

Maine Grocers &
Food Producers
Association
PO Box 5234
Augusta, ME 04332
mgfpa.org

Sampling of Retailers COVID-19 Precautions & Best Practices *Plus: Governor Mills' Essential Businesses Mandates*

Managers along with all store associates should be trained on social distancing techniques & general health best practices. These communications have become part of daily management routines. Stores are adhering to [CDC](#) recommended guidelines.

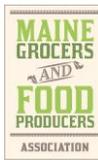
- Change any automated greetings and options within the greeting you have to better reflect your company's situation and practices and update your website with information as well (on the homepage).

SANITIZING & CLEANING

- Stores have increased in-store cleaning & sterilization practices. Close early to allow staff time to restock shelves, sanitize the store and rest: [CDC Cleaning & Disinfecting Your Facility Recommendations](#).
- Store associates are wiping down and disinfecting frequently touched areas (shopping cart handles, shopping baskets, pin pads, conveyor belts) as often as needed throughout the day. Governor Mills' Executive Order on 3/31 requires that essential businesses disinfect the handles of every cart and basket between uses. For more information, review [FMI's Cleaning & Sanitization Guide for Food Retail](#).
- Sanitize workspace between customers.
- Assign staff people to sanitize all carts returned from the parking lot.
- Governor Mills' Executive Order on 3/31 mandates that essential businesses minimize customer handling of unpurchased merchandise. This is an opportunity for additional signage asking customers to minimize the handling of merchandise.
- Place alcohol-based hand sanitizers near the cash registers to encourage hand hygiene. Employees are asked to hand sanitize between customers.
- Promote frequent and thorough [hand washing](#) (at least 20 seconds). If soap and running water are not immediately available, provide alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Some retailers have installed hand washing stations (available via their local Port-o-Potty supplier) near the front entrance of their stores; encouraging shoppers to stay germ-free and wash prior to entering.
- Employees are now wearing face coverings. In some instances, companies are supplying masks to all employees. In other instances, the masks are available for employees upon request. [CDC's Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#).

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Governor Mills' Executive Order on 3/31 restricts the number of people allowed at essential businesses at any one time, mandates that they conduct as much business as possible by curbside order and pick up or delivery to limit in-person contact.



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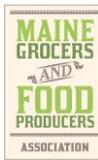
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Under Governor Mills' Executive Order, Essential Businesses Retail Tiers:

Tier	Sq Ft	Number of Customers
1	<7,500	5
2	7,500 - 12,000	15
3	12,001 - 18,000	35
4	18,001 - 40,000	45
5	40,001 - 60,000	70
6	60,000+	100

Updated as of 4/10/20

- Governor Mills' Executive Order on 3/31 mandates that essential businesses must enforce these number of customer limits and a six-foot separation between any customers waiting in lines.
- Many stores, including small to mid-size independent grocers, are installing clear plastic guards at registers. Because the register area doesn't allow for the cashier and customer to maintain a distance of 6 feet apart per CDC guidelines, plexiglass guards are being added for additional protection in one of the most vulnerable areas of the store. Plexiglass barriers may also be constructed at other counter positions, including seafood, deli, and pharmacy. Governor Mills' Executive Order on 3/31 mandates that essential businesses with more than 75,000 square feet install protective shields between customers and checkout clerks as soon as practicable.
- Governor Mills' Executive Order on 3/31 mandates that essential businesses offer separate operating hours for Maine people over the age of 60 and those with underlying medical conditions.
- Governor Mills' Executive Order on 3/31 mandates that essential businesses enforce physical distancing in and around their facilities by prominently posting signs at public entrances and on the floor to notify customers to stay six-feet apart. *Those signs can also be placed at every register, on front doors, and in many places throughout the store, including the deli and pharmacy.*
- All employees should be instructed to maintain a 6 ft space between themselves and others (customers and employees).
- Employees and management walk the aisles to check and make sure people are following distance rules.
- Public service announcements played on a loop reminding customers to maintain distance and stay home if not feeling well.
- The length of two standard shopping carts creates natural spacing for "Social Distancing".
- Assign a staff person to manage the line outside and use tape for inside lines.
- Placing store signage that requests single-family shopping trips during peak hours.
- Practices to limit contact whenever a cashier needs to look at an ID or process a cash transaction.



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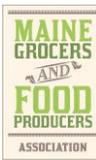
- Whenever possible, stores are opening only every other register lane to create further distancing between customers at checkout instead of opening lanes right next to each other.
- To minimize customer interaction, use one store door for entrance and one for exit, if available.
- Whenever possible, stores are managing customer shopping with aisles that only allow for one-way shopping.
- Implement flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts) to increase the physical distance among employees and between employees and others.
- Require customers who use reusable bags to bag their own groceries. Remind customers to wash reusable bags and totes after each use and to store bags and totes in a clean, cool and dry location.
- Per LD 2167, retailers may now use paper, plastic or reusable bags throughout the state or continue with their town's previous local ordinance structure including fees or specific bag restrictions. You may or may not allow reusable bags in your store.
- Some stores have temporarily suspended their bottle redemption programs.
- Some stores have temporarily suspended their lottery ticket operations.

INVENTORY & STOCKING

- Set maximum quantities on items to help supply as many customers as possible, make no commitments on inventory and no guarantees on when or if product will arrive.
- Adjust your policy on returns until further notice. Do you want to implement a temporary [All Sales Are Final Policy?](#)
- To minimize the number of people in the store, direct food/beverage vendors to drop off orders. Assign store staff to stock shelves.
- Stop deli services including sliced meats and cased items, make the items available in prebagged 'grab & go' format.
- Restrict all in-person vendor communications unless critical to business.
- Create an in-house essentials store to allow employees to purchase critical items at the end of their shift to reduce their need to go to stores and alleviate stress.

EMPLOYEES & COMMUNICATION

- Employees are required to stay home if they are not feeling well.
- Employers are maintaining flexible schedules to ensure employees can make decisions based on their health and well being.
- Temperatures are taken and anyone with a fever is not allowed at work.



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- Ensure all [CDC COVID-19 Precaution Signs](#) are visible for employees.
- Many retailers have added \$1-\$2/hr to their employees pay as well as offering additional earned vacation time and bonuses to qualifying employees.
- Additional paid rest breaks & complimentary bottled waters.
- Some stores are providing complimentary lunches to support other local businesses.
- Develop a business continuity plan: Be prepared to change your business practices.
- Cross-train employees: Prepare employees to perform essential functions across the workplace so you can operate even if key employees are absent.
- Create an employee communications plan: Establish a process to communicate the latest coronavirus information to employees and business partners.
- Local decision making: Employers with more than one business location empower local managers with the authority to take appropriate actions based on the conditions in each locality.



Retailers are adding hand washing stations outside of their stores. "That's our back up, if/when we run out of hand sanitizer for customer use in-store. Currently we have a greeter at the entrance informing customers carts have already been sanitized and to grab one wipe to use during their shopping trip."

"Door Concierge," an employee who opens and closes the door to customers, making sure to limit the number inside to just 10.



Plexiglass Barriers

