

# WEST VIRGINIA STRONG

## *The Comeback*



**A Guide to Safely Opening our Restaurants  
Through Takeaway Service & Outdoor Dining**

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## A Guide to Safely Opening our Restaurants Through Takeaway Service & Outdoor Dining

Per Governor Jim Justice's Executive Order 2-20, restaurants have been allowed to remain open, by drive-through or carry out only, to serve their patrons. These establishments have, at all times, and will continue to be, urged to implement and practice proper physical distancing. To date, restaurants across the state have abided by these orders, have served their communities well and worked to keep the citizens of West Virginia safe.

Under Gov. Justice's reopening plan, **West Virginia Strong — The Comeback**, restaurants are allowed to open or remain open with the limited services outlined below. To do so, Gov. Justice has issued the following guidance to mitigate the exposure and spread of COVID-19 among food-service workers and patrons. These guidelines, in addition to the guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), will help West Virginians transition back to safe dining outside of their homes. Businesses are allowed and encouraged to implement more stringent protocols as they see fit.



As part of the reopen plan, the West Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control Administration ("ABCA") is developing a streamlined process with no fees for a restaurant to temporarily expand their floor space to include new or expanded outdoor dining space. Additional guidance on this process will be issued by the ABCA.

As your business reviews and implements these new measures, we encourage you to share and discuss them with your employees and your customers. Communicating enhanced cleaning and sanitization practices will make workers and patrons feel more confident in your restaurants.

Please note: The following guidelines are being published in advance of Governor Justice's Executive Order — currently anticipated to be effective as of the week of May 4, 2020 — that will allow outdoor dining in addition to carry out, drive-through and delivery services. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in suspension of a restaurant's license to operate or its ABCA license, as applicable, and/or other appropriate enforcement measures.

## A GUIDE TO SAFELY OPENING OUR RESTAURANTS THROUGH TAKEAWAY SERVICE & OUTDOOR DINING

Below are guidelines established to help you prepare your business for patrons to continue carryout food service and begin outdoor dining. These guidelines should provide extra safety precautions and give your customers assurance that risks are being mitigated.

### SOCIAL DISTANCING

- **Distance:** Update plans for outdoor dining areas, redesigning seating arrangements to ensure at least six (6) feet of separation from seating to seating. Clear paths must be designated to allow diners to enter and exit the outdoor dining area without breaking the six feet social-distancing barriers.
- **Party size:** Limit outdoor dining party size at tables to no more than six (6).
- **Party type:** Enforce social distancing of those not residing together while present on such entity's leased or owned property.
- **ABCA Regulations:** To facilitate restaurants offering outdoor dining, in addition to their takeaway and delivery services, the West Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control Administration ("ABCA") is developing a streamlined process with no fees for a restaurant to temporarily expand their floor space to include new or expanded outdoor dining space. Additional guidance on this process will be issued by the ABCA.
- **Waiting areas:** Do not allow patrons to congregate in waiting areas. Design a process to ensure patron separation while waiting to be seated outside or pick up their take-away order that can include ground markings, distancing, or waiting in cars.
- **Dining only:** Limit activity to outdoor dining or pickup of food or beverages to be taken away. No live music, and all restaurant playgrounds shall remain closed.



### REDUCING CONTACT

- **No entry:** Patrons are not permitted to enter or exit restaurants except to access restrooms, pick up a take-out order, or to access outdoor seating areas. Mark ingress/egress to and from restrooms to establish paths to restrooms and outdoor dining areas to establish paths that mitigate proximity for patrons and staff.
- **Limit contact with outdoor dining guests:** Limit contact between workers and patrons by reducing the number of visits wait staff makes to each outdoor table.
- **Reservations:** Where practical, implement a call-ahead seating model.
- **Take-out model:** Where practicable, take-out and curbside pick-up services should be prioritized over outdoor dining services.
- **Menus:** The use of non-touch or disposable paper menus discarded after each patron use is strongly encouraged.
- If not feasible, reusable menus should be cleaned and sanitized between use by each patron.



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### CLEANING & SANITIZING PROTOCOLS



- **Face coverings:** Require all employees to wear cloth face coverings at all times. Such coverings shall be cleaned or replaced daily.
- **Preparation:** Thoroughly detail, clean, and sanitize the entire facility and continue to do so regularly, focusing such cleaning and sanitation on high contact areas that would be touched by employees and patrons.
- **Sanitizing between each customer:** Between diners, clean and sanitize table condiments, digital ordering devices, check presenters, self-service areas, tabletops, chairs and commonly touched areas. Discard any single-use items left by the last patron.
- **Back-of-house cleaning:** Implement procedures to increase cleaning and sanitizing frequency of surfaces in the back-of-house. Avoid all food contact surfaces when using disinfectants.
- **Restroom cleaning:** Clean and sanitize restrooms regularly, check restrooms based on the frequency of use, and ensure adequate supply of soap and paper towels at all times.
- **Hand sanitizers:** Provide hand sanitizer for use by patrons, including contactless hand sanitizing stations when available.

### FOOD SAFETY



- **Disposable plates and utensils:** The use of disposable containers and utensils is strongly encouraged. If disposable utensils are not available, silverware must be pre-rolled.
- **Trash bins:** Where restaurants use disposable containers and utensils, restaurants must place designated trash bins outside where patrons can dispose of all trash at the completion of their meal to minimize contact with wait staff. Bins should be placed in areas that do not create lines for patrons practicing proper social distancing.
- **Beverages:** Drinks should be served in cans or bottles. If cans or bottles are not available, disposable cups are strongly encouraged.
- **No buffets:** Do not offer self-serve salad bars or buffets in outdoor dining areas.
- **No self-service:** No self-service food, drink, condiment or utensil stations are permitted for outdoor dining.

### COMMUNICATING WITH CUSTOMERS



- **Post signage:** Post signage on entrances that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 is permitted at the facility.
- **Install barriers:** Where practicable, physical barriers such as partitions or Plexiglass at cash registers or ordering windows should be used.
- **Use technology:** Use technological solutions where possible to reduce person-to-person interaction: mobile ordering, mobile access to menus to plan in advance, text on arrival for seating, and contactless payment options.

In addition to the specific guidelines for West Virginia food service personnel above, businesses and their employees should be mindful of the more general guidance issued for small businesses, found at [governor.wv.gov](https://governor.wv.gov).