



Hotel  
Dining Services

# RECOVERY BLUEPRINT

A Guide to Help Welcome Guests Back

This presentation is guidance only. It does not constitute legal, medical or safety advice, nor is it a formal endorsement or recommendation of a particular response.

**YOU  
HAVE  
ARRIVED**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

03

## **What is this for?**

A brief explanation of the Blueprint's purpose

04

## **Federal and local requirements overview**

Authoritative sources and emerging recommendations

05

## **Reopening expectations**

Guest, Staff, Managers, Banquet Directors, and  
Operations Advisors interview recap

08

## **Principles for effective reopening**

Guidance to inform your approach

10

## **A zonal approach**

How to adapt this guidance to your unique space

24

## **General Guidance**

Illustrative pages reflect a typical dining environment  
and how guidance may be applied.

34

## **Appendix**



# WHAT IS THIS FOR?

As travel increases and guests return to hotels, hoteliers will likely find increased demand for in-room and hotel dining, given its relative convenience and perceived safety. The hotel dining experience will be understood within the overall context of the visit. It must be approached holistically, balancing an appropriately welcoming environment with necessary sanitation and social distancing requirements.

To support your planning efforts, we've developed guidance specific to reopening hotel food service facilities and providing in-room dining. We encourage you to familiarize yourselves with the foundational principles, suggested best practices, and provide examples from other food service environments as you determine what's best for your facility.

Every hotel, and every hotel guest is unique, and your experience will be nuanced. There is no single flowchart or checklist that can be applied. You will, of course, need to find and follow official laws and requirements from federal and state sources like the CDC, FDA, OSHA, local governor's office, and local health department as you craft your specific reopening plan.

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## Federal & local guidelines generally provide reopening or recovery guidance in 5 key areas

Reopening or recovery guidelines come from many sources, including the federal government, CDC, FDA, OSHA, state and local governments, local departments of health, and trade organizations. They range from requirements in the form of laws, ordinances and executive orders to recommendations and evolving industry standards. This is true even from a single source: for example, some state regulations will include specific requirements for some issues and may say “consider,” “if feasible,” or “where practical” for others. All businesses are strongly encouraged to coordinate with state and local health officials so timely and accurate information can guide appropriate responses. Local conditions will continue to influence the decisions public health officials make.

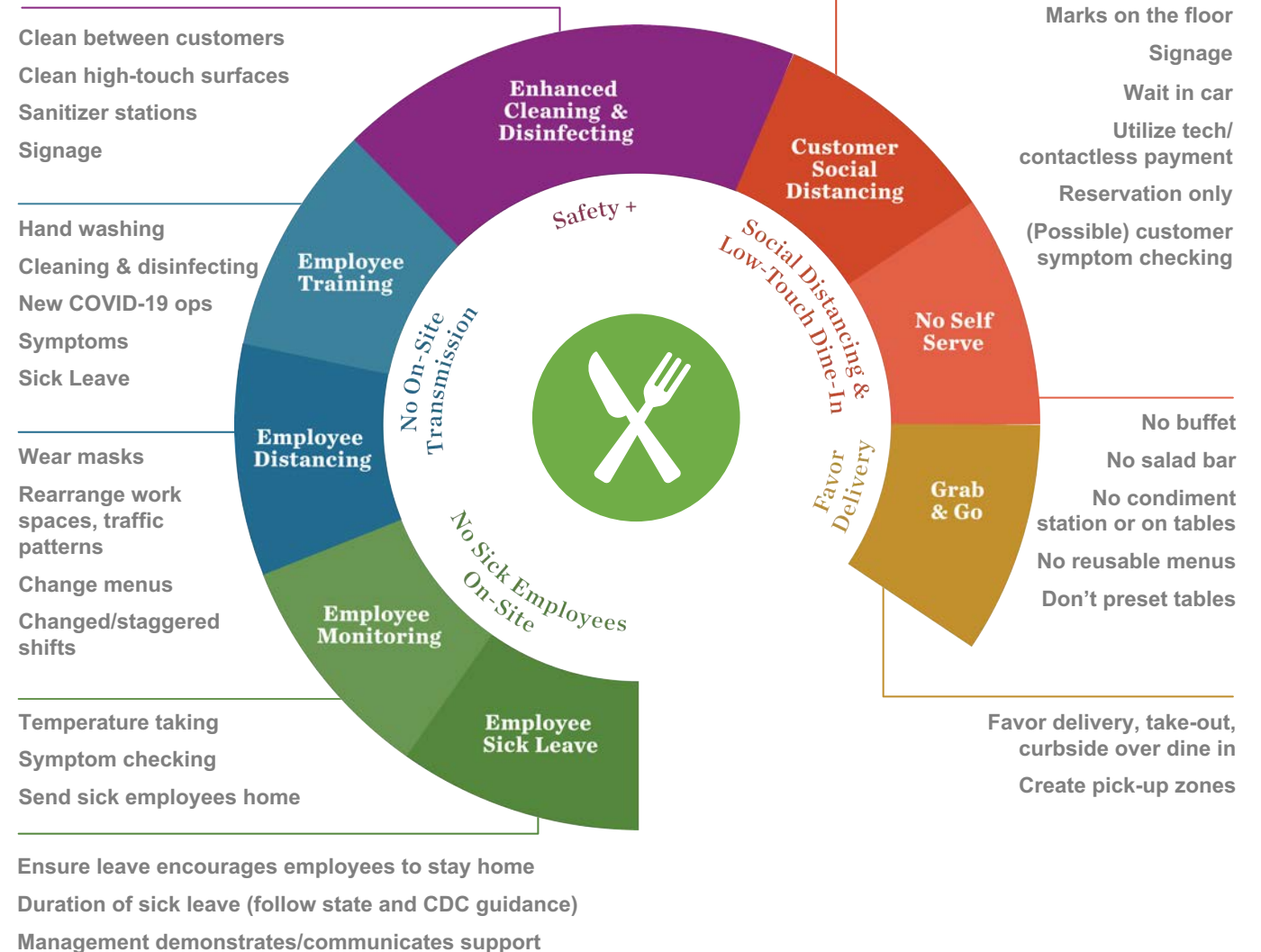
Although reopening or recovery guidelines come from a number of sources and differ geographically, there are common organizational schemes and general alignment across five general areas:

- No sick employees on-site
- Prevent on-site transmission
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting for safety
- Social distancing and low-touch for dine-in
- Favoring take-out/delivery

**Thinking in these terms can make understanding and applying guidelines less daunting and complex.**

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## Your locale may advise or recommend that you:\*



Note: Specific requirements may not apply to your location.

\*Reflects guidance from sources published prior to May 5, 2020. Current guidance may vary.

# Generally, diners have widely varying expectations about going back out to eat

Consider shaping the experience to match the user expectations

"I feel like I've been in jail for 45 days."

"People like me are going to jump out there...when we don't all die, other people will slowly join us."

## Get Back to Normal

Enthusiastically returning to dining establishments with friends and family

Aware and potentially frustrated by things that are different from before

**Overtly signal the new normal, using "in this together" language to deflect frustration**

**Make them ambassadors and give them easy ways to share the success of their experiences with their networks**

"I am going to wait for two weeks to see how things turn out."

"My friend and I have been planning to dine out...but still, we decided to wait for two weeks."

## Cautiously Optimistic

Likely delaying return to make sure protocols are established and working

First visit may be to pick up a to-go meal

**Allow diners to see and understand that safety protocols are being followed**

**Consider a soft opening where the primary offering is to-go. Communicate this as an active choice in support of the diner's well being**

"I want to go so bad but I value my life more."

"They can open whatever they want. Doesn't mean anyone is going."

## Wait and See

Likely immersed in national and global news and waiting for an overall end to the crisis

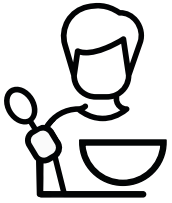
Likely initially to be more attracted to non-dine-in options

**Create a trust-building strategy that begins with contactless delivery, then to-go, then dine-in**

**At every stage of trust-building, provide reassurances for both that stage and the next**

# We spoke to guests, staff, managers, and operations advisors to understand their views

To best understand how COVID-19 has impacted perceptions of staying and dining at a hotel, it's important to listen to the people involved. Through interviews with key groups, we were able to better understand what challenges and perceptions a Reopening Blueprint should address.

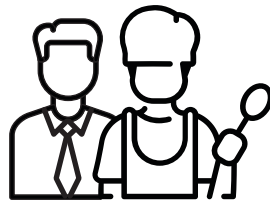


## Guests

Guests from different demographic groups and locations generally believe hotels are well-equipped to manage the new requirements, and feel they provide the most convenient dining options. That said, opinions on what a post-COVID hotel dining experience should be varied widely.

**“I don’t want to see a complete no-contact service. I want people to go back to work.”**

**“The fewer people I interact with, the better.”**



## Staff, Managers & Banquet Director

Hotel staff, managers, and banquet directors emphasized safety, but had different approaches driven by their distinct brands. There was, however, universal agreement that excellent communication is required to ensure a good hotel dining experience.

**“We had discussions around using disposables but decide to still use pre-wrapped cutlery. We are an eco-friendly company and it’s just not in our brand.”**

**“The server would knock on the door, drop off the food in disposable containers on the floor, then leave.”**



## Operations Advisors

Operations advisors suggested a wide range of measures hotels might undertake as they reopen, with an emphasis on delivering contactless services and new operational processes that leverage emerging technology.

**“The route they use for in-room dining should be sanitized. There should be a designated elevator dedicated for food delivery.”**

**“It might not even be the person who delivers the food. It might be a robot.”**

**“The (hotel) app is going to be our friend. You can use it to check in, order food, browse entertainment... everything!”**

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# What we heard from our research participants...

## Convenience & Trust

Hotel guests prefer utilizing hotel restaurants and in-room dining instead of external restaurants, post COVID-19. They tend to trust hotels, presuming they'll employ rigorous sanitation procedures. They also appreciate their unparalleled convenience.

"I trust the hotels to have standardized procedures."

"Now with COVID-19, it's all about convenience. I am more apt to eat in the hotel restaurant or order in-room service."

## Concerns over the Unknown

Hotel guests expressed concerns over what to expect when arriving (changes, invisible processes, etc.). For example, several guests were anxious about how the food is handled and transported from the kitchen for in-room dining.

"When they come up, they will touch the elevator and deliver my food. Are they going to change their gloves once exited the elevator?"

"I don't know what to expect. Not knowing the guidelines and how the hotel and restaurant are living up to the standard."

## Personalized Service

Hotel guests have varied comfort levels with many aspects of their post-COVID stay, from small things like gloves, to larger in-room service delivery concerns.

Hotels should strive to provide a more personalized service to satisfy safety needs and desired customer service.

"I would prefer the server to stand behind the cart so I can take my food."

"We would ask guests whether they would love to have the cart inside or just leave it by the door."

## To-Go Service & Food Delivery

Hotels are expecting increased volume of to-go orders and food delivery service use, which introduces new partnership opportunities. It also requires new physical changes, processes, and communication.

"We provide pre-packaged food for our guests and most of them are taking it to go."

"We partner with nearby restaurants to get free delivery for our guests. When customers arrive, the front desk will inform the guests of the promotion."

# General Principles for Effective Reopening or Recovery

An appropriately planned reopening for dining establishments, generally, will be guided by the following principles:

## 1 Health & Well-Being

Food service establishments must demonstrate the importance placed on the health and well-being of their employees and customers. This may include posting policies including symptom checking, as well as publicizing employee measures (and support of employees) to customers. Help customers understand the new expectations and behave in safe ways.

## 2 Stay Nimble; Information is Fluid

This is a fluid environment and will evolve as things are tried, information is gathered, guidance from authorities changes, and customer responses are surveyed and understood. Be prepared to operate in an iterative way. Expect to make continuous adjustments and changes. Plan for multiple possible future scenarios. Observe results and track metrics.

## 3 Menu Dictates Space

A tighter, more focused menu allows food service operators to better plan labor and prep needs, and run a more sanitized kitchen. Refocus external communications to celebrate a carefully crafted, reduced menu. Focus on what you know diners will love, and tell a story that highlights what your establishment does best. Consider pre-selling items to anticipate capacity and plan your operations.

## 4 Trusted Provider

Embrace preparation and safety protocols as part of your establishment's story. Assert yourself as a safe public space/beacon/gathering place. Become a trusted local provider that builds loyalty & signifies safety through your sanitation rigor.

## 5 Buffered, Sealed Back of House

Maintain a distinct separation between FOH & BOH. Social distancing in BOH may be challenging, and the FOH is exposed to many variables. Use expeditors as a buffer between those who can touch food and those who cannot. Designate separate entrances for FOH and BOH employees. Signal separation through visual cues (glove colors, aprons, head covering color) and make customers aware that a plan is in place.

## 6 Buffered, Contactless Front of House

FOH needs multiple layers or barriers reinforced by products, furniture, and staff structure in order to support distancing by diners at every level. Main considerations include the table setting (minimal), how food is ordered (digital, disposable menus), and how food arrives (minimal contact).

## 7 New Rituals & Positive Outlook

Don't view regulations as onerous or challenging. Different doesn't have to be negative. Seek opportunities to create new, lasting rituals, to signal safety, to claim new spaces, and to innovate.

## 8 Transparency & Communication

Incomplete or incorrect information poses a risk in this complex, unprecedented situation. Clear, concise, complete, consistent communication to employees and customers is critical, and will help boost efficiency, morale, and consumer sentiment.





# Supplemental Principles

## For Hotels



### Hotel-Wide

1

#### Leverage Trust in Hotels

Customers have more trust for hotels than external restaurants for perceived high sanitation standards. Train staff well, communicate processes transparently, and design your environment and operations to reflect and enhance customers' trust in your establishment. Must incorporate social distancing.

2

#### Integral Ecosystem Approach

Hotel dining is inseparable from the larger hotel ecosystem. Plan new services, holistically. Create a master experience strategy roadmap and allocate resources strategically. Work collaboratively to provide customers with a coherent and consistent experience.

3

#### Brand Value

Hotels should adopt measures appropriate to their brand image. From small details, to process innovation, ensure every touchpoint reflects your brand's values.

4

#### Meet Customers Where They Are

The definition of service may be different post-COVID, but it still drives customer satisfaction. Your customers will have varied comfort levels. Meet them where they are, presenting options that meet your standards, while allowing them to decide what level of engagement they prefer.

5

#### Engage to Innovate

Capacity limitations will restrict traditional dining operations. Actively seek customers' input on alternative models to ensure everyone is well-fed and cared for. Pilot new ideas. Get feedback and iterate. Keep and scale what works.

6

#### Sustainability

Disposables may be preferable for the time being, but long-term environmental and financial sustainability should be taken into consideration. Sustainability should go hand-in-hand with food safety. Make the choice that's right for your organization as well as your guests' safety, and communicate those decisions, clearly.



### In-Room Dining

1

#### Over-communicate for Peace of Mind

In-room diners are not able to directly witness steps taken to ensure safety during food preparation, handling, delivery, or equipment sanitation. Extra care should be taken to inform diners about new procedures and options, helping to alleviate anxiety about "the unknown."

2

#### Contained & Sanitized Delivery

The route from kitchen to guest room should be considered an extension of the sanitized kitchen. Methodically plan the route, each touchpoint, and action between kitchen and arrival at your diners' doors to protect guests and staff.

# How to read this document

While every dining establishment is different, most experiences share very similar experiential zones. We've organized the majority of this reopening guidance by zone, so it's easy to understand how it might map to your particular location.

More general guidance that is not applicable to a specific zone can be found under *Additional Considerations*.

Zonal Guidance	Pre-Arrival / Arrival	Earliest possible opportunity to help diners understand what to expect and how to approach your establishment with social distancing in mind.
	Entry / Exit	Important moment to clarify expectations, communicate conditions of entry, and begin actively managing social distancing requirements.
	Dining Experience	Where diners and staff engage most deeply, where the most significant changes will be experienced, and where the most important expression of your commitment to safety occurs.
	Restroom	This critical touchpoint that will either build or immediately compromise trust, depending on how thoughtfully it is approached.
General Guidance	Additional Considerations	Important general considerations that do not map to a specific zone.

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# Hotel Dining

## Restaurant Dining Rooms

Hotels will likely see an increase in demand for on-premises dining once travel resumes. Please consider the following as you craft your specific reopening plans:

### Pre-Arrival/Check-in

- During the investigation and booking process, provide guests with up-to-date information on local government and hotel company guidelines, social distancing and sanitation procedures. Ensure they arrive at your hotel having had the opportunity to research and understand your requirements.
- From arrival to departure, leverage every touchpoint to eliminate concern, as one problematic encounter will negatively impact the whole experience, including food service. Multiple exposure to important messages will facilitate awareness and participation.
- Many new and existing digital tools can help your guests plan their visit, check-in, make dining or room service reservations, order meals, gain room access, pay, check-out, etc. Leveraging these tools will help you better manage capacity and support social distancing.
- Leverage workplace and organizational communications to ensure employee population is aware of the requirements prior to arriving at work.
- Purposefully direct the hotel's entry path, creating turns to slow arriving guest's pace. This will help them notice important signs & provide reassurance that there is a "right" way to move through the space —not just for them, but for everyone.
- Place entry signs where guests pause upon arrival, to ensure maximum comprehension. Graphically and with as few words as possible, explain the expectations of their stay.
- Position highly visible staff in strategic locations where guests may gravitate or cluster, such as bell hop and receptions desks. Ensure staff is well-informed and capable of answering guest's questions, safely equipped, and able to maintain 6' distance from guests at all times.
- When possible, install foot handles or alternative openers. Position wipes or touchless sanitizer dispensers before and after doors that must be touched.
- Provide free face masks upon entry for any guest that may require them.
- Ensure guests are aware of their dining options upon check-in. Provide disposable printed guidance or deliver via digital means. Encourage reservation-only dining, to avoid crowding and manage occupancy.



# Hotel Dining

## Restaurant Dining Rooms

Hotels will likely see an increase in demand for on-premises dining once travel resumes. Please consider the following as you craft your specific reopening plans:

### Dining Room Arrival

- Use technology for menu awareness, reservations, pre-ordering, and pickup to manage dine-in capacity limitations.
- As necessary, begin queuing outside the restaurant to meter entering diners and meet occupancy requirements. Promote availability of other options (in-room dining, pick-up, etc.) while guests wait.
- Provide clear separation between entry, waiting, and dining areas, maintaining 6' between parties. Use signage to direct traffic, and decorative elements (plants, etc.) to define zones.
- As space allows, segment dine-in and takeout traffic to minimize congestion at narrow doorways. Provide directions to the correct door as far in advance as is practical, including providing instructions online.



# Hotel Dining

## Restaurant Dining Rooms

Hotels will likely see an increase in demand for on-premises dining once travel resumes. Please consider the following as you craft your specific reopening plans:

### Restaurant Entry/Exit

- Provide a clear view from interior to exterior through entry doors or adjacent window, as well as sufficient circulation space, so passing customers avoid collisions and stay 6' apart.
- Limit occupancy to support current social distancing requirements. Actively monitor capacity at all times and consider leveraging technology for real-time capacity awareness.
- Consider a dedicated entry and exit to completely segment arriving and departing diners.
- When possible, install foot handles or alternative openers. Position wipes or touchless sanitizer dispensers before and after doors that must be touched.
- Consider the use of technology which may signal diners their table or to-go order is ready, helping avoid crowded waiting areas.
- If such technologies are used, consider establishing an additional check-in spot or “express lane” to separate walk-up, pick-up, and reservation traffic to help avoid congestion.
- Intentionally disrupt the restaurant entry path, establishing an overt queue and creating turns to slow arriving diners’ pace. This will help them notice important signs, engage appropriately with staff, & provide reassurance that there is a “right” way to move through the restaurant —not just for them, but for everyone.
- Place entry signs where diners pause to ensure maximum comprehension. Graphically and with as few words as possible, remind guests of dining room expectations (party size, fever-free, mask use, etc.).
- Provide free face masks upon entry for any guest that may require them.



# Hotel Dining

## Restaurant Dining Rooms, *continued*

### Hotel Restaurant Dining Room

- Position highly visible staff in strategic locations. They should be well-informed and prepared to answer questions, and meter entry volume to maintain required capacity. Ensure they are safely equipped & maintain 6' distance from diners at all times. Use stanchions and plants to create normalized buffers.
- Package pick-up orders in sealed containers, bagged for easy transport. Be sure to include disposable cutlery and condiments to minimize return trips/delivery of forgotten items.
- Always greet and escort diners to their table, eliminating the need for heavy environmental communication that may distract from the dining room's ambiance.
- Enliven outdoor seating areas to increase their appeal. Provide disposable paper menu and exterior table service to overcome interior capacity challenges during peak periods.
- Suspend self-serve soup, salad bars, bakery cases, and buffets as required by local authorities. Remove communal condiments and elements except for single-serve napkin dispensers and automatic hand sanitizers.
- Unless legally mandated otherwise, consider allowing "closed" tables to remain as "spacers" between tables. Visually indicate they are closed (signage, etc.) and remove seating. An uncrowded restaurant can be desirable. A vacant one may be disconcerting.
- Keep seated parties separated by no less than 6 feet. Indicate which tables are "open" and which are "closed" very clearly—either sign them, place an artifact on them, or physically remove them to maintain this distance.
- Bar and counter seating is discouraged, and may not be allowed. If opened, ensure bar seats are 6' apart. Closed bars may be used as employee space, providing easy access to supplies, beverages, and bar sink for hand-washing, decreasing the need to enter kitchen. Include sanitization requirement for such a shared space.
- In order to provide maximum circulation for staff, block diner access to high staff flow areas. Use signage or stanchions to ensure diners know they should not enter these spaces.
- Arrange furniture so that servers and cleaning staff can pass at the appropriate distances, without crowding seated diners. Determine primary routes to and from BOH, to avoid perception of "milling" among diners.





# Hotel Dining

## Restaurant Dining Rooms, *continued*

### Hotel Restaurant Dining Room, *continued*

- Wait staff and cleaning staff should be easily differentiated by their attire. Specific colors of face masks and gloves should allow diners to see and understand that cleaning is being undertaken by well-equipped, dedicated staff, to avoid cross-contamination.
- Dining tables should be clean and dry. Remove all communal items, including menus, utensils, and condiments. Touchless self-serve napkin or hand sanitizer dispensers may remain.
- Hospitality cards on table describe commitment to diners and staff, and outline cleaning protocols. Consider including “sanitized by” personalization.
- Provide individually-packaged sanitizing wipes upon request, if automatic hand sanitizer is not available at each table.
- Servers should wear masks and gloves at all times. Reimagine masks as a branded conversation piece, not just a necessary safety precaution.
- Server to briefly explain new expectations (wear mask except when eating, raise hand to summon wait staff, new ordering or payment processes, etc.), and answer questions.
- After initial seating, table should be serviced by only one individual during guests’ visit. Ensure guests are aware of more focused, infrequent table visits and individual attention.
- Staff should maintain 6’ distance as practical. Minimize reaches, table visits, and time at table.
- Provide disposable, single-use menus, or consider leveraging technology for touchless digital menu, ordering, and payment.
- Kid's activities must not use shared crayons, etc.
- Consider covering food between kitchen and table. Drape trays to ensure plates do not come into direct contact with communal tray surfaces. Minimize reaches to table, allowing diners to distribute food to their party.



## Hotel Dining

### Restaurant Dining Rooms, *continued*

#### Hotel Restaurant Dining Room, *continued*

- If space allows, deliver food on a cart or to adjacent table, and allow diners to distribute food to their party once server has moved away.
- Deliver sealed or covered beverages and allow diners to open/remove covering. All refills must be delivered in a fresh glass (no refills at the table). If opening bottled wine, put on fresh gloves as perform in front of guests, allowing guests to pour.
- Provide condiments in single-serve or disposable containers, upon request, only.
- Provide leftover containers and allow guest to package their own leftovers in a durable container. Provide a bag for easy transport. Include disposable cutlery.
- Leverage technology to provide alternative payment options. Ensure availability of non-technology options for those paying cash, etc.
- Provide single-use check covers to each table, a wrapped towelette for signing pen, or other method to ensure pens are sanitized, if pens are used.
- Provide a simple token of appreciation like wrapped candies or mints, and provide feedback cards to guests.
- Bus and sanitize tables in a single step after diners depart. Avoid incremental removal of dishes during the meal to reduce contact.
- Cleaning crew sanitizes and resets tables between parties and/or on set schedule.
- All horizontal surfaces and door handles should be sanitized frequently, within view of diners.



# Hotel Dining

## Restaurant Dining Rooms, *continued*

### Convenience/Sundries

- Consider “always open” or pop-up micro-markets or touchless vending machines with a variety of take-away items and staples to help mitigate dining room capacity challenges and enable staff to grab groceries on their way home from late shifts.
- Consider pre-packaged meals from third-parties to reduce effort of pre-packaging in-house.
- Provide wrapped, disposable cutlery, and consider reheat locations with safely spaced microwaves, sanitation wipes, hand sanitizer, etc.
- Rigorously limit access and capacity to maintain social distancing at all times. Leverage floor graphics and wayfinding signage reinforcing 1-way traffic flow and 6’ distances.
- Shoppers will occasionally forget something and need to “loop” back. Provide “off-ramps” that allow them to safely return to an earlier aisle, decreasing frustration & saving trip time.
- Place automatic hand sanitizer dispensers throughout the space, and sanitary wipe dispensers and trash cans near common items, such as chill cases with handles.
- Route traffic so that “last aisle” also serves as payment queue while waiting to check out.
- Leverage technology to provide contactless payment. Ensure social distancing is enforced at point of sale, and barriers are provided to minimize contact between diners and cashiers.
- Consider bundled food kits containing breakfast, lunch, and dinner options to minimize repeat visits to dining facilities.



# Hotel Dining

## Restaurant Dining Rooms, *continued*

### Restrooms

- To comfortably allow good social distancing, consider “wait here” signs to avoid crowding while waiting for the restroom. Provide signs with visual guidance on how diners should pass each other if space is very constrained.
- Provide paper towel dispensers outside restrooms for those who refuse to touch doors, and position trash cans within easy arm’s reach of doors, inside and out.
- Post a well-kept cleaning log in an easily visible spot. Restrooms should smell fresh and clean at all times to ensure maximum confidence.
- Visits to the restroom should be as contact-free as possible for your diners. Door kicks, foot handles, touchless faucets and soap dispensers, easy access trashcans, and disposable paper towels instill confidence.



## Hotel Dining Bars & Lounges

Bars and Lounges require special considerations given the character of the environment, presence of alcohol, and more varied seating types. Bars and lounges may also be subject to different or additional state or local restrictions as compared to restaurants.

In addition to general Hotel Restaurant Dining Room guidance, please consider the following additional recommendations as you craft your specific reopening plans:

### Pre-Arrival/Arrival

- Limit occupancy to support current social distancing requirements. Begin queuing outside to meter entering patrons and promote availability of other options (takeout, delivery, curbside pick-up, etc.).
- Enliven appropriately licensed outdoor seating areas to increase appeal. Consider disposable paper menu and outdoor table service to overcome interior capacity challenges during peak periods. Adhere to local liquor laws that may impact sales and exterior seating.

### Entry/Exit

- As possible, consider dedicated entry and exit to completely segment arriving and departing patrons.
- Provide a clear view from interior to exterior through entry doors or adjacent window, as well as sufficient circulation space, so passing customers can avoid collisions and maintain 6' of distance through narrower entryways as they pass.
- Provide guidance on how diners should pass each other when space is very constrained.

### Restrooms

- See Hotel Restaurant Dining Room guidance.



## Hotel Dining Bars & Lounges

Bars and Lounges require special considerations given the character of the environment, presence of alcohol, and more varied seating types.

In addition to general Hotel Restaurant Dining Room guidance, please consider the following additional recommendations as you craft your specific reopening plans:

### Bar Service/Dining Room

- Consider the use of menu boards that might replace disposable menus. They should be easily visible from a distance to decrease need to approach bar.
- Provide additional protection between staff and patrons at bar (plex panels, etc.).
- If bar service is allowed, separate order and pickup point as much as possible. Suggest patrons wait for their order at their table, or approach the bar only when invited to do so.
- Do not allow people to congregate at the bar, and do not allow people to eat or drink while standing.
- No self-serve beverages or communal food items of any kind (nuts, etc.). Garnishes, etc., should be kept out of customer's reach at the bar.
- Bartender should remain behind the bar and change gloves, frequently. Servers should only engage with seated guests. Use disposable towels and provide additional trash receptacles.
- Remove communal self-serve condiment and cutlery stations. Single-serve condiments to be provided upon request, and cutlery provided with each order.
- Clearly post and reinforce maximum party size in casual seating areas.
- Remove extra tables and chairs so social distancing is more easily enforced. Remove or overtly block portions of large, communal tables. Respace soft seating areas to achieve 6' distance between parties.
- Bar and counter seating is discouraged, and possibly not allowed. If opened, ensure bar seats are 6' apart and limit party size to avoid frequent reconfiguration of barstools by patrons.
- If bar service is allowed, provide reasonable pass-through for food and beverages to minimize contact. Clearly communicate expectations (signage) about how food and beverages will be delivered to avoid confusion.
- Consider expanding bar service to underutilized spaces. Separate, furnish, and enliven them so they feel purposeful, while supporting social distancing and necessary staff circulation spaces. Adhere to local liquor laws and ensure space is appropriately signed.
- Deliver sealed or covered beverages and allow diners to open/remove covering. All refills must be delivered in a fresh glass (no refills at the table). If opening bottled wine, etc., put on fresh gloves as perform in front of guests, allowing guests to pour.





# Hotel Dining

## In-room Dining

Hotels will likely see an increase in demand for in-room dining once travel resumes. Please consider the following as you craft your specific reopening plans:

### Pre-Arrival/Check-in

- During the investigation and booking process, provide guests with up-to-date information on local government and hotel company guidelines, room sanitation, and in-room dining procedures. Ensure they arrive at your hotel having had the opportunity to research and understand your requirements.
- From arrival to departure, leverage every touchpoint to eliminate concern, as one problematic encounter will negatively impact the whole experience, including in-room dining. Multiple exposure to important messages will facilitate awareness and participation.
- Many new and existing digital tools can help your guests plan their visit, check-in, make requests for bedding, make dining or room service reservations, order meals, gain room access, pay, check-out, etc. Leveraging these tools will help you better manage demand and support social distancing.
- Leverage workplace and organizational communications to ensure staff population is aware of room entry requirements prior to arriving at work.
- Purposefully direct the hotel's entry path, creating turns to slow arriving guest's pace. This will help them notice important signs & provide reassurance that there is a "right" way to move through the space—not just for them, but for everyone.
- Place entry signs where guests pause upon arrival, to ensure maximum comprehension. Graphically and with as few words as possible, explain the expectations of their stay.
- Position highly visible staff in strategic locations where guests may gravitate or cluster, such as bell hop and receptions desks. Ensure staff is well-informed and capable of answering guest's questions, are safely equipped, and maintain 6' distance from guests at all times.
- When possible, install foot handles or alternative openers. Position wipes or touchless sanitizer dispensers before and after doors that must be touched.
- Provide free face masks upon entry for any guest that may require them.
- Ensure guests are aware of their in-room dining options upon check-in. Provide disposable printed guidance or deliver via digital means.



# Hotel Dining

## In-room Dining

Hotels will likely see an increase in demand for in-room dining once travel resumes. Please consider the following as you craft your specific reopening plans:

### Room Entry/Exit

- Consider contactless technology for room access.
- Consider “sealing” the room for a set period of time after rigorous cleaning, to ensure sanitation. Provide other in-room signals of cleanliness (housekeeping cards, safety seals on mini bar, glass covers, etc.).
- Use in-room entertainment to promote hotel’s new standards and provide information regarding what to expect when dining, in-room.
- Provide disposable menus and avoid the use of reusable information binders unless sanitized and sealed.
- Provide information so that guests may use their own phones, rather than the room phone, to place in-room dining orders.
- Consider installation of touchless sanitizers in corridors, elevators, and rooms.
- Cover and protect food between kitchen and room. Drape trays to ensure plates do not come into direct contact with communal delivery cart surfaces.
- Designate sanitized routes and responsible staff to deliver meals from kitchen to guest areas, with automatic hand sanitizer before and after doors/surfaces that must be touched.
- Designate separate routes and responsible staff for returning dishes, to avoid cross-contamination.
- Use disposable printed materials and in-room signage to establish clear expectations regarding placing orders, receiving their meals, any interaction with staff, payment, and disposal of their dishes.



# Hotel Dining

## In-room Dining

Hotels will likely see an increase in demand for in-room dining once travel resumes. Please consider the following as you craft your specific reopening plans:

### In-room Dining

- Offer in-room dining related information upon customer check in. Provide additional information at each moment of interaction such as instructions on the in-room menu, verbal communication on processes when taking orders and delivery.
- Present customers with service options when taking orders. Explain clearly and transparently on any extra precautions being taken for different levels of engagement.
- As possible, strive to avoid any contact between guests and staff. Consider reserving a sanitized passage specifically for the purpose of in-room food delivery. Once food is delivered, staff uses a separate route to avoid cross contamination.
- Consider having dedicated staff for food wrapping and placement, delivery, and trash/tray/flatware collection.
- Ensure all food and beverages are covered and/or sealed upon delivery. Provide all necessary cutlery and implements (bottle opener, etc.).
- Provide condiments in individual portions, along with sanitary wipes and extra disposable napkins.
- Delivery staff should wear all required PPE and practice sanitation procedures when delivering the food. Avoid any direct contact with food placed on cart at any given moment.
- Announce arrival of food and inquire about customers' preference for service at the point of delivery. Inform customers on after-meal trash/tray/flatware collection process.
- Allow customers to signal finishing of meal through phone calls and digital platforms while actively reaching out after 20-30 minutes of food delivery to ensure a prompt and timely collection of trash/tray/dirty dishes.
- Closely monitor any trash, trays, dirty dishes left in the hallways by leveraging existing closed-circuit television and service staff. Enable necessary cross-department collaboration between security, housekeeping, and hotel restaurant for a better result.
- Charge in-room service to the room if possible. Provide sanitation wipes and hand sanitizer if a signature is mandatory.

# General Guidance

**The following illustrative pages reflect a typical dining environment and how guidance may be applied. While it may differ in important ways from your facility, many examples are generally applicable.**

**We hope you find them useful as you craft your specific reopening plans.**

# While every restaurant is different, most establishments share typical guest “zones”

A typical diner’s visit unfolds across a series of experience zones. Think about how these zones apply to your establishment in order to appropriately apply this Blueprint to your unique situation.

## Pre-Arrival/Arrival

Earliest possible opportunity to help diners understand what to expect and how to approach your establishment with social distancing in mind.

## Entry/Exit

Important moment to clarify expectations, communicate conditions of entry, and begin actively managing social distancing requirements.

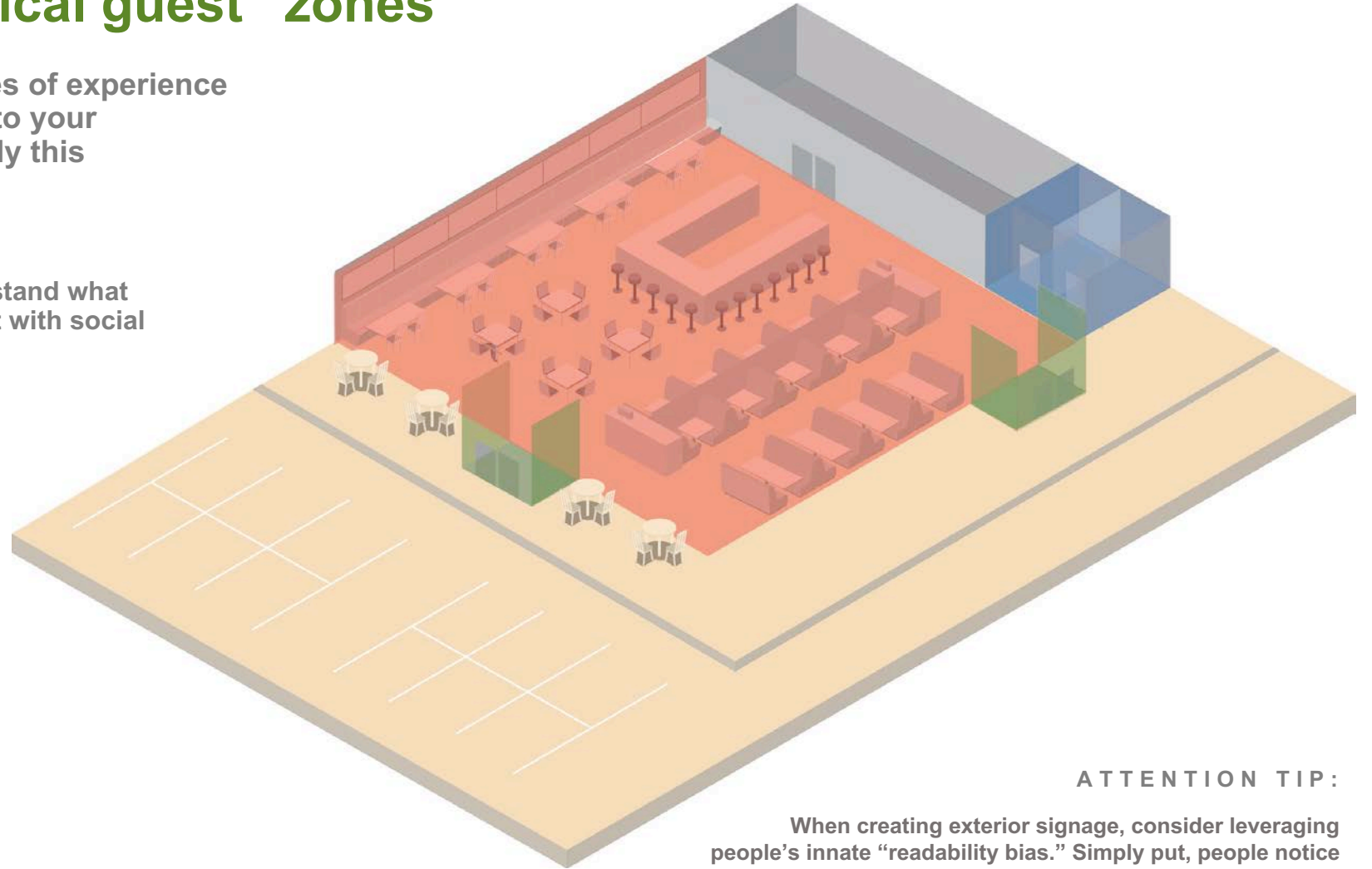
## Dining Room/Bar

Where guests engage most deeply, where the most significant changes will be experienced, and the most important expression of your commitment to safety.

## Restroom

A critical guest touchpoint that will either build or immediately compromise trust, depending on how thoughtfully it is approached.

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### ATTENTION TIP:

When creating exterior signage, consider leveraging people’s innate “readability bias.” Simply put, people notice larger things first. Use larger fonts for the most important information and ensure the size is appropriate to the viewing distance. A max of 10’ for every 1” of text height is a good rule of thumb (for sighted people only).


# Provide clear guidance before diners leave home, and as they approach your doors


"Dining out is a planned event now more than ever. Information online is not always up to date and I always have to call the restaurant to confirm, which is frustrating."  
- China Diner

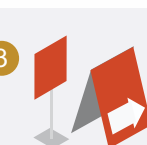
"I will be optimistic, hopeful, curious [to be back out]. I want things back to where they were."  
-US Diner

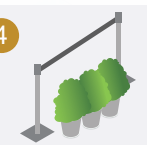
"I'll have anxiety on many levels. On a social level, am I being paranoid if I bring wet ones?"  
- US Diner





- 

**Website, social media, and search apps**  
Provide up-to-date information about your social distancing requirements. Promote online reservations and ordering, curbside takeout, pickup or takeaway, and digital gift cards.
- 

**Use technology to assist your diners**  
Many new and existing digital tools can help your diners plan their visit, avoid long waits, let you know they've arrived, order, pay, etc. Leveraging these tools will help you better manage occupancy and support social distancing.
- 

**Clear site signage**  
Landlord permitting, place communication on sidewalks, along guest's path to front door. Use as few words as possible to prep guests for social distancing requirements.
- 

**Separate exterior entry, waiting, & dining zones**  
Provide clear separation between entry, waiting, and dining areas, maintaining 6' between parties. Use signage to direct traffic, and decorative elements (plants, etc.) to define zones.
- 

**Outdoor café atmosphere**  
Create a convivial outdoor dining atmosphere, with music, comfortable seating, lighting, flowers, and greenery. Ensure diners are shielded from traffic and unpleasant fumes.
- 

**Distinguish dine-in and takeout entries**  
As space allows, segment dine-in and takeout traffic to minimize congestion at narrow doorways. Provide directions to the correct door as far in advance as is practical, including providing instructions online.

## ATTENTION TIP:

People also have a tendency to be drawn to things that move. Use "dynamic" substrates like lenticular, prismatic, or holographic signage materials to suggest motion on otherwise static notifications.

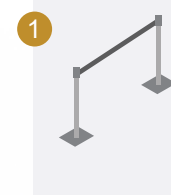
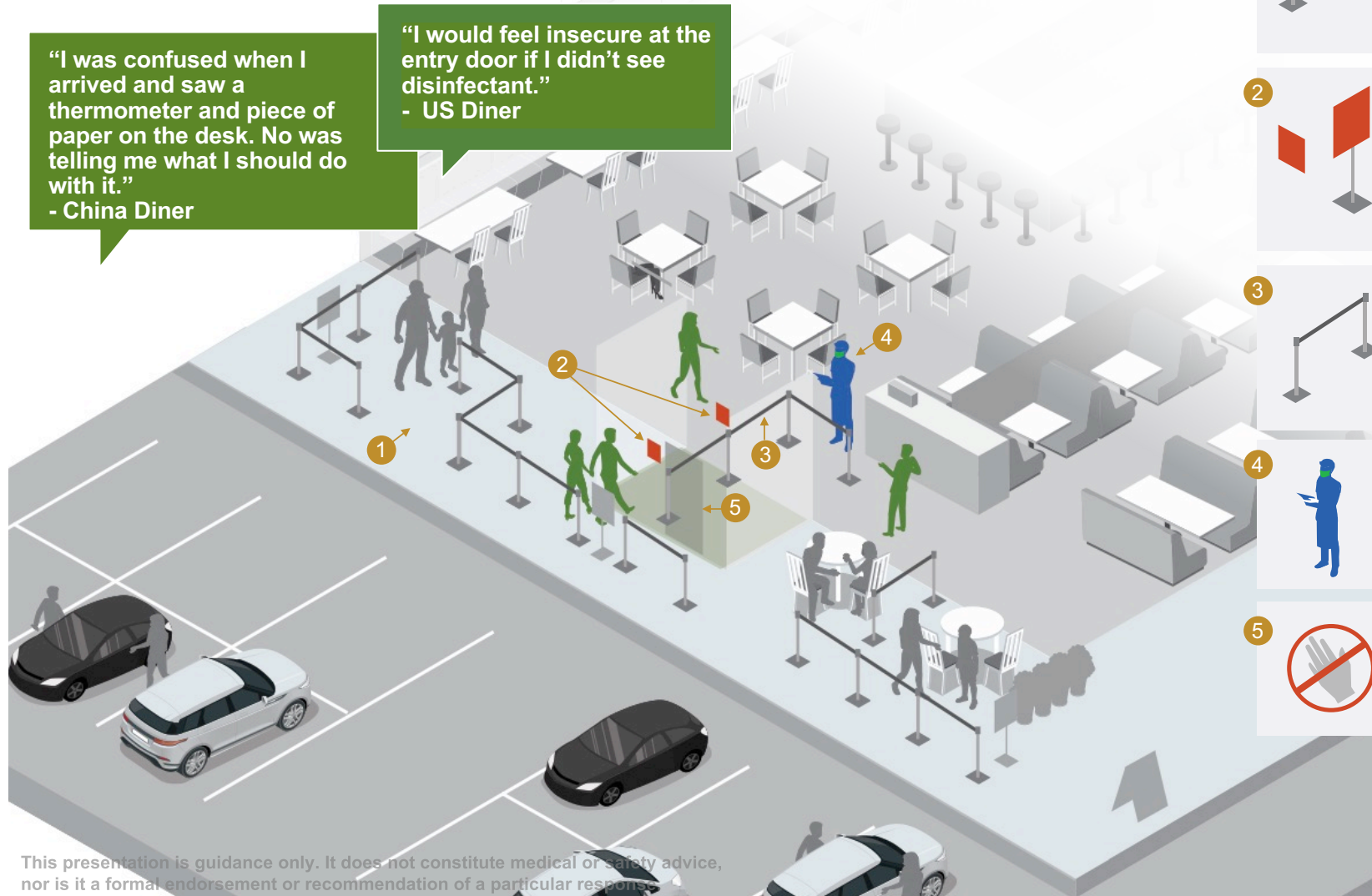
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# Entry & Exit should be as low-volume and low-contact as possible

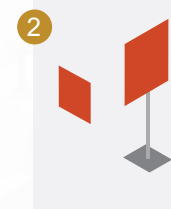
"I was confused when I arrived and saw a thermometer and piece of paper on the desk. No was telling me what I should do with it."  
- China Diner

"I would feel insecure at the entry door if I didn't see disinfectant."  
- US Diner



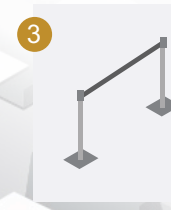
## Change the entry path & establish 6' distances

Purposefully disrupt the direct entry path, creating turns to slow diner's pace. This will help them notice important signs & provide reassurance that there is a "right" way to move through the space —not just for them, but for everyone.



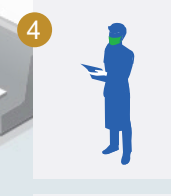
## Overt communication

Place entry signs where diners pause to ensure maximum comprehension. Graphically and with as few words as possible, explain expectations of entry (party size, fever-free, mask use, etc.). Provide diners with the rules and opportunity to agree and prepare before they're seated.



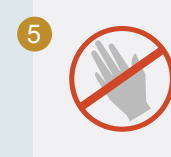
## Separate entering & exiting diners

Ensure entering and exiting diners do not cross paths at doorways. Lane direction will depend on space configuration. Eliminate interior waiting area to encourage reservations, take-out, or waiting in cars.



## Safe assistance

Position highly visible staff in strategic locations. Ensure they are safely equipped & maintain 6' distance from diners at all times. Use furniture and plants to create normalized buffers.



## Touchless entry & exit

When possible, install foot handles or alternative openers. Position wipes or touchless sanitizer dispensers before and after doors that must be touched.

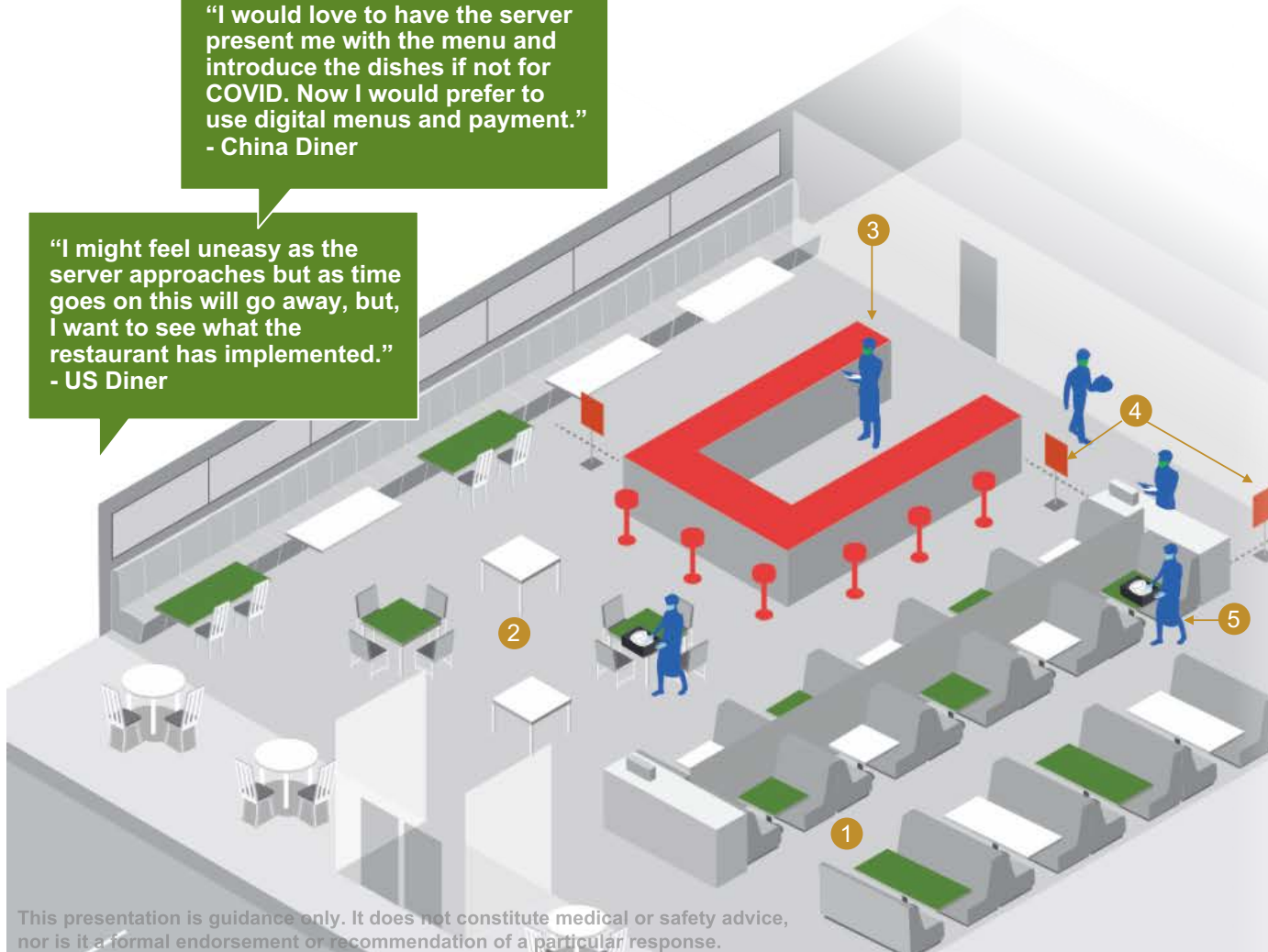
## ATTENTION TIP:

Leverage people's innate "contrast bias." Ensure signage coloration is chosen to stand out, visually, in the environment.

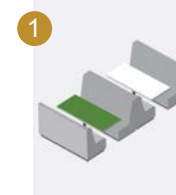
# Dining rooms must optimize for maximum circulation and social distancing

"I would love to have the server present me with the menu and introduce the dishes if not for COVID. Now I would prefer to use digital menus and payment."  
- China Diner

"I might feel uneasy as the server approaches but as time goes on this will go away, but, I want to see what the restaurant has implemented."  
- US Diner

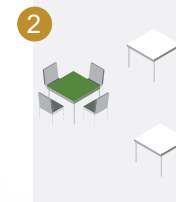


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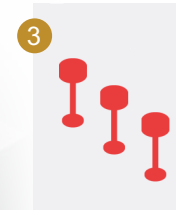
## Staggered seating pattern

Keep diners physically separated by no less than 6 feet. Indicate which tables are "open" and which are "closed" very clearly—either sign them, place an artifact on them, or physically remove them to maintain this distance.



## Low capacity, not necessarily vacant

In table service environments, unless legally mandated, consider allowing "closed" tables to remain as "spacers" between remaining tables. Visually indicate they are closed and remove seating. An uncrowded restaurant can be desirable. A vacant one may be disconcerting.



## Limited or no bar service

Bar and counter seating is discouraged, and possibly not allowed. If opened, ensure bar seats are 6' apart. Closed bars may be used as employee space, providing easy access to supplies, beverages, and bar sink for hand-washing, decreasing the need to enter kitchen.



## Staff-only exclusion zones

In order to provide maximum circulation for staff, block diner access to high staff flow areas. Use signage or stanchions to ensure diners know they should not enter these spaces.



## High visibility cleaning activities

Wait staff and cleaning staff should be easily differentiated by their attire. Specific colors of face masks and gloves should allow diners to see and understand that cleaning is being undertaken by well-equipped, dedicated staff.

## ATTENTION TIP:

People learn by watching others. Deeply engaged people will attract "spectators." Provide your guests with privacy, but allow them to observe others engaged in new activities to help them learn new norms more quickly.

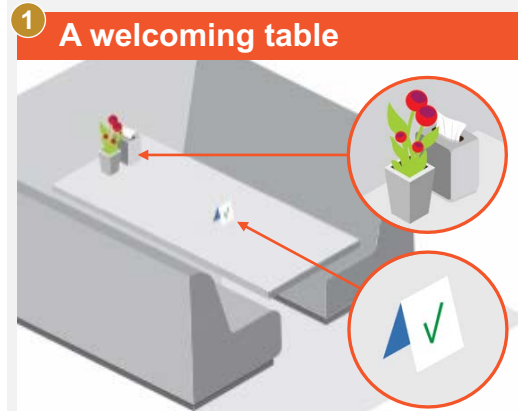
## New Dining Room Rituals

Your dining room will showcase the importance you place on the health and well-being of your employees and customers. Strive for moments of delight and innovation as you demonstrate your commitment. Always refer to CDC, state, and local authorities for most recent guidance.

"I might feel uneasy as the server approaches but as time goes on this will go away, but, I want to see what the restaurant has implemented."  
- US Diner

"I would love to have the server present me with the menu and introduce the dishes if not for COVID. Now I would prefer to use digital menus and payment."  
- China Diner

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- Dining tables should be clean and dry.
- Remove all communal items, including menus, utensils, and condiments. Touchless self-serve napkin or hand sanitizer dispensers may remain.
- Hospitality cards on table describe commitment to diners and staff, and outline cleaning protocols. Consider including "sanitized by" personalization.
- Fresh flowers make tables more welcoming.



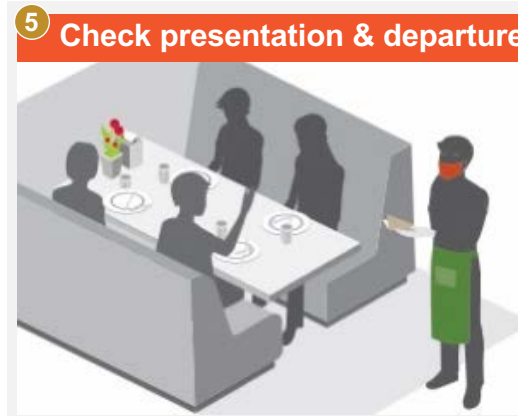
- Servers should wear masks and gloves at all times. Reimagine masks as a branded conversation piece, not just a necessary safety precaution.
- Server to briefly explain new expectations (raise hand to summon wait staff, new ordering or payment processes, etc.), and answer questions.
- Staff should maintain 6' distance as practical. Minimize reaches, table visits, and time at table.



- Provide disposable, single-use menus, or consider leveraging technology for touchless digital menu and ordering.
- Provide individually-wrapped cutlery. Consider disposable or compostable options.
- Consider providing individually-wrapped towelettes to each table prior to meal arrival.
- Kid's activities must not use shared crayons, etc.



- Consider covering food between kitchen and table.
- Drape trays to ensure plates do not come into direct contact with communal tray surfaces.
- Minimize reaches to table, allowing diners to distribute food to their party.
- Provide condiments in single-serve or disposable containers



- Consider leveraging technology to provide alternative payment options. Ensure availability of non-technology options for those paying cash, etc.
- Provide single-use check covers to each table, and wrapped towelette for signing pen.
- Provide a simple token of appreciation like wrapped candies or mints.
- Consider providing feedback cards to guests.



- Dedicated cleaning team helps avoid cross-contamination.
- Distinctive uniforms, masks, and gloves ensure they're easily differentiated from wait staff, and help promote your sanitation efforts.
- Buss and sanitize tables in a single step after diners depart. Avoid incremental removal of dishes during the meal to reduce contact.



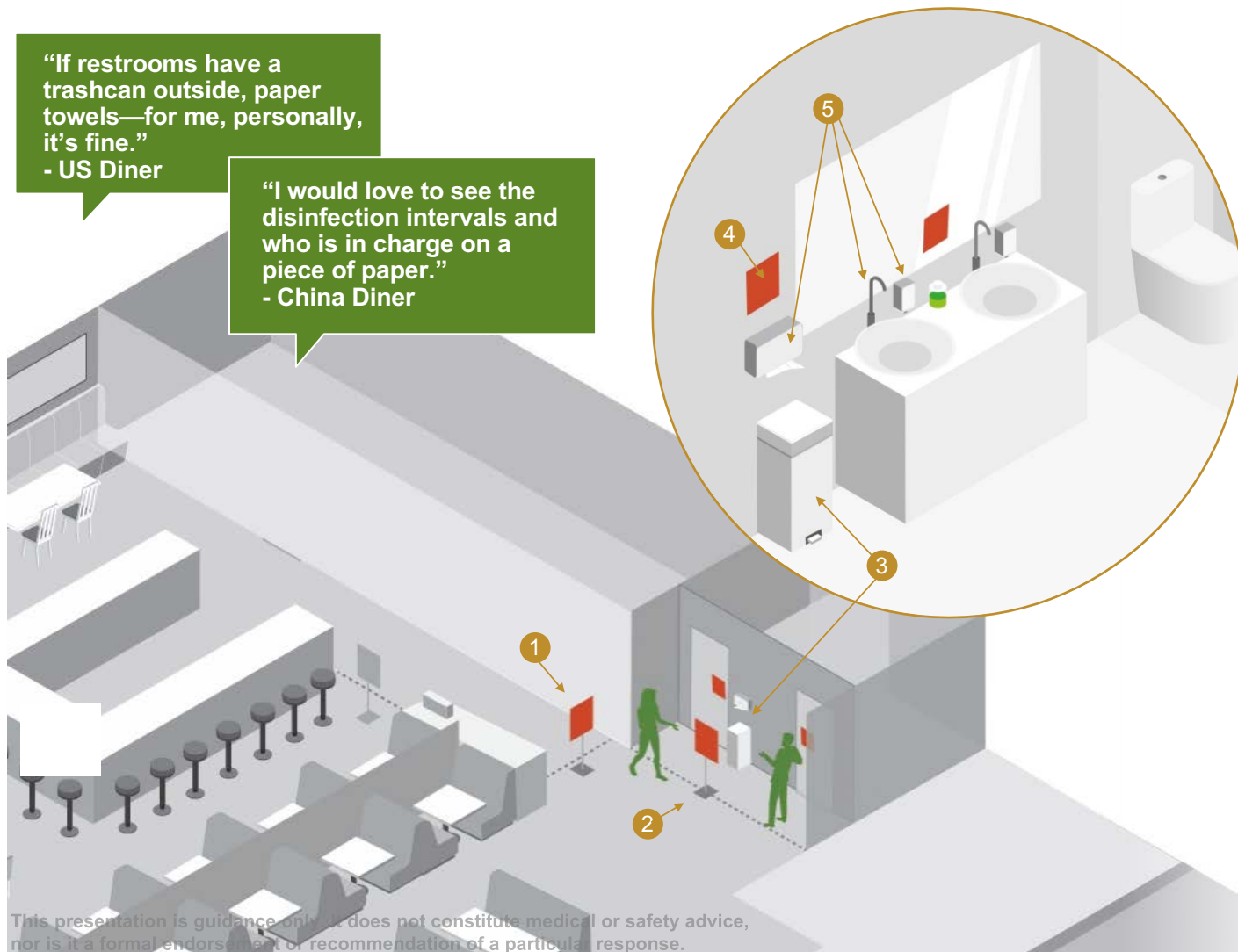
- Cleaning crew is responsible for sanitizing and resetting tables between parties and/or on a set schedule.
- All horizontal surfaces, and door handles should be sanitized frequently.
- Always refer to CDC and local authorities for most up-to-date sanitation requirements.



# Sanitary restrooms are required for diners to feel confident about general cleanliness

"If restrooms have a trashcan outside, paper towels—for me, personally, it's fine."  
- US Diner

"I would love to see the disinfection intervals and who is in charge on a piece of paper."  
- China Diner



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1



## No accidental kitchen visits

In case someone takes a wrong turn to the bathroom, ensure they can't accidentally walk into the kitchen or a staff-only zone. Block diner access to high staff flow areas. Use signage or stanchions to ensure diners know they should not enter these spaces.

2



## Comfortable waiting space

To comfortably allow good social distancing, consider "wait here" signs to avoid crowding while waiting for the restroom. Provide guidance on how diners should pass each other when space is very constrained.

3



## Trash cans, inside and out

Provide paper towel dispensers outside restrooms for those who refuse to touch doors, and position trash cans within easy arm's reach of doors, inside and out.

4



## Visible and timely record of frequent cleanings

Post a well-kept cleaning log in an easily visible spot. Restrooms should smell fresh and clean at all times to ensure maximum confidence.

5



## Single-use & touchless everything

Visits to the restroom should be as contact-free as possible for your diners. Door kicks, foot handles, touchless faucets and soap dispensers, easy access trashcans, and disposable paper towels instill confidence.

### ATTENTION TIP:

Restrooms should look and smell clean. Bad odors can be just as distracting, and even more memorable and distasteful, than visual clutter. Ensure your restrooms smell fresh and clean, though not overpoweringly so.

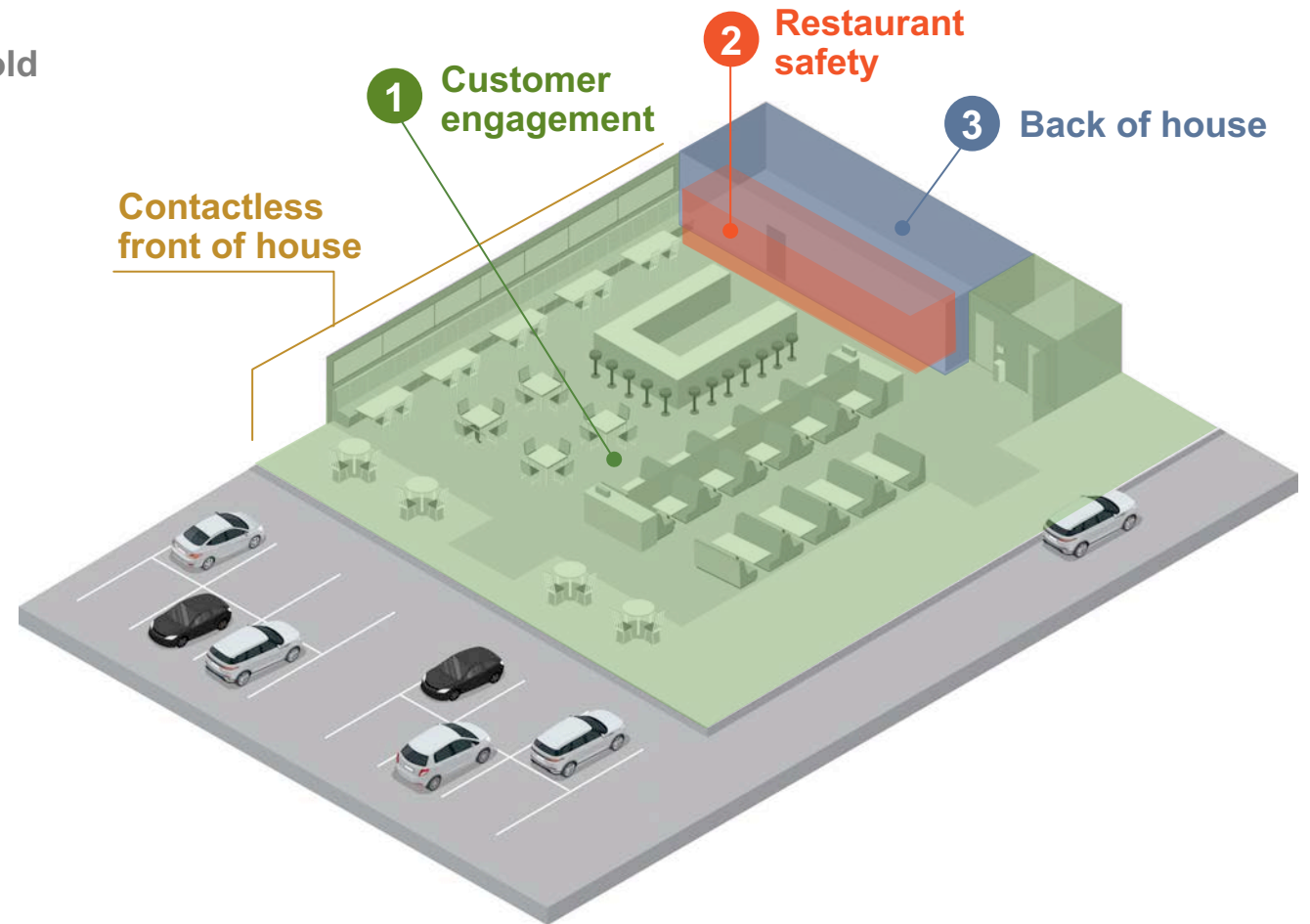
# Ensure care is taken throughout the food preparation journey

Every food item entering the site must follow normal safety procedure with increased care—especially at the inflection points between food delivery, food preparation, and food consumption.



# Roles and responsibilities: a new way to think about your team

By further distinguishing roles and responsibilities between the front and back of house, food service operators can uphold reopening principles of a contactless customer space and a sealed food preparation space.



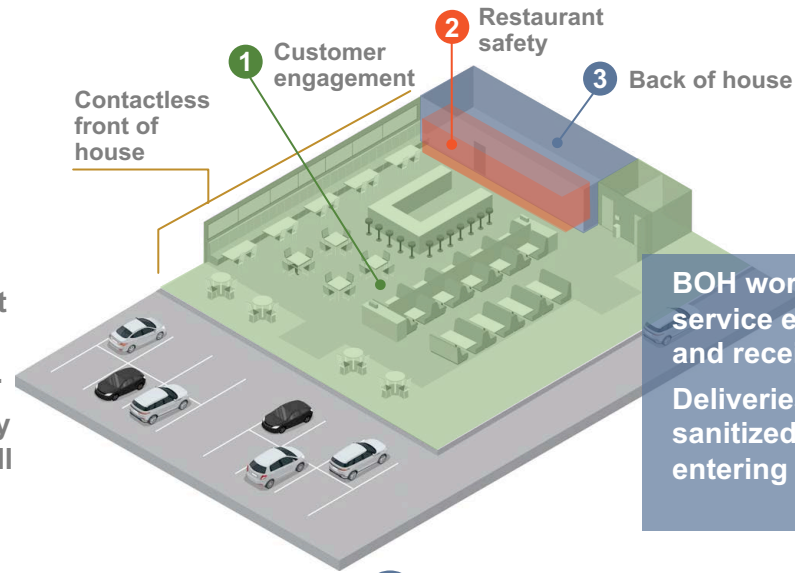


# Roles and responsibilities

A **contactless front of house** requires that the entire FOH team consider what responsibilities are associated with customer engagement, and what responsibilities are associated with restaurant safety. By dividing responsibilities into these two functional areas, the FOH team can maintain a high level of service and safety, while reinforcing sanitation measures deployed in the BOH.

Positions such as servers and floor managers can sharpen customer engagement and culture stewardship responsibilities, while positions such as food runners, bussers, and barbacks should carry designated restaurant safety responsibilities.

Strong role distinction and coordination will help plan the flow of space, the safety of staff and customers, and the movement of food from the kitchen to the table. All people working in the front of house area maintain clear boundaries in their respective roles to enhance precautions.



FOH team designates assignments before arrival to shifts to determine entry points and service flow patterns.

BOH workers should enter through service entrance with mask and gloves and receive clean uniforms upon entry. Deliveries should be placed in a sanitized holder for receiving before entering kitchen area.

1



## Customer engagement roles and responsibilities

Example roles: floor manager, host, server, section captain, service-facing bartender

**Customer engagement Do's:** greet guests, educate on protocol and menu, guide the experience, maintain restrooms, process payment, and verbally enhance the customer experience.

**Customer engagement Don'ts:** transport food from the kitchen to the floor, enter the back of house area, clear food from tables, box food, make coffee, refill water (unless contactless), reset tables, or return food from tables to the expo area when needed.

2



## Restaurant safety roles and responsibilities

Examples roles: food runner, food busser, back waiter, drink-making bartender, barback

**Restaurant Safety Do's:** coordinate with BOH lead to transport food from the pass to the table, clear plates after meal, box food, refill water, make coffee, retrieve drinks from the drink-making bartender, reset tables.

**Restaurant safety Don'ts:** engage in close conversation with guests, take orders, greet guests, educate on protocol and menu, process payment, cook food.

3



## Back of house roles and responsibilities

BOH maintains a sanitized space, as square footage is limited in most kitchens. Equipped with masks, gloves, headwear, and clean uniforms, back of house employees can maintain a sanitized space with timely cleaning and sanitation protocols, and by controlling who is allowed into the space during prep and service. The lead cook should manage which, where, and when specific restaurant safety team members may enter, maintaining a "buffer" to protect restaurant staff and customers.

Example roles: chef, sous chef, lead line cook, line cook, prep cooks, pastry chef, pastry cooks, dishwasher

**Back of house Do's:** receive safely delivered food, perform inventory and ordering, prepare mise en place, cook food during service, sanitize and wash dishes, clean and sanitize kitchen.

**Back of house Don'ts:** deliver dishes to floor, engage with customers, enter the front of house.

# APPENDIX

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# Resources & references

A brief synopsis of useful information sources\*



## White House & CDC

- Phased Guidelines
  1. Drive-through, curbside take out, or delivery
  2. Limited dine-in capacity
  3. Increased dine-in capacity
- High Level and relevant to all industries
- Specific Guidelines for Certain Industries
- e.g. Grocery & Food Retail
- Assume Restaurants & Bars is coming



## FDA

- Best Practices for Reopening
- Today, only covers Phase 1: Pick-up and Delivery; no guidance on Dine-in
- Defers to CDC where FDA & CDC may differ



## Your State

- Laws & Regulations, specific to your state & state's timeline
- Also: Guidance; language may say "consider"
- Will cover Phase 2 reopening specifics (limited dine-in capacity)
- Will differ by state
- e.g. Mask-wearing laws
- e.g. Employee temperature-taking



## National Restaurant Association

- Best Practices nationwide; template document to be modified per-state
- Links to CDC, FDA, State information (clearinghouse)
- Peer information sharing & guidance including implicit standards & lessons learned

\*Reflects guidance from sources published prior to May 5, 2020. Current guidance may vary.



## Disclaimer

COVID-19 is dynamic and rapidly evolving situation. These materials do not constitute legal, medical or safety advice. Give careful consideration to local laws and guidance in your area, including the most recent advice from local and national health authorities, before making decisions for your business.