



New Mexico
Restaurant
Association

New Mexico's Restaurants Are Ready:

Responsible Restaurant Reopening

The NMRA would like to propose a thoughtfully put together a plan for reopening restaurants that protects the public, gets thousands of people back to work and helps restaurants survive until a time when we can resume providing hospitality to our communities at 100%.

An overarching framework for this discussion is to Keep It Simple – for Restaurants, The Public and Enforcement Agencies. New Mexico's restaurant and foodservice businesses have always been committed to food safety, customer safety, and employee safety. As we begin to emerge from the COVID-19 public health crisis, New Mexico's restaurants remain committed to being leaders in keeping our employees and the dining public safe.

Our Dining Rooms are Ready - "6 and 6" Rule:

This distancing and maximum requirement can again be modified as the Governor's gathering number and other social distancing rules change over time. Simply, this makes enforcement visual and simple compared to computing a percentage of occupancy.

- 6 Persons max per party
- 6 Foot social distancing between tables, OR have an obvious protective barrier, like a Plexiglass screen between booths

Our Employees Are Ready - Employee Health:

Restaurants will continue to monitor employees' health, including a temperature screening and symptoms check (coughing or fever) at the start of every shift

- Excuse from work anyone with a heightened temperature or visible symptoms
- Employees "shall not" go to work if sick and are required to call in.
- Every restaurant employee will wear a mask or face covering to protect others from contracting the virus. (Use basic face coverings rather than N-95 respirators or surgical masks, which should be reserved for medical first responders).
- Each restaurant will create an operating plan for any instance of an employee with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

Our Kitchens are Ready - Sanitation and Food Safety:

Restaurants will continue to follow the already high food safety standards required to operate a food service business in New Mexico.

- Audit of Food Handler and Manager Certification as warranted by governing Department of the Environment.
- Continue employee safety training, highly emphasizing proper handwashing and hygiene etiquette. Re-train staff on proper sanitization practices. Ensure staff does not handle ready-to-eat foods with bare hands, as required by law.
- Restaurants will create and execute a heightened cleaning and sanitizing schedule for all back-of-house and front-of-house surfaces that staff and customers will come in contact with. Increase the frequency of sanitization of all surfaces.
- Have hand sanitizer and sanitizing products readily available for employees and customers.

Our Procedures are Ready – Planning for now and the future

Restaurants will understand that some customers will be eager to venture out to the greatest degree allowed, while others will remain nervous. Acknowledging and accommodating both groups is important at this time.

- Designate "6 and 6" with signage, tape, or by other means appropriate social distancing spacing for employees and customers
- Where appropriate, designate appropriate social distancing spacing for those waiting to enter any establishment, or those waiting in line for counter service.
- Have a plan in place to continue to have a strong carry-out and delivery business, even while ramping up your facilities' dine-in process and business. Continue to follow the best social distancing and minimal contact procedures for carryout and delivery.
- Minimize contact with customer items, such as credit cards. When possible, have customers swipe their own card.
- After handling a credit card or cash, employees must properly wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before serving the next customer.
- Do not allow the use of or handle reusable containers brought to the facility by customers (i.e. travel mugs, growlers).