Note:
This is a living document which means as Government restrictions and Public Health guidelines evolve, this document will also evolve to reflect new Government advice and changes to protocols when they emerge. All sectoral guidelines have been developed in line with the Government’s Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business, the Work Safely Protocol and the Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19, and based on the latest health guidance available from the Department of Health and the HSE. The links to latest guidelines will be included throughout the document.

The Tourism and Hospitality Sector Guidelines, aligned with the Work Safely Protocol, have been developed to assist businesses to apply guidance to their specific activities. The guidelines are regularly updated by Fáilte Ireland to reflect the imposition or lifting of restrictions as decided by the Government.

Disclaimer
The information contained within these operational re-opening guidelines can change from time to time, it must not by itself be relied upon in determining obligations or other decisions. Users of this document must independently verify any information on which they wish to rely. It is expected that all business owners and management will have familiarised themselves with the Work Safely Protocol prior to re-opening and implemented all relevant requirements.

Fáilte Ireland, their servants or agents, do not assume legal or other liability for any inaccuracy, mistake, misstatement, or any other error of whatsoever nature contained herein. Fáilte Ireland hereby formally disclaim liability in respect of such aforesaid matters.

The information accessible in this document has been compiled from many sources that are not controlled by Fáilte Ireland. While all reasonable care has been taken in the compilation and publication of the contents of this document, Fáilte Ireland makes no representations or warranties, whether express or implied, as to the accuracy or suitability of the information or materials contained in this document. Due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic this document will be subject to change.

Access to and use of the information herein is entirely at the risk of the user. Fáilte Ireland shall not be liable, directly, or indirectly, to the user or any other third party for any damage resulting from the use of the information contained or implied in this document.

Fáilte Ireland has endeavoured to attribute copyright or other intellectual rights to the rightful owners where such course has been appropriate. Where any attribution has been missed or overlooked Fáilte Ireland, on being informed, will correct this omission. By proceeding to use this Fáilte Ireland document you are accepting this disclaimer.
# Revision History:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date Changes</th>
<th>Changes from previous version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>09/06/2020</td>
<td>Document Published.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>10/06/2020</td>
<td>Section 10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>19/06/2020</td>
<td>Additions from HPSC COVID-19: Guidance for Food Service Businesses v0.3 15.06.2020 and reordering of content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>23/06/2020</td>
<td>Appendix updated and clarification on inclusion of service personnel in NPHET guidance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>06/07/2020</td>
<td>Updates to Appendix 1 of COVID-19: Guidance for Food Service Businesses (HPSC) V1.1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>24/07/2020</td>
<td>Clarification for contact tracing requirements and pre-booking time limited slots and information on government travel advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>24/08/2020</td>
<td>Updated in line with Government Public Health advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>22/09/2020</td>
<td>Further clarification on Organised Indoor &amp; Outdoor gatherings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>09/11/2020</td>
<td>Update of information relating to Face Covering (HPSC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>16/11/2020</td>
<td>Update of information relating to International Travel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>02/12/2020</td>
<td>Updated links</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>02/12/2020</td>
<td>Updates to Summary of Level 3 – Page 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>17/12/2020</td>
<td>Update in line with S.I 571 of 2020 (Face Coverings In Certain Premises And Businesses) and updates to Government Public Health and Safety advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>22/12/2020</td>
<td>Update of Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>04/01/2021</td>
<td>Update of Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19 for Level 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>08/01/2021</td>
<td>Update of Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19 for Level 5 and Guidance on International Travel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On 15th September 2020, the Government launched its ‘Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19’. This is a cross-government approach to managing the pandemic for the coming 6-9 months. A numbered framework of levels has been implemented in order to manage the pandemic in the medium-term.

Each numbered level will provide clarity on what restrictive measures are appropriate around the country based on the pattern and progress of COVID-19 in a particular area at a particular time. These Levels are applied to each county based on its current COVID-19 situation.

It will be possible for different regions and counties to be at a different Level to the National Level, depending on the incidence of the virus in that particular region or county. Businesses must ensure that that they keep up to date with levels and restrictive measures in place within their county or region. The levels outlined in this plan are subject to prevailing Public Health advice. Further measures for each level may be implemented in line with Government advice for certain regions and counties.

To view the latest information on COVID-19 in Ireland click [HERE](https://www.gov.ie/en/covid19/).

---

**Protective Measures**

Tourism & Hospitality businesses **must** ensure that the ongoing protective measures below are in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- Physical Distancing Protocols
- Cleaning & Disinfection Protocols
- Maximum Capacity Limits
- One-Way Traffic Systems
- COVID-19 Contact Tracing
- Table Service only
- Face Coverings / Masks
- COVID-19 Signage & Communication
- Noise Control Measures
- Appropriate Ventilation Measures

These protective measures are outlined in further detail throughout these Re-Opening Guidelines.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Gatherings</th>
<th>No social/family gatherings should take place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weddings</td>
<td><strong>Up to 6 guests</strong> can attend a wedding ceremony and reception (irrespective of venue).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels &amp; Tourist Accommodation</td>
<td><strong>Open</strong> only for those with <strong>essential non-social and non-tourist purposes</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gyms, Pools &amp; Leisure Facilities</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td><strong>Capacity limited to 25%</strong> - essential workers and essential purposes only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Face coverings must be worn.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Travel</td>
<td><strong>You must stay at home</strong> except for travel for work, education, medical and other essential purposes, if appropriate, or to take exercise within 5km of your home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Café’s, Restaurants &amp; Pubs (including Hotel Restaurants and Bars)</td>
<td>Closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Take away or delivery only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotels may provide food and beverage services to residents only with a requirement to serve a <strong>substantial meal</strong> when alcohol is sold or supplied for consumption on the premises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wet Pubs</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max. Table Capacity</td>
<td><strong>No Indoor or Outdoor Service permitted.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal &amp; Informal Events</td>
<td><strong>Not permitted</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Music &amp; Performances</td>
<td><strong>No live or loud music permitted.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No live performances are permitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing Time</td>
<td>Food &amp; Beverage facility must be cleared of all patrons by <strong>11:30pm</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightclubs</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractions</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Parks &amp; Play Areas</td>
<td><strong>Open</strong> with protective measures. <em>Face coverings</em> are recommended in busy or crowded areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These are Controlled Environments with a named event organiser, owner or manager. For example: business, training events, conferences, events in theatres and cinemas or other arts events (excluding sport).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organised Indoor Gatherings</td>
<td>No organised indoor gatherings should take place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organised Outdoor Gatherings</td>
<td>No organised outdoor gatherings should take place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>Non-Social Meetings, Training and Educational programmes only permitted to take place when considered an <strong>essential service</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table of Contents

1. Introduction: Meeting & Overcoming the COVID-19 Challenge 7
2. Business Response/Action Plan
   Monitoring & Supporting 9
   Policies & Processes 10
   Communication 10
   Training 10
   Cleaning & Frequency 10
   Ventilation/ Air Conditioning 10
   Staffing Resources 11
3. Employee & Customer Health
   Face Coverings/Masks 12
   Physical Distancing 12
   Employee Physical Distancing 13
   Measures to Control Noise Levels 13
   Providing Hand Sanitisers 13
   Information Signage 13
   Employee & Guest Health Concerns 13
   Isolation Area 13
4. Employee Responsibilities
   Hand Hygiene 14
   COVID-19 Training 14
   Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) 14
   Employee Welfare Facilities & Timekeeping 15
   Reception Desk 15
5. Physical Distancing
   Capacity Management 15
   Queuing 15
   Restaurants 15
   Self-Service/Buffet Style 16
   Back of House 16
   External Smoking Areas 16
   Timekeeping Facilities 16
6. Locations for Distribution of PPE
   Front Office 17
   Back Office 17
7. Employee Uniforms
   Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol 17
   Physical Distancing Protocol 17
8. Cleaning Products & Protocols
   Public Spaces & Communal Areas 17
   Laundry 18
   Back of House & Staff Areas 18
   Equipment Shared by Employees 18
   Water Disinfection 18
   Control of Waterborne Hazards 18
9. Front of House
   Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol 19
   Capacity Management 19
   Physical Distancing Protocol 19
   Bookings 19
   COVID-19 Contact Tracing 19
   Bar/Waiting Area 20
   Table Service 21
   Order Taking 21
   Self-Service Carvery/Buffet 21
   Glassware 21
   Service Stations 22
   Ice Machines 22
   Payment Facilities 22
   Guest Considerations 22
   Customer & Service Elevators 22
   Toilet Facilities 22
10. Kitchen
    Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol 23
    Physical Distancing Protocol 23
    Kitchen & Food Handling Personnel 23
    Wash-Up 23
11. Back of House
    Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol 24
    Physical Distancing Protocol 24
    Employee Toilet Facilities 24
    Cellars, Cold Rooms & Store Rooms 24
12. Reception Desk & Offices
    Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol 25
    Physical Distancing Protocol 25
13. Suppliers of Goods & Services
    Deliveries 26
    Dealing with Drivers 26
    Entering the Restaurant 26
    Accepting Deliveries 26
Appendix 1
   Controlled and Uncontrolled Environments 27
1. Introduction: Meeting & Overcoming the COVID-19 Challenge

COVID-19 is an unprecedented challenge for the tourism sector.

Before re-opening, restaurants will need to review how they work and employ new practices and procedures to ensure everyone stays safe. As a result, Fáilte Ireland has developed operational guidelines in line with the Health Service Executive (HSE), Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI).

As part of this, Fáilte Ireland has created this set of specific guidelines. You can be reassured that these recommendations are underpinned by advice made available from the HSA, HSE, HPSC, FSAI, World Health Organisation (WHO) and other relevant bodies.

Businesses must follow the Work Safely Protocol which has been developed under the aegis of the Safety Health and Welfare Act 2005. This protocol was first published in May 2020 and updated in November 2020. Businesses are now required to review their existing advice and guidance to ensure it is in line with the protocol. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) is the compliance body and has full powers as set out in this legislation designated in relation to the implementation of the National Protocol. Non-compliance can result in the closure of a business.

Pubs are required to serve a substantial meal under the definition currently in the Intoxicating Liquor Act 1962, as well as meeting other features expected of a restaurant. This definition provides that “the meal is such as might be expected to be served as a main midday or evening meal or as a main course in either such meal” and is of a kind for which it would be reasonable to charge not less than €9.00.

Businesses must keep a record of the time and date of arrival at the premises of a group/sole customer and the name and telephone number of the lead person in a group/sole customer for COVID-19 contact tracing.

Current legislation states businesses and services where intoxicating liquor is sold or supplied for consumption on the premises must also keep a record of the substantial meals ordered by each group/sole customer.

The guidelines were developed based on the following considerations:

- **Restructuring operations**
  Tourism businesses of all types need to adapt their operations, review employee practices and consider the design of their business to ensure physical distancing and the prevention of the spread of COVID-19.

- **Putting dedicated resources in place**
  Tourism businesses must ensure that they have dedicated personnel to implement and operate a robust system that prevents the spread of COVID-19. Equally importantly, businesses need to put processes in place that can deal with individual and multiple cases of the disease that may occur.

- **Adapting and enhancing hygiene practices**
  Tourism businesses must adapt and implement enhanced procedures in general cleaning, storage and cleaning of equipment. In particular, they must introduce and implement touchless solutions where possible.

- **Ventilation**
  The proven importance of ensuring adequate air circulation should be factored into operational practices. Further information regarding air conditioning and ventilation can be found in Section 5.d of the Work Safely Protocol.

- **Focusing on best practice in food & beverage service**
  Tourism businesses must follow HACCP**, service and physical distancing to promote the health of employees and guests.

- **Food and beverage service businesses as ‘controlled’ environments**
  Public and private venues or workplaces are considered controlled environments. This includes food and consumption businesses such as restaurants and cafés. Uncontrolled environments are settings where people have open access to the premises and generally don’t know each other and are unlikely to be in close contact with each other for an extended period of time. Examples include supermarkets, retail stores, shopping malls and takeaway-only food outlets. Additional details on controlled and uncontrolled environments can be found in Appendix 1.

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

**References to HACCP in this guidance is for the purposes of food safety and not the prevention of COVID-19.
GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING RESTAURANTS & CAFÉS

**Food Preparation Area**

Current legislation states a “food preparation area” means an indoor part of such premises which is structurally adapted and used for the purpose of preparing food for consumption by members of the public on or off the premises concerned and, for the avoidance of doubt, does not include a tent, caravan, vehicle, storage container or other temporary structure.

If your business serves food, you are required to have a designated food preparation area as outlined above.

**Food Safety and COVID-19 Safety**

There are no reports of transmission of COVID-19 via food. The main mode of transmission is from person to person. Food business operators must continue to apply their food safety management systems, based on the principles of HACCP. There is a requirement in legislation to have a Food Safety Management System in place based on the principles of HACCP. ISO 340:2007 is one of the available approaches to achieve this. A Health and Safety statement was already required, and is still a requirement. The COVID-19 Response is a requirement of the Work Safely Protocol.

In addition, food and beverage business operators will be required to introduce COVID-19 safety management systems in the form of enhanced hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, employee training and health checks, as well as physical distancing. This is to protect against the transmission of the virus to or between employees, customers and other people who enter their premises. Any COVID-19 precautions must not compromise food safety.

For advice and information on food safety during COVID-19 and for food businesses re-opening, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) website is a useful resource which is regularly updated. See HERE for more information.

**Guidance on International Travel**

Current government advice is available HERE.

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.*
2. Business Response/Action Plan

Creating an Action Plan will help to clarify what is required to overcome the threat of COVID-19 and give your employees and guests confidence that they are safe.

In developing one, the first step that the restaurant’s management must take is to familiarise themselves with the latest guidelines from the following sources:

- Health and Safety Authority (HSA)
- Health Services Executive (HSE)
- Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC)
- Irish Government Departments
- Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)
- World Health Organisation (WHO).

Information from these sources will help to shape your plan of action. You must also:

- **Complete a risk assessment** to identify what operational, changes you need to make in your business, this should include an occupational health and safety risk assessment. Further information can be found [HERE](#).
- **Review all standard operating procedures (SOPs)** to define and note what you are changing.
- **Create a communication plan** to inform employees and visitors of what you are changing, what you need them to do and how you expect everyone to act and behave.
- **Visit the HSA website** for templates, checklists and advice on reopening. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

A number of activities will require review e.g. workflows, operations, etc. For advice on reopening, visit the FSAI website.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

The plan must reassure employees and customers that safeguarding their health and safety is of the utmost importance. It will also assist in ensuring that your operations continue to run in an appropriate manner.

You must review the plan regularly and amend it as new regulations, guidelines and procedures come into force.

Experience will also tell you how appropriate and effective the original plan is.

For further information on the development of your Action Plan see [HERE](#).

**Monitoring & Supporting**

A COVID-19 Response Team/Coordinator must be appointed to ensure new procedures are adhered to. Adherence to this protocol will only be achieved if employers and workers have a shared responsibility to implement the measures contained in this protocol in their place of work. A collaborative approach to the implementation of the protocol is essential to achieve success and maximum buy in.

Each workplace should appoint at least one lead worker representative charged with ensuring that COVID-19 measures are strictly adhered to in their workplace. The person(s) undertaking the role must receive the necessary training and have a structured framework to follow within the organisation to be effective in preventing the spread of the virus. Further information and a short online course on the role of Lead Worker Representative can be found on the HSA website.

Employers should have regular and meaningful engagement with their worker representative, workers and/or their recognised Trade Union or other representative (including health and safety committee where it exists) about the measures being put in place to address the occupational exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace. Employers should provide COVID-19 induction training for all workers on their return.

The number of worker representatives for COVID-19 appointed should, ideally, be proportionate to the number of workers in the workplace and this person(s) should be clearly identifiable in the workplace. Employers and worker representatives will work together to ensure that all the actions in this protocol are fully adhered to in order to ensure the suppression of COVID-19 in the workplace.

Section 3 of the [Work Safely Protocol](#) sets out the steps for employers and workers to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19.

These provisions include:

- Consulting with the workplace representatives in the development of a COVID-19 response plan.
- Developing/Amending policies and procedures for prompt identification and isolation of workers who may have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Developing, consulting, communicating and implementing workplace changes or policies. Specific reference is made to agreeing with workers any temporary restructuring of work patterns that may be required to implement the COVID-19 prevention measures in the workplace. There is also provision for the lead worker representative to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.

For a more comprehensive list of symptoms of COVID-19, please click [HERE](#).

A link for the HSA Templates and Checklists can be found [HERE](#).

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.*
Policies & Processes

Restaurant owners and managers need to review all business policies and standard operating procedures across each department to reflect operational changes. In particular, this means:

- Defining and documenting a clear plan of action in the event of a suspected case of COVID-19 among guests and/or employees.
- Defining and documenting the correct use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) where required. This must be in line with the Government’s Public Health advice.
- Developing a policy for the care of employee uniforms.
- Reviewing and updating cancellation and refund policies in line with the restaurant’s requirements.
- Developing and updating policy relating to the standards of behaviour expected from employees and customers to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Strict management controls must be in place to ensure compliance with Public Health advice at all times.

Communication

You must share the plan with all employees, as well as changes to other policies, e.g. sick leave policies, prior to them returning to work. If it’s updated at any time, you must make sure everyone knows what has changed.

Giving guidelines to employees on how they must communicate the Action Plan to guests will ensure everyone gives the same message and there is no inconsistency.

Make sure an up-to-date list of the contact information of all employees, including emergency telephone numbers, is always readily available across all departments in the restaurant.

Regularly review all COVID-19 related signage and notices throughout the premises to ensure they display the latest Government recommendations. Signs must be placed in prominent and relevant positions, be legible and, where appropriate, be offered in multiple languages.

Downloading and using the HSE COVID-19 tracker app is also an important measure that can be adopted. Employers should provide advice on the tracker and encourage workers to download. Workers should download as it can be used for contact tracing purposes in and out of the workplace.

Cleaning & Frequency

Ensure contact/touch surfaces such as table tops, work equipment, door handles and handrails are visibly clean at all times and are cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily.

Implement modified cleaning intervals for rooms and work areas. This applies especially for washroom facilities and communal spaces. Cleaning must be performed at least twice per day and if facilities are visibly dirty.

Cleaning of work areas must be conducted at regular intervals. Further information on cleaning in non-healthcare settings is available from the ECDC HERE and from the Government website HERE.

Training

The management must inform all employees of the measures being adopted to manage the threat of COVID-19. Use the most appropriate training channels to do this and ensure all employees remain at home and seek medical attention if they have key symptoms such as a high temperature, coughing or shortness of breath.

There is an obligation on employers to ensure that employees are aware that they must not attend work if they have symptoms. This is essential to ensure that the virus does not spread.

You must organise information briefings that cover all the basic protective measures against COVID-19 and the signs and symptoms of the disease. For specific procedures, training will be required and this must be tailored to your business. However, in general you must consider training employees in relation to:

- Hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures.
- Correct use of PPE.
- Cleaning regimes (incorporating front and back office areas if relevant).
- Employee health and what to do if feeling unwell.
- Unwell guests/dealing with suspected cases/ liaising with authorities.

First Aid Responders may require further training in light of COVID-19.

For a more comprehensive list of symptoms of COVID-19, please click HERE.

Ventilation /Air Conditioning

Where possible, windows and doors should be opened on a regular basis to allow for a flow of air throughout the property. When rooms are being cleaned, windows and/or doors where appropriate, should be opened. Care needs to be taken at all times to ensure security and safety measures.

Further information regarding air conditioning and ventilation can be found in Section 5.d of the Work Safely Protocol.
**Staffing Resources**

Property owners/management should review rotas in line with the Work Safely Protocol, subsection 3 which provides that full consultation on these matters is required to ensure sufficient employees are available to maintain physical distancing while completing the tasks to the required standards. Further details can be found [HERE](#).

Employee scheduling must ensure more time is allocated for cleaning and encourage employees to work alone if possible.

To achieve this, you should:

- Implement phased shifts.
- Schedule small teams.
- Keep the same team combinations where possible to limit employee interaction. This will assist should contact tracing be required.

You will also need to plan for the impact of employee absences; this may involve reallocating employees from non-essential tasks. Where appropriate, cross-training employees will help maintain employee levels within your property. Employees who have not had close contact with a confirmed case should continue taking the usual precautions and attend work as usual.

Further information on close contacts, casual contacts and testing is available from the HSE website.

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres* and a minimum of 1 metre* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place. You must apply the Work Safely Protocol.

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.*
3. Employee & Customer Health

The health and safety of employees and guests is the number one priority for restaurant owners and managers. The following steps will help ensure everyone remains fit and well:

**Face Coverings/Masks**

Following the HPSC Evidence Summary on the “Efficacy of visors compared with masks in the prevention of transmission of COVID-19 in non-healthcare settings”, Tourism and Hospitality businesses should consider the following recommendations:

- In public settings, expert opinion and international guidance generally favours cloth face coverings over visors or shields.
- There is a rationale and laboratory evidence favouring cloth face coverings over visors where the wearer is at a higher level (standing) than those potentially exposed at a lower level (sitting). This is extremely important for food and beverage service businesses.
- Visors reduce exposure to a certain extent when compared to no face covering and may be considered an alternative in certain circumstances where an individual is unable to wear a face covering/mask. Click HERE for more information.
- If visors are used, they should cover the entire face (above the eyes to below the chin and wrap around from ear to ear) and be correctly applied.
- Further information on the handling and care of visors can be found HERE.

Wearing a face covering/mask helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It is strongly recommended to wear a face covering/mask in situations where physical distancing is difficult. Face masks are always in addition to, and never a substitute for, other Public Health measures including physical distancing, hand hygiene and practising appropriate respiratory etiquette.

Under current legislation, management and employees in customer facing roles, who engage in or carry out work relating to the preparation of, or service of, food or beverages for consumption on the premises must wear a face covering. Management must ensure that employees comply with this regulation.

There are cases where people may be unable to wear a face covering and this is deemed as a reasonable excuse. For details on what constitutes a reasonable excuse see HERE. Businesses must ensure that they are familiar with the various reasons why an employee or customer may not be required to wear a face covering/mask, further details can be found HERE.

The Work Safely Protocol states that face coverings/masks are recommended in public areas in buildings, including receptions/foyers and also when moving throughout buildings.

Government Public Health advice states that face covering/masks must be worn by customers when arriving to and leaving their table when in the restaurant and bar. Please see HERE.

As part of your business risk assessment, you should determine the requirement for face coverings/masks in all individual business activities. The Work Safely Protocol states that in settings where 2 metre employee separation cannot be ensured then face coverings/masks should be made available to employees in line with Public Health advice.

Ensure that customers are clearly informed of your own business policy and government regulations regarding face coverings/masks in advance of arrival. Employers and employees must keep up to date with the latest Public Health advice issued regarding face coverings/masks.

A face covering should cover your nose and mouth, go under your chin, fit snugly against the side of the face with no visible gaps and be secured with ties or ear loops. For more information on the safe use, storage and disposal of face coverings/masks, please click HERE.

**Physical Distancing**

Physical distancing guidelines (following Government’s Public Health advice) must be incorporated into the Action Plan for each department within a restaurant. Specific areas must also comply with mandatory capacity limits.

Following updated Government Public Health measures, businesses must ensure that they implement the required measures, subject to the level of their specific region, in relation to maximum capacity at a table. These measures are applicable to pre-bookings and walk-in customers.

Customers must be advised to stand 2 metres away from other groups of people who are not from the same household while queuing, using elevators, stairs or moving around the restaurant.

In a controlled environment, such as pubs, bars, gastropubs, restaurants and cafés, physical distancing of at least 2 metres is required, unless the requirements outlined in Appendix 1 have been met, in which case a minimum of 1 metre is sufficient.

Careful consideration needs to be given when using communal areas. Ensure there are systems in place to prevent intermingling in these areas (e.g. entrances, exits and toilet facilities). See Appendix 1.

Restaurant tables, seating and couches in public areas and other physical layouts must be arranged to ensure appropriate distancing is adhered to.

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.*
GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING RESTAURANTS & CAFÉS

Employee Physical Distancing

Where possible, on arrival and departure from work, employees should be able to enter and exit through separate doors.

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres* and a minimum of 1 metre* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place. Where the food services environment makes it difficult to physically distance, employers need to consider what measures to put in place to protect employees.

Minimise any direct employee contact and provide hand washing facilities, and other hand hygiene aids such as hand sanitisers, wipes, etc. Ensure these are readily accessible so employees can perform hand hygiene as soon as a task is complete.

Measures to Control Noise Levels

According to the WHO, transmission of COVID-19 can occur through direct, indirect, or close contact with infected people through infected secretions such as saliva and respiratory secretions or droplets, which are expelled when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, etc.

In adherence with WHO evidence, recent Public Health advice states that there must be a restriction on noise levels within restaurants to prevent transmission of COVID-19.

High noise levels within a premises can impact conversation negatively and encourage customers to raise their voice to communicate thus encouraging possible transmission of the virus.

Straining to hear others due to high volumes can cause people to move closer to each other and not adhere to social distancing. To avoid this, businesses must put in place a plan and take appropriate measures to control noise levels, to ensure volumes do not rise to a level where people are required to take such measures to hear others.

Signage relating to these COVID-19 preventative measures must be displayed in visible locations to inform customers.

Intervention will be required by management in a situation where customers do not follow this advice. Restaurant owners and management should be aware that permitting increased noise levels within their premises is an unnecessary risk as it forces customers into close proximity and encourages raised voices. Restaurant owners and management are responsible for keeping noise at an appropriate level to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Providing Hand Sanitisers

Hand sanitisers (including touchless dispensers where possible) must be readily available and accessible to all, at each access point. Hand sanitisers for use against COVID-19 may be alcohol or non-alcohol based.

When choosing a hand sanitiser, it is important to ensure that it is effective against COVID-19. Further information on hand sanitisers is available on page 41 of the Work Safely Protocol, found HERE.

Information Signage

You must display appropriate COVID-19 signage relating to hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures throughout the restaurant. Where feasible, television screens and monitors can communicate these effectively.

Employee & Guest Health Concerns

When they return to work, employees must be trained on what to do if they or a guest becomes unwell. All employers and employees must follow the Work Safely Protocol.

When dealing with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 among employees, follow the Work Safely Protocol.

If management is alerted to a suspected case of COVID-19 at the restaurant, a clinician from a local medical centre should be contacted. The clinician will advise on the next steps. Further information is available on the HSE website and also page 5 of the Work Safely Protocol.

Please see HERE for more information.

Note: Your restaurant needs to have the telephone numbers of the health authorities, medical centres plus public and private hospitals readily available in case a guest or employee falls ill. For a full list of Dept of Public Health contact details, please see HERE.

Employers must ensure all employees submit their pre-return to work form before they return to work. For further details relating to what information should be obtained, please refer to Section 3.D4 of the Work Safely Protocol.

Isolation Area

Identify an area / room on the premises where any customer or employee showing possible COVID-19 symptoms can be isolated from other people. From there, the individual can travel home to seek medical attention elsewhere. It is essential to clean and disinfect this isolation area thoroughly after it has been used.

Further information is available in the Overall Guidelines for Re-opening of All Sectors, found HERE.

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.
Hand Hygiene

Correct hygiene and frequent handwashing with soap is vital to help combat the spread of COVID-19. Food and beverage businesses need to ensure that adequate sanitary facilities are provided and that employees thoroughly and frequently wash their hands.

This involves hand washing with soap and water, for a minimum of 20 seconds or the use of hand sanitiser (if hands are visibly clean), as required and frequently.

Hands must also be washed as often as necessary and always:
- Before starting work
- Before handling cooked or ready-to-eat food
- Before eating
- After handling or preparing raw food
- After handling waste
- After cleaning duties including sweeping/mopping etc.
- After using the toilet
- After blowing nose, sneezing or coughing
- After eating, drinking or smoking
- After handling money
- At the end of a shift

This list is not exhaustive.

Please see HERE for more information from the FSAI.

For additional COVID-19 hand hygiene measures, hands must be washed before putting on or after removing PPE.

Please see HERE for more information from the HSE.

COVID-19 Training

All employees must receive training on COVID-19 safety and disinfection protocols. More comprehensive training must be given to teams in frequent guest contact including Front of House, Operations and Security.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal protective equipment (PPE), can be effective in reducing the spread of viruses and disease within the food industry, but only if used properly. If required by their roles, appropriate PPE must be worn by employees. Each section of the restaurant must be assessed to decide what is needed. Training on how to properly use, apply and dispose of all PPE is mandatory.

As part of the business risk assessment consideration needs to be given to the level of PPE required for various tasks, (e.g. power hosing which can cause an aerosol effect).

Handwashing is a greater protective barrier to infection than wearing disposable gloves. Correct hand hygiene is extremely important, whether using gloves or not. However the following must be applied when using disposable gloves:
- Gloves may be used by food workers for food handling, according to usual food safety guidance, but they must ensure that the gloves are changed frequently and that hands are washed before putting gloves on, between glove changes and when gloves are removed.
- Gloves must be changed after carrying out non-food related activities such as opening / closing doors by hand, emptying bins, handling money, etc.
- Food workers should be aware that wearing gloves can allow bacteria to build up on the surface of the hands, so hand hygiene is extremely important when gloves are removed to avoid subsequent contamination of food.
- It is acceptable to prepare and handle food with bare hands provided proper hand washing procedures are in place. Hand sanitisers can be used as an additional measure but should not replace handwashing.

Further information on PPE is available HERE.

In the context of COVID-19 risk, employers should check the HPSC website regularly for updates regarding use of recommended PPE.
Employee Welfare Facilities & Timekeeping

All employers and employees must follow the Work Safely Protocol. Please see HERE for more information.

It’s also essential to display signage relating to hand and respiratory hygiene as well as physical distancing prominently at Back of House.

Employee welfare facilities (such as employee areas and locker rooms) need to be re-organised to suit physical distancing measures and be frequently cleaned and disinfected. Staggered start times and break times can also be very helpful and you must review the use of clocking-in machines.

Staff meetings should be held online if possible. If physical meetings need to take place, physical distancing measures must be taken.

Please see HERE for more information.

5. Physical Distancing

Physical distancing is very important to help slow the spread of COVID-19. This is achieved by minimising contact between potentially infected individuals and healthy individuals. In a controlled environment, such as pubs, bars, gastropubs, restaurants and cafés, physical distancing of at least 2 metres* is required between tables, unless the requirements outlined in Appendix 1 have been met, in which case a minimum of 1 metre* is sufficient.

The restaurant owner or management needs to meet Public Health advice on maintaining current physical distancing guidance between people at all times.

Capacity Management

The capacity of your business must be reviewed prior to reopening and at all times when your business is operational. Overall capacity will depend on the size of the floor space within the premises where customers will be seated.

Seating layout and table plans need to be reviewed to ensure the recommended physical distancing and other protective measures can be strictly adhered to.

The employee and customer flow of the business must be carefully managed, particularly at entrances, exits and other areas where customers might potentially congregate but are not permitted to do so.

Following updated Government Public Health measures, businesses must ensure that they implement the required measures, subject to the level of their specific region, in relation to capacity management.

Queuing

Any area where guests or employees queue must be clearly marked for appropriate recommended physical distancing. This includes tills, stairs, elevator lobbies, public areas, drop off areas, etc.

Use floor markings inside the premises to facilitate compliance with the physical distancing advice of 2 metres*, particularly in the most crowded areas. Use vertical signage to direct customers to facilitate movement within the premises while maintaining 2 metre* distance.

Restaurants

Physical distancing of 2 metres* should be maintained between tables. However, if this is not possible, this can be reduced to 1 metre* in controlled environments if the other risk mitigation requirements outlined in Appendix 1 have been met.

If all risk mitigation requirements have been met, and physical distancing is reduced to 1 metre*, pre-booked time limited slots must be in place for customers, which are a maximum of 105 minutes duration plus 15 minutes to allow for adequate cleaning.

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.
Pre-booking and time limited slots of 105 minutes duration are not a requirement if physical distancing of 2 metres* is strictly maintained.

Following updated Government Public Health measures, businesses must ensure that they implement the required measures, subject to the level of their specific region, in relation to maximum capacity at a table. These measures are applicable to pre-bookings and walk-in customers.

Businesses should ensure that they implement the required measures, subject to the level of their specific region, in relation to formal or informal events within their premises.

Restaurants and bars need to reduce seating capacities to meet the current physical distancing guidance outlined by HPSC between each seated group of customers.

It is the responsibility of supervisors and managers to ensure that customers do not congregate in groups. Customers should be seated at a table except when using the toilet, paying, and departing.

Self-Service/Buffet Style
This style of service must only be provided where physical distancing and other Public Health advice can be followed.

Physical distancing guidance must be followed while queuing. See Queuing section above to ensure appropriate risk mitigation measures are in place. Customer access to carvery / buffet / open food display should be staggered and a one-way system introduced.

Back of House
Physical distancing protocols that follow Government’s Public Health Advice must be observed in the staff room, shared office spaces, employee locker rooms, retail store rooms, delivery areas, stock rooms, IT areas, bar support areas such as cold/keg rooms, kitchens and other areas where employees gather and work.

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres* and a minimum of 1 metre* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.

Where the food service environment makes it difficult to physically distance, employers need to consider what measures to put in place to protect employees.

Examples of practical measures to adhere to physical distancing guidance in the food services environment are to:

- Stagger workstations on either side of service area so that food workers are not facing one another
- Provide PPE if required, such as face masks, disposable gloves and clean aprons / uniforms. The use of PPE would be routine in high-risk areas of food premises that produce ready-to-eat and cooked foods. When employees are dressed in PPE it is possible to reduce distance between workers
- Limit the number of employees in a food preparation area at any one time
- Organise employees into working groups or teams to facilitate reduced interaction between groups.

Physical barriers such as sneeze guards / plexiglass and partitions can be useful, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain apart, for example in kitchens and at cash registers, host stands or food pickup areas. These physical barriers need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected.

External Smoking Areas
In these areas, the capacity must be in line with Government Public Health recommendations at any one time, while ensuring that the recommended physical distancing measures are adhered to.

Timekeeping Facilities
If queuing takes place at the clocking-in machine, ensure that physical distancing guidance between employees is maintained. See Queuing section above to ensure appropriate risk mitigation measures are in place. If you use clocking-in machines, a strenuous cleaning and disinfection regime must be put in place.

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.
GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING RESTAURANTS & CAFÉS

6. Locations for Distribution of PPE

If required, PPE should be distributed at the following locations:

**Front Office**
- All entrances and exits.
- Reception area.

**Back Office**
- Employee entrances.
- Specific department offices.
- Food preparation areas.
- Store rooms and cellars.
- Location in proximity to the Isolation Room.

**Note:** Hand sanitiser must be provided in all entry and exit points of the public areas including reception. Hand sanitiser must only be used on visibly clean hands. If hands are visibly dirty, they must be washed. Following updated Government advice for businesses serving food, consider providing hand sanitiser on each table for customer use.

Hand sanitiser must only be used on visibly clean hands. If hands are visibly dirty/contaminated they must be washed.

7. Employee Uniforms

**Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol**

The policy on the care of uniforms must be updated to ensure every employee is clear on the standards of appearance and dress expected whilst at work.

**Physical Distancing Protocol**

If a locker or changing room is provided, mark the floors to indicate available and unavailable spaces that must be used when changing into work attire/PPE. It may be necessary to roster access times to these rooms so physical distancing takes place.

8. Cleaning Products & Protocols

Cleaning products and protocols must be suitable and manufacturer approved for use against viruses, bacteria and similar risks.

It’s important to follow manufacturer instructions with regard to dilution, application and duration of use. Restaurants must review cleaning procedures within all departments and update these if any cleaning products are changed.

It’s also important to work with suppliers, vendors and distribution partners to ensure an uninterrupted supply of cleaning supplies.

Further information is available in the Overall Guidelines for Re-opening of All Sectors, found [HERE](#).

* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.
GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING RESTAURANTS & CAFÉS

Laundry

All linen must be washed at a high temperature and in accordance with the Government’s Public Health advice. Dirty linen must be bagged immediately to eliminate excess contact while it’s transported to the restaurant’s laundry facility.

Click HERE for more information.

Back of House & Staff Areas

Back of House areas must be cleaned and disinfected as regularly as required but at least twice a day. Particular attention must be paid to employee areas including the canteen, employee entrances, employee toilet facilities, uniform control rooms, loading areas, offices, kitchens and employee relations service desks.

Equipment Shared by Employees

- Clean and disinfect shared equipment and tools before, during and after each shift or anytime the equipment is transferred to another employee.

- This includes items such as phones, computers and other communication devices, keys, payment terminals, kitchen implements, tools, safety buttons, cleaning equipment, time clocks and all other direct contact items used.

- Shared food and beverage equipment in Back of House areas (e.g. kettle, microwave, etc.) need to be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

Water Disinfection

Maintain the concentration of disinfectant in water for consumption within the limits recommended according to international norms and standards. Preferably this should be at the upper limits of the range.

Control of Waterborne Hazards

It is critical that restaurants review the guidance on ‘Control of Legionella Bacteria During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic’ and review their own systems in line with this.

This guidance highlights the requirement to continue managing Legionella control to avoid the potential for Legionnaires’ disease.

The following is a non-exhaustive list relevant to the tourism sector of potential sources of aerosols which may contain Legionella bacteria: wet cooling systems (for example, cooling towers and evaporative condensers); spa pools; showers, taps and toilets; machine cooling systems; spray booth water curtains; humidifiers in food cabinets; ornamental fountains and water features; dust suppression systems; horticultural misting systems; lawn sprinklers; clinical humidifiers; sprinklers and hose reels; and power hoses.

Legionnaires’ disease can be fatal and hospitalisation is generally required to treat symptoms. With the health service currently dealing with a Public Health emergency, it is vital that employers take appropriate action to maintain and operate their water systems especially wet cooling systems, so far as reasonably practicable.

Please see HERE for more information.

For further advice please visit HERE.

* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.
GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING RESTAURANTS & CAFÉS

9. Front of House

Government Public Health advice requires the following measures:

Following updated Government Public Health measures, businesses must ensure that they implement the required measures, subject to the level of their specific region.

- Maximum of 6 people per table.
- Multiple tables cannot be booked.
- Table service only. Customers not permitted to sit at the bar counter.
- Physical distancing, contact tracing and enhanced hygiene measures must be adhered to.
- A substantial meal to the minimum value of €9.00, prepared on-site, within the premises, where intoxicating liquor is sold or supplied for consumption on the premises.
- Measures to control noise levels.
- Face coverings/masks worn by customers at all times other than when sitting at their table.
- Employees wear face coverings/masks at all times.
- No work or business related parties/social gatherings including office parties.

The restaurant owner or management must follow the Government’s Public Health advice throughout Front of House. To achieve this, the following steps should be taken:

If serving food, a food preparation area is required on site / on the premises

Where possible, customers should be able to enter and exit through separate doors. Minimise the number of access points for arriving and departing guests. Doors should be propped open if fire regulations allow.

Hand sanitiser (touchless where possible) must be readily available and accessible to all, at each access point. Consider providing hand sanitiser on each table. Signage must encourage all customers to use this when they enter and leave.

Any area where customers queue must be clearly marked for appropriate physical distancing. Use floor markings inside the premises to facilitate compliance with the physical distancing advice of 2 metres*, particularly in the most crowded areas. Use vertical signage to direct customers to facilitate movement within the premises while maintaining 2 metre* distance. This includes elevators, the entrance to bar and lounge areas, at entrances to toilets, function rooms, smoking areas, etc.

When a group arrives and needs to queue, only one member should do so. The others must adhere to physical distancing until the group can be seated.

Ensure procedures compliant with the Government’s Public Health advice are in place for the Meet, Greet and Seat process. For example, a friendly verbal greeting should replace a physical greeting.

Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

The frequency of cleaning and disinfecting must be increased to at least twice daily and all areas must be visibly clean at all times.

- Greeting podiums at the entrance (plus all associated equipment) must be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Service stations, service trollies, beverage stations, counter tops, handrails and trays must be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Dining tables, bar tops, stools and chairs must be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Storage containers must be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use.
- Food preparation stations to be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Bill tip trays, pens and all other reusable guest contact items must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

Follow in-house standard operating procedures regarding food preparation and service. These must adhere to HACCP standards.

Ensure regular checks are carried out to ensure the proper functioning of soap and hand sanitiser dispensers, disposable tissue dispensers, and other similar devices throughout the restaurant. Repair or replace any defective units.

* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.
Capacity Management

The capacity of your business must be reviewed prior to re-opening and at all times when your business is operational. Overall capacity will depend on the size of the floor space within the premises where customers will be seated. For further guidance on Capacity Management click HERE.

Physical Distancing Protocol

Physical distancing of 2 metres* should be maintained between tables. However, if this is not possible, this can be reduced to 1 metre* in controlled environments if the other risk mitigation requirements outlined in Appendix 1 have been met.

If all risk mitigation requirements have been met, and physical distancing is reduced to 1 metre*, pre-booked time limited slots must be in place for customers, which are a maximum of 105 minutes duration plus 15 minutes to allow for adequate cleaning.

Pre-booking and time limited slots of 105 minutes duration are not a requirement if physical distancing of 2 metres* is strictly maintained.

In a controlled environment physical distancing of at least 1 metre* should be maintained between people seated at tables. Physical distancing is required between individuals who are not from the same household. It is not required between members of the same household.

Peak-period queuing procedures must be implemented if customers can’t be seated immediately.

Consider an online reservation option for customers, as not only will this communicate new procedures and practices, but it will also limit the requirement for queuing.

Bookings

Encourage bookings rather than walk-ins and allocate specific times people will spend in the restaurant. Doing so will assist physical distancing, contact tracing and maximise revenue.

Following updated Government Public Health measures, businesses must ensure that they implement the required measures, subject to the level of their specific region, in relation to maximum capacity at a table. These measures are applicable to pre-bookings and walk-in customers.

Businesses should ensure that they implement the required measures, subject to the level of their specific region, in relation to formal or informal events within their premises.

If the risk mitigation requirements for a controlled environment, as outlined in HPSC COVID-19: Guidance for Food Businesses, have been met the distance between tables can be reduced to 1 metre*. In this case pre-booked time limited slots should be in place for customers, which are a maximum of 105 minutes duration plus 15 minutes to allow for cleaning.

COVID-19 Contact Tracing

Businesses must keep a record of the time and date of arrival at the premises of a group/sole customer and the name and telephone number of the lead person in a group/sole customer for COVID-19 contact tracing.

Current legislation states businesses and services where intoxicating liquor is sold or supplied for consumption on the premises must also keep a record of the substantial meals ordered by each group/sole customer.

Details must be securely retained for 28 days and be compliant with GDPR.

The name and contact details of one person in each party must be recorded for both walk-ins and pre-bookings.

Bar/Waiting Area

Divide the bar into areas/zones and allocate a zone to each employee. Minimise and control the movement between these areas. As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres* and a minimum of 1 metre* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.

All employees must wash their hands frequently and as required. The following must also be cleaned and disinfected more frequently:
- Beer taps, handles and optics
- Drip trays and washable bar mats
- Glass mats
- Handheld measures
- Cocktail equipment
- Ice buckets, scoops and tongs
- Fruit preparation equipment
- Storage containers, etc.

Straws should be individually wrapped. Embellishment or decoration of glasses (e.g. cocktail umbrellas) should be minimised.

Where fruit garnishes are required, good hand hygiene practices must be in place while preparing the fruit. Keep garnishes refrigerated and in a covered container until required and serve using tongs/scoop. Each scoop must have its own covered receptacle.

In advance of re-opening, the cleaning of beer lines must be arranged as a notice period may be required by breweries or suppliers.

* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.
GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING RESTAURANTS & CAFÉS

Table Service

There must be adequate spacing between customers at each table in accordance with Government physical distancing guidelines and HPSC COVID-19: Guidance for Food Service Businesses.

Customer facing personnel allocated to serve individual tables must adhere to physical distancing where possible. Attention must be paid to hand and respiratory hygiene during order taking and table service.

Face coverings/masks must be worn by staff in customer facing roles where no other protective measures are in place e.g. protective screens and where physical distancing of 2 metres* is not possible.

Before serving a table and after clearing a table, all employees must wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds or use sanitiser if hands are visibly clean.

Attention must be paid to hand and respiratory hygiene during order taking and service.

Orders should be taken in a time efficient manner and at a suitable distance to minimise time spent in close contact with guests. Close contact can mean spending more than 15 minutes in face-to-face contact within 2 metres* of an infected person. For more information see HERE.

Where offered, sharing plates can be served per table, they are not to be served as catering platters to larger groups.

Tableside cooking must be suspended unless physical distancing can be adhered to.

Customers must remain seated and order from their seat. The bar counter cannot be used for seating or service to customers.

Order Taking

Menus must be single use or made of a material that can easily be cleaned. Electronic menus, phone apps and menu boards are an alternative option.

It may be possible to verbally recommend food and drinks to guests. If so, this should be done.

Attention must be paid to hand and respiratory hygiene during order taking and service. Orders should be taken in a time-efficient manner and at a suitable distance to minimise time spent in close contact with guests. Close contact can mean spending more than 15 minutes in face-to-face contact within 2 metres of an infected person. For more information see HERE.

Face coverings/masks must be worn by staff in customer facing roles where no other protective measures are in place e.g. protective screens and where physical distancing of 2 metres* is not possible.

It’s recommended to use individual pens, pads, or electronic devices.

Self-Service Carvery/Buffet

This style of service must only be provided where physical distancing and other Public Health advice can be followed.

Physical distancing guidance must also be followed while queuing. See Queuing section above to ensure appropriate risk mitigation measures are in place. Customer access to buffet / carvery / open food display should be staggered and a one-way system introduced.

It is important to maintain good hygiene practices if this style of service is offered. Both customers and employees should strictly observe good personal hygiene practices at all times around open food areas. Attention must be paid to hand and respiratory hygiene.

Face coverings/masks must be worn by staff in customer facing roles where no other protective measures are in place e.g. protective screens and where physical distancing of 2 metres* is not possible. Face coverings/masks must be worn by customers when accessing this style of service.

All foods in the bain-marie or hotplate must be shielded from customers. Employees must serve up and plate food to limit shared use of utensils at open food areas.

All trays used by customers must be cleaned between each use.

All goods / foods, visual displays, etc. must be covered and only handled by appointed employees.

Where food is served buffet-style, all items displayed for customer use must be individually wrapped or be a single-serve item.

There must be no shared items at the carvery or buffet. Examples of shared items include:

- Water jugs (must be poured by service personnel only)
- Salt and pepper shakers and butter dishes should be available only on request
- Unwrapped butter, etc.
- Each guest be given individual portions/ sachets where possible.

Glassware

To prevent cross-contamination, fresh glasses must be used for each new drink, particularly from optics and beer taps.

When pouring drinks, employees must handle glasses by the stem or base and place on clean service trays or bar counter before serving. Avoid touching the nozzle, tap optic or bottle against the glass.

Similarly, there must be minimal handling of glassware when clearing glasses. Here, service trays must be used where appropriate.

* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.
GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING RESTAURANTS & CAFÉS

Service Stations

Cleaning and disinfection must be carried out with increased frequency at service stations, at least twice a day, but more frequently during busy periods and whenever facilities are visibly dirty. Surfaces to clean include counter tops, shelving, equipment, storage containers, etc.

At service stations, customer facing personnel must be encouraged to maintain the recommended physical distance from each other. Limit the number of customer facing personnel at service stations at any one time. Minimise movement between service stations and ensure customers don’t have access to these areas.

Ensure service stations are stocked with all necessary equipment (e.g. cutlery, condiments, etc.) and cleaning supplies (disinfectant, disposable paper towels, etc.).

Cutlery must be stored in a clean disinfected cutlery drawer or covered cutlery container.

All customer facing personnel must have their own stationery items and equipment (e.g. pens, order book). If equipment and tools are shared, they must be cleaned and disinfected before, during and after each use or before being given to another employee.

Ice Machines

Before your restaurant re-opens, ice machines must be emptied, recalibrated and refreshed with new ice. The water lines to ice machines must be cleaned out prior to refreshing with new ice. To avoid cross-contamination, each ice scoop must be stored in a separate covered receptacle and washed and disinfected regularly.

Payment Facilities

Where possible, guests should use card/contactless payment. After bringing the debit/credit card machine to the table (if possible), it must be cleaned and disinfected before being used again.

If handling cash, employees should be provided with gloves and observe the Government’s Public Health advice on hand hygiene measures.

Guest Considerations

All self-serve condiments and utensils must be removed. These must only be supplied by restaurant employees.

Remove all ‘grab and go’ offerings.

All food and beverage items should be placed on the table or other surface instead of being handed directly to a guest.

No self-serve food available.

Beverage dispensers must only use single use cups. There must be no refills using same beverage holder.

Cashless payment systems should be used where possible.

Customer & Service Elevators

An employee should be assigned to clean and disinfect the button panels of elevators regularly and increase the frequency of cleaning during busy periods.

Physical distancing must be adhered to in elevators except among members of the same household.

Signage must be displayed to ensure customers understand the physical distancing requirements that apply within elevators.

Toilet Facilities

Clear signage should indicate the location of and route to the bathrooms.

A strict queuing system and limitations on number of users must be enforced to ensure physical distancing.

Install clear markings to minimise contact between guests and to ensure that queues follow physical distancing requirements. Encourage the use of alternate sinks.

The frequency of cleaning and disinfection must be increased in toilet facilities to at least twice daily. Ensure splashes are avoided while cleaning these facilities.

Ensure soap and hand sanitiser dispensers, disposable tissue dispensers and other similar devices are regularly checked, cleaned and maintained. Repair or replace defective soap units.

* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.
10. Kitchen

There is a requirement in legislation to have a Food Safety Management System in place based on the principles of HACCP. ISO 340:2007 is one of the available approaches to achieve this. A Health and Safety statement was already required, and is still a requirement. The COVID-19 Response plan is a requirement of the Work Safely Protocol.

Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

At the end of each shift, clean and disinfect each area systematically with effective detergents and disinfectants. All cleaning must be recorded by a suitably trained person.

Physical Distancing Protocol

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres* and a minimum of 1 metre* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.

Where the food service environment makes it difficult to physically distance, employers need to consider what measures to put in place to protect employees.

Examples of practical measures to adhere to physical distancing guidance in the food services environment are to:

- Divide the kitchen into zones with an employee allocated to each zone. Control and minimise movement between zones
- Stagger workstations on either side of service area so that food workers are not facing one another
- Provide PPE if required, such as face masks, disposable gloves and clean aprons / uniforms. The use of PPE would be routine in high-risk areas of food premises that produce ready-to-eat and cooked foods. When employees are dressed in PPE it is possible to reduce distance between workers
- Limit the number of employees in a food preparation area at any one time and record the times that employees are on duty
- Organise employees into working groups or teams to facilitate reduced interaction between groups.

Physical barriers such as sneeze guards / plexiglass and partitions can be useful, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain apart, for example in kitchens and at cash registers, host stands or food pickup areas. These physical barriers need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected.

Display signs that promote physical distancing and review all handwashing / good hygiene practice signs. Replace them if they are damaged or outdated.

Kitchen & Food Handling Personnel

Ensure that all employees have been trained in any new COVID-19 standard operating procedures adopted by the restaurant. Keep a record that this training has taken place.

Ensure that the HACCP system is up-to-date. All new protocols need to be reflected in records, food flow diagrams, cleaning schedules, zoning, allergen updates on menus and delivery & takeaway services, etc. HACCP based procedures are required for food safety and not for the prevention of COVID-19.

The same food law requirements apply now as did before COVID-19. Any changes to the nature and extent of the business must be reflected in the food safety management system/HACCP documentation.

Wash-Up

Prior to re-opening, ensure all mechanical dishwashers operate at optimum levels and reach the correct temperature. Ensure all heads of spray taps are cleaned and disinfected. Use adequate and safe chemicals. If equipment is being hand washed, use the correct double sink method with a drain area and wash at the correct temperature and using the correct chemicals.

* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.
11. Back of House

Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol
The frequency of cleaning and disinfection must be increased in all areas to at least twice daily. Particular attention must be paid to frequently touched surfaces which must be visibly clean at all times. These include:

- Entry/exit doors
- Handrails
- Smoking areas
- Exterior seating/benches
- Exterior of refuse bins
- Toilets
- Desks, chairs and office furniture
- Computers, printers and communication devices
- Tables and seating in employee rest rooms
- Door release buttons
- Light switches throughout the property
- Lockers, etc.

Physical Distancing Protocol
Physical distancing protocols that follow the Government’s Public Health advice must be observed in shared office spaces, employee locker rooms and other relevant employees facilities.

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres* and a minimum of 1 metre* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.

Where the food service environment makes it difficult to physically distance, employers need to consider what measures to put in place to protect employees.

Examples of practical measures to adhere to physical distancing guidance in the food services environment are to:

- Stagger workstations on either side of service area so that food workers are not facing one another;
- Provide PPE if required, such as face masks, disposable gloves and clean aprons/uniforms. The use of PPE would be routine in high-risk areas of food premises that produce ready-to-eat and cooked foods. When employees are dressed in PPE it is possible to reduce distance between workers;
- Limit the number of employees in a food preparation area at any one time;
- Organise employees into working groups or teams to facilitate reduced interaction between groups.

Physical barriers such as sneeze guards/plexiglass and partitions can be useful, particularly in back of house areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain apart. These physical barriers need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected.

Employees should have a self-sufficient workstation where possible, with an individual computer, telephone and all ancillary equipment.

In offices where meetings/consultations take place, the physical distancing protocol must be adhered to and entry numbers limited. Seats and tables of all visitors must be cleaned and disinfected after each visit.

Employee Toilet Facilities
A strict queuing system and limitations on number of users within toilets must be established to ensure physical distancing.

Install clear markings to minimise contact between employees and to ensure that queues follow physical distancing requirements. Encourage the use of alternate sinks.

The frequency of cleaning and disinfection must be increased in toilet facilities to at least twice daily. Ensure splashes are avoided while cleaning these facilities.

Ensure soap and hand sanitiser dispensers, disposable tissue dispensers and other similar devices are regularly checked, cleaned and maintained. Repair or replace any defective units.

Cellars, Cold Rooms & Store Rooms
Hand sanitiser (touchless where possible) should be placed at all entrances to cellars, cold rooms and storerooms with instructions that they be used on entering and leaving.

Clear signage must tell employees to observe physical distancing. A distance of 2 metres* and a minimum of 1 metre* should be maintained between staff if the size of cellars, cold rooms and storerooms allows. Where 2 metres* is not possible all other measures to protect staff should be in place.

Access systems such as biometric touchpads, keypads or swipe cards must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

Beer lines will require cleaning before re-opening. Breweries recommend giving at least 3 weeks’ notice.

Clean and disinfect the dispense head and keg neck at every keg change.

* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.
12. Reception Desk & Offices

**Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol**

Cleaning and disinfection must take place regularly, particularly in high contact areas such as the reception area. This must focus on frequently touched surfaces especially counters, desks, equipment, communication devices, door release buttons, etc.

**Physical Distancing Protocol**

Physical distancing protocols that follow the Government’s Public Health advice must be observed in shared office spaces, employee locker rooms and other relevant employees facilities.

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres* and a minimum of 1 metre* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.

Physical barriers such as sneeze guards / plexiglass and partitions can be useful, particularly in back of house areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain apart. These physical barriers need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected. These screens do not need to be floor to ceiling but should be of an adequate height (e.g. cover a person in a standing position) and width to block the pathway from the nose and mouth to the face and workspace of the other persons. Screens may be fixed or mobile depending on requirements including emergency access. Ref: Section D3 of Work Safely Protocol

Employees should have a self-sufficient workstation where possible, with an individual computer, telephone and all ancillary equipment.

In offices where face to face meetings/consultations take place, they must be arranged in line with the Government Public Health advice that is in place at the time of holding the meeting. The length of the meeting and the number attending should be kept to a minimum and participants must maintain physical distancing at all times. Seats and tables of all visitors must be cleaned and disinfected after each visit.

A designated employee, where possible, should be stationed at Front of House to control physical distancing measures.

* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.
13. Suppliers of Goods & Services

Restaurants must contact all suppliers to ensure that they have put all necessary protocols in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

**Note:** Fresh food deliveries must be treated separately to other deliveries. HACCP only refers to food deliveries.

**Deliveries**
- An employee must meet each supplier who is delivering to the restaurant.
- All delivery personnel must follow the Government’s Public Health advice on physical distancing when picking up deliveries and passing deliveries to guests:
  - Wear suitable, clean and protective clothing where necessary.
  - Maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness.
  - Clean hands before and after each delivery transaction. The use of gloves is not recommended as this can give a false sense of security. Hand washing is best practice.
- If possible, delivery drivers should not be allowed to enter the site (with the exception of food deliveries which adhere to HACCP delivery protocols). Employees should not come in close contact with drivers. HACCP is in the context of food safety and re-opening only and not for COVID-19 prevention.

**Dealing with Drivers**
Delivery personnel must be asked to use hand sanitiser if required to exit their vehicle and enter the premises.
- Provide hand sanitisers (alcohol or non-alcohol based) in the delivery area.
- Hand hygiene, in conjunction with physical distancing, is also of paramount importance.
- Drivers must comply with HACCP procedures and ensure that all transport containers delivering food products are kept clean and frequently disinfected.
- Disposable containers and packaging, where possible, must be used to avoid the need to clean any returns. In the case of reusable containers, appropriate hygiene and disinfection protocols must be followed by employees.

**Entering the Restaurant**
Delivery personnel must use hand sanitisers if required to exit their vehicle and enter the buildings.

Signage must make drivers aware of 1) physical distancing when picking up deliveries and passing deliveries to employees 2) the need to maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness and 3) the need to wear clean protective clothing.

A system for recording visits to the site/property by employees/others should be put in place as required (contact log). Ref. Section D9 of Work Safely Protocol. The same system should be implemented for suppliers who are required to enter the site/property.

**Accepting Deliveries**
- Ideally deliveries should only be made before opening. However, if the restaurant is open, delivery drivers must not enter through public areas and drivers must not come in close contact with guests.
- A goods reception area must be set up that is large enough to ensure physical distancing for both driver and restaurant employees. HACCP procedures must be strictly implemented and observed there at all times. HACCP based procedures are required for food safety and not for the prevention of COVID-19.
- All excess packaging must be removed by the driver. All outer packing must be removed (if possible) and placed in a suitable disposal unit.
- When signing for deliveries, employees should only use their own pens. In case of electronic devices, both device and pen must be cleaned and disinfected prior to signing.
- The delivery area must be cleaned and disinfected regularly.

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.*
Appendix 1

Source: COVID-19: Guidance for Food Service Businesses, V1.2 19.10.2020 (HSE Health Protection Surveillance Centre)

Controlled and Uncontrolled Environments

CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENTS

Public and private venues or workplaces are considered ‘controlled’ environments. Examples are workplaces, schools, museums, swimming pools, galleries, cinemas, stadiums, conference facilities and casinos. Food businesses are considered ‘controlled’ environments, which includes restaurants and cafés.

Requirements (for food businesses) in controlled environments

- Use additional signage to ask customers not to enter if they have symptoms.
- Regulate entry so that the premises do not become overcrowded. Encourage pre booking as much as possible. A text may be sent to remind the guest to stay away if unwell.
- Use floor markings inside the premises to facilitate compliance with the social distancing advice of 2 metres, particularly in the most crowded areas, such as tills.
- Use vertical signage to direct customers to facilitate movement within the premises while maintaining 2 metre distance.
- Make regular announcements to remind customers to follow social distancing advice and clean their hands regularly.
- Place plexiglass barriers at tills and counters if feasible, as an additional element of protection for workers and customers.
- Adequate hand hygiene and toilet facilities. Provide additional pop-up hand hygiene stations or facilities if possible, providing soap, water and hand sanitiser.
- Establish and supervise a schedule of frequent cleaning of bathrooms and frequently touched surfaces.
- Customers should be seated at a table except when using the toilet, paying, and departing.
- Clear signage should indicate the location of and route to the bathrooms.
- Limit the number of servers per group of guests to the smallest number that is practical.
- There is a limit of on the number of people gathering in a venue at one time — in line with NPHET guidance on indoor gatherings. Multiple gatherings are allowed in venue facilities provided they are in separate ‘defined spaces’ and there are systems to prevent intermingling in common spaces (e.g., entrances, exits and toilet facilities).
- Keep contact details for the person making the booking. Explain that the reason for keeping these records is to provide them to Public Health for contact tracing in the event that someone becomes ill with COVID-19. These records should be kept for 28 days and be compliant with GDPR.
- Physical distancing of 2-metres should be maintained between tables. However, if this is not possible, this can be reduced to 1 metre in controlled environments if all of the other risk mitigations requirements outlined have been met AND pre-booked time-limited slots are in place, which are a maximum of 1 hour 45 minutes duration. There should be a minimum of 15 minutes between bookings in order to allow for adequate cleaning and to allow customers to leave and enter, without mixing.
- Physical distancing of at least 1 metre should be maintained between people seated at tables.
- Encourage the use of contactless payments where possible, without disadvantaging older or vulnerable customers
- Use disposable menus or laminated menus that can be adequately cleaned after each use.
- Unnecessary items should be removed from tables and single use rather than shared condiments should be provided.

Considerations:
Where at all practical, workers should provide services to only 1 gathering and should not move between multiple gatherings in different venue locations (e.g. two different function rooms).

Where possible, facilities such as toilets should not be used simultaneously by multiple gatherings. However, if they are cleaned in between usage, they may be used separately by different gatherings, within the same time period.

UNCONTROLLED ENVIRONMENTS

These are settings where people have open access to the premises and generally don’t know each other and are unlikely to be in close contact with each other for an extended period of time. Examples are supermarkets, retail stores, shopping malls, and takeaway-only food outlets.

Requirements:
- Physical distancing of 2 metres for customers (who are not close friends or family).
- As far as reasonably possible, physical distancing of 2 metres — and a minimum of 1 metre – should be maintained between workers.
- Keep contact tracing records for workers.

Considerations:
As much as possible use contactless payment systems to limit physical contact.

FOR TOURISM SPECIFIC BUSINESS SUPPORTS,
visit www.failteireland.ie

OR EMAIL
business.supports@failteireland.ie
@Failte_Ireland
Fáilte Ireland
#TourismTogether