

Coronavirus, Round 2: A Restaurant Survival Plan

Use the lessons of 2020 to prepare for a second wave of dining limits and possible closures.



Businesses are experiencing a new round of uncertainty as coronavirus cases rise in many places. The pandemic's latest surge is forcing restaurants in some areas to close or limit indoor dining with little warning or time to plan.

Here are things you should consider, including a checklist to make sure you're prepared in case your business is affected.

Stay tuned to what's happening

- Connect with businesses in your area to share [best practices](#)
 - Mobile ordering
 - Contactless payment
 - Curbside pickup
 - Outdoor dining
- Know the guidelines and regulations in your area and review often as they change frequently.
- Discuss situations with the public health department.

Consider contact tracing

- Decide if contact tracing is required or appropriate in your area.
- Choose the best way to [collect customer information](#).

- Train your staff how to collect names and numbers (or addresses) of guests.
- Assure customers of privacy protections and how you secure their data

Inform employees

- Encourage self-reporting if [employees](#) have a positive coronavirus test.
- Assign someone to contact employees and answer concerns.

Inform customers

- Over-communicate and be transparent about what your business is doing.
- Update Facebook, your website, Google and other sources where your hours, menu and business information are posted.
- Have guidelines and assignments on how to reply to posts.
- Videos are very impactful. Consider one to show how you are keeping your restaurant clean and safe.
- Let your customers and employees know what you are doing when you close, such as deep-cleaning, refreshed decor, new menu items, etc.

Be prepared to shift your business model

- If you close, but are able to continue with [takeout and delivery](#), market these services frequently so consumers know.
- Look at ways to streamline efficiency and create procedures so you can respond quickly to business changes.
- If you pivoted to a takeout menu in the spring, consider going back to that menu or specials (such as family meals).

Financials

- Be aware of upcoming expenses and your cash flow situation.
- If you received money from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), contact your financial advisor to learn how this disruption in business will affect that program.

Deep-clean

- Follow CDC [cleaning guidelines](#).
- Create a deep-cleaning checklist (with contacts for services, if needed).
- [Sanitize indoor air](#) in the dining room.

Here is a checklist of recommended shutdown actions. Some steps are for a full shutdown. Adapt your checklist as needed for business model shifts.

EMPLOYEE RECORDS

- Change payroll
- Change schedule
- Update documentation

DIGITAL AND SOCIAL PLATFORMS

- Update Facebook and post about changes
- Update Google business profiles
- Update website

INVENTORY (KITCHEN, BAR, PREP AREAS)

- Contact your vendors and suppliers to let them know if you have to make changes
- Take a full inventory of the products you have with expiration dates
- Update Inventory Manager™
- Freeze products that you can
- Donate or use up perishable items
- Cover and seal all bottles

KITCHEN

- Clean equipment, floors, doors, etc.
- Remove grease from fryers
- Turn off unused appliances (case-by-case scenarios)
- Clean ice machine
- Clean garbage cans thoroughly
- Clean floor drains

FRONT OF THE HOUSE

- Clean equipment, floors, doors, tables, chairs, cabinets, etc.
- Return dirty linens to vendor (or wash)
- Clean garbage cans thoroughly

BEVERAGE STATIONS/BAR

- Clean and disassemble equipment
- Drain/flush beverage lines if not being used
- Clean floor drains

CANCEL (OR PUT ON HOLD) OPERATIONAL SERVICES

- TV/cable
- Internet
- POS system
- HVAC
- Linens and mats service
- Garbage/grease trap pickup
- Cleaning services
- Landscape services
- Accounting and payroll services
- Rent
- Marketing services
- Delivery providers

CHECK-IN

- Schedule check-ins to make sure everything is working properly
- Monitor temperatures of freezers, refrigerators
- Check on security information



28%

of franchisees say digital payments are their primary form of payment in 2020

Source: [Nation's Restaurant News](#)

47%

of restaurants are planning to use more versatile ingredients and reduce the number of menu items in response to COVID-19

Source: [Technomic Inc.](#)

54%

decline in seated dining from October 2019 to October 2020

Source: [Statista.com](#)