



**Special Communication to City of Burlington  
Emergency Operations Center and Mayor  
Regarding COVID-19**

**To:** Brian Lowe

**From:** Kayla Donohue and Jesse Freedman of City Analytics Team

**RE:** Best Practices for Essential Businesses

**Date:** March 30, 2020, 3:00pm

*Updated:*

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**Summary of Guidance & Best Practices Implemented nationally and locally:**

- The CDC does not currently recommend that people who are well wear a facemask, including cashiers, baggers, cleaning personnel, and shoppers. The best prevention practices continue to be proper hand hygiene, refraining from touching your face, social distancing and respiratory etiquette.
  - Please note, however, that there is increasing evidence of asymptomatic spread and some evidence that wearing even a cotton facemask can reduce the likelihood of viral transmission.
- Rhode Island became the first state to issue mandatory social distancing for retailers and capacity limits.
- The Food Management Institute (FMI), working with the CDC, recommends enhancing alternative shopping methods, including online shopping and curbside pickup, as well as reducing payments on delivery and using contactless payments, and other measures to expand social distancing inside businesses such as using floor stickers for queuing.
- Walmart, Kroger, 7-Eleven, Giant Eagle, Wegmans, Publix, ShopRite, Albertsons, and others are installing plexiglass windows as a COVID-19 safeguard, in addition to social distancing floor decals. Many stores are offering a special shopping period during the first hour of business for the elderly and those that might be considered high-risk.
- Locally, City Market has installed plexiglass shields at registers; removed bulk item bins and open hot bar serving stations by pre-packaging staple items for customers; located disinfecting wipes, sanitizer, and gloves for all shoppers to use while in store; have decreased store hours to allow additional time for cleaning and sanitizing; implemented a daily shopping hour dedicated to older adults and high risk customers; waived grocery delivery fees for seniors and Food for All members; are not allowing refillable mugs or reusable grocery bags to be brought into stores; and are discontinuing bottle redemption until April 30.

**Important Note Regarding this Document:** *The coronavirus pandemic, and local, state and federal guidance/orders regarding this pandemic, are rapidly evolving. Information contained in this memo is presumed to be accurate and reflective of the situation as of the date and time noted above. Information in this memo is offered as review of actions, events, case studies, and data based on specific requests of and research by the Analytics Team. The original audience for this document was the Mayor and members of the City's Emergency Operations Center. These resources are being made available in the event that they may be informative for other Vermont communities.*

## Key Sources:

- [King County Department of Health Guidance for Essential Businesses](#)
- [Washington Department of Health Food Worker and Establishment Guidance on COVID-19](#)
- [Rhode Island Guidelines for Retailers and Grocers](#)
- [National Grocer Association Guidance](#)
- [CDC's Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- [CDC's Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities](#)
- [CDC's How to Protect Yourself](#)

## Sample Checklist for Best Practices for Essential Businesses

### Policies & Education For Employees

- Review your sick leave policies and expand upon paid leave options for your workers. Offering paid sick leave will help mitigate the economic impacts of missed work for your employees, while simultaneously keeping the rest of your employees and customers well.
- Clearly communicate health requirements and expectations with your workers. Ensure employees understand signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and when they need to stay home from work, and when they can return to work. Consider conducting daily wellness checks of all employees.
- Ensure all employees wash their hands frequently and thoroughly. Make sure hand washing stations are available and well stocked. Ensure employees have ample time to frequently wash their hands.
- Ensure all employees maintain social distancing requirements whenever feasible to complete work. Ensure employee breakrooms, cafeterias, locker rooms, etc. Allow for social distancing to be met when employees utilize space. Consider staggered shift or break times to reduce number of employees congregating in these areas.
- Ensure all employees (and customers) understand proper cough etiquette.
- Remind employees to avoid touching their faces.
- Consider temporarily assigning employees at high risk (those over age 60, those with underlying health conditions, or those who are pregnant) for coronavirus duties that don't involve close contact with the public.

### On-Site Prevention Practices

- Expand services for and encourage customers to call-ahead or place orders online for curbside pickup or delivery whenever possible.
- Routinely perform cleaning, sanitation and infection control procedures consistent with CDC guidance
- Provide older and high-risk costumers with dedicated shopping hour during the first hour of business.

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- Allow employees to wear masks and gloves if they choose (while CDC does not currently recommend use of masks for people who are well, employees may choose to wear non-commercial grade masks for comfort of staff and customers)
- Install plexiglass shields/windows at check-out counters where social distancing between staff and customers cannot be maintained
- Ask customer to refrain from using reusable bags, or to bag purchases themselves when using reusable bags (while CDC currently understands exposure risk from bags to be low, it is a measure some may choose for comfort of staff and customers)
- Consider cashless payments for in-person purchases such as credit cards, smart-phone based touchless payment (while CDC does not consider money to be a high exposure risk, this can further decrease staff-customer contact)
- Install floor decals or stanchions to promote physical distancing where lines form
- Consider limits on number of customers that can enter a store at the same time.
- Modifying store operating hours to enable greater time for workers to perform enhanced cleaning, to replenish inventory (particularly for self-serve items that now must be pre-packaged)
- Hire a third shift of product stockers, cleaners, and sanitizers
- Have greeters or an assigned staff person clean carts and hand baskets frequently at store entrance/between each use
- Provide tissues, no-touch waste bins, alcohol-based hand sanitizer or wipes, and disposable gloves in customer areas.
- Suspend food sampling, self-serve bulk items, and/or self-serve ready-to-eat products
- Institute purchasing limits on high demand items and household staples (toilet paper, hand sanitizer, cleaning products)

#### Other Sources

- [Guidance for the Food Industry](#)
- [Food Safety and the Coronavirus Disease](#)
- [Grocer Shopping During Coronavirus](#)
- [Tracking the Retail Response to Coronavirus](#)
- [Kroger, Giant Eagle to install plexiglass windows as COVID-19 safeguard](#)
- [Restaurants near Revere Beach end takeout service in city effort to disperse crowds](#)
- [Grocery stores taking extra precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19](#)
- [Amazon, Instacart Grocery Delivery Workers Strike For Coronavirus Protection and Pay](#)
- [Grocery workers are keeping Americans alive during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here's what they need.](#)
- [Grocery Stores Are the Coronavirus Tipping Point](#)
- [Protecting Grocery Store Workers and Shoppers from COVID-19](#)
- [What grocery stores are doing to protect workers during coronavirus outbreak](#)

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