



BUSINESS DINING 2.0:

A Guide for Empowering COVID-Conscious Diners

A NEW 'SOCIAL CONTRACT'

When state governments mandated that restaurants shut their doors to in-house dining, it was an easy-to-enforce, one-size-fits-all directive. Restaurants bore the brunt of the pandemic's first economic blows, but they also became leaders in adopting safety standards that allowed them to continue operating safely. The limited service options, meanwhile, made it easy for diners to know what to do.

States are now reopening, and the situation remains fluid. In order to responsibly welcome customers back into dining rooms, restaurants are transforming themselves to ease public safety concerns.



Restaurants are changing almost everything about how they think, move, and serve. For all of these efforts to make a difference, though, they need diners to join them.

This guide was co-created by Dinova, the preferred business dining network, and the corporate and restaurant partners who contributed their time and experiences. We designed it for the companies and diners in our network but are sharing it with everyone, because as one of them eloquently stated: *There's nothing proprietary about keeping people safe.*



INCLUDED IN THIS GUIDE

- Who's Responsible for Ensuring Restaurant Safety?
- The Restaurant Industry's Pandemic Response
- The New Diner Experience: What's Changed?
- The COVID-Conscious Diner Cheat Sheet

The idea of a new social contract - one that keeps both restaurants and diners safe, together - emerged recently as part of **"SAFETY FIRST: SERVING FOOD AND PROTECTING PEOPLE DURING COVID-19."**

Because restaurants are a key battleground in the fight to contain COVID-19, success will require both restaurants and diners to adhere to new safety measures, as people's attitudes shift from fearful to cautious.

According to information shared in a May 28 webinar presented by Datassential, a food research organization, "72% of consumers don't trust others to act responsibly when restaurants open up."

WE WANT TO EMPOWER YOU, AS A DINER, TO DO YOUR PART IN THIS NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT.

We want to help you find answers about the areas of most concern for you. We want you to feel confident in selecting safe options and engaging in practices that have been designed to protect you as you get back out there - visiting with your customers and coworkers, dining together. For right now, information is the most powerful tool we can share.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING RESTAURANT SAFETY?

In short: everyone.



THEIR RESPONSIBILITY

- Safe Food Handling
- Sanitizing Dining Rooms
- Complying With Government Ordinances



SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

- Hand Hygiene
- Social Distancing
- Staying Home When Sick
- Showing Kindness



YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

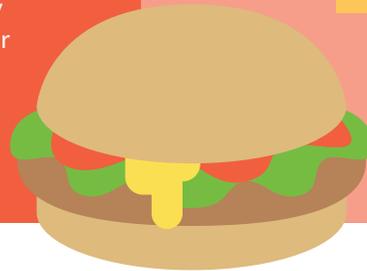
- Planning Ahead
- Knowing What to Expect
- Complying With Restaurants' Rules



Since you, the diner, are likely accustomed to the "golden rules" of pandemic safety—hand washing, social distancing, and staying home when you're ill—the rest of your part boils down to patience and preparedness.

THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY'S PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Restaurants have a challenging road ahead, as they adapt (or even rethink) operating procedures under new government regulations. And many must do this even as they face lower revenues and reduced employee headcount. Here are the restaurant industry best practices shaping these efforts.



UNDERSTANDING HOW COVID-19 IS SPREAD



ASSIGNING WORKPLACE SAFETY COORDINATORS



COMMUNICATING POLICY AND CONDUCTING TRAINING ON SAFETY PRACTICES



SCREENING EMPLOYEES FOR ILLNESS



WASHING HANDS FREQUENTLY



FOCUSING ON SAFE FOOD HANDLING



WEARING MASKS AND GLOVES



PRACTICING SOCIAL DISTANCING (AND ENCOURAGING PATRONS TO DO THE SAME)



USING 'NO-CONTACT' TRANSFERS FOR ALL SUPPLY DELIVERIES AND ORDER PICK-UPS

Restaurants are counting on diners to help them keep everyone safe (and their doors open) as they bounce back.



THE NEW DINER EXPERIENCE: WHAT'S CHANGED?

YOU MAY BE SCREENED UPON ENTRY

Restaurants in some areas are required to assist with additional screening and tracing efforts. While governments can require restaurants to comply with these guest screening measures, it's your right to refuse to participate just as it is the restaurant's right to refuse service if they believe you pose a safety risk.

HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU MAY BE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE

Temperature-taking

Restaurants can require guests to have their temperatures taken, as long as they don't do so discriminately: If they require one person to have their temperature taken, they have to require it for everyone.

Health declaration forms

- These forms typically ask about:
 - Whether you're exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms (fever of 100.4, shortness of breath, coughing, sore throat, diarrhea),
 - Whether you've had close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, and
 - Whether or not you've traveled internationally or domestically (i.e., air travel or cruise) in the past 14 days.
- Some may request that all diners fill these out; others may require you to fill one out only if the staff determines that you are exhibiting COVID-like symptoms.

Contact-tracing

- While it may sound intimidating, contact tracing is simply a means of collecting information so that restaurant staff can notify you if there's a chance you've been exposed
- Details that restaurants are being asked to help collect range from "a daily log of phone numbers, emails, and arrival times for everybody who comes in to eat," to "contact information for all patrons, as well as exactly when they ate, where they ate, and which employees served them."

1.

DINER SCREENING

BEWARE CONTACT-TRACING TEXT AND EMAIL SCAMS

The FTC has issued warnings regarding new contact-tracing text and email scams. Protect yourself with these best practices:

- Set up two-factor authentication on your devices
- Keep up with software updates
- Avoid clicking links from suspicious messages
- Verify the authenticity of the sender by contacting the agency directly - not through the message
- Watch out for the hallmark of scams - requests for your personal information (e.g., social security number, credit card info, etc.)



2. SOCIAL DISTANCING

SOCIAL DISTANCING WILL BE ENFORCED

While social distancing may seem incompatible with your previous restaurant dining experiences, it's one of the most straightforward and individually actionable ways to help prevent the spread of the virus. It's also simple: areas containing fewer people with more space around each person lowers the risk of person-to-person transmission.

WORRIED ABOUT REDUCED CAPACITY? HERE'S WHAT TO DO.

- Use call-ahead seating.
- Make a reservation.
- Order takeout.
- Be patient and flexible.



HERE'S HOW THESE NEW MEASURES COULD PLAY OUT

Reduced/restricted seating

- Whether state-mandated or voluntarily instituted, diner headcount limits mean fewer people breathing particulates into a restaurant's space.
- Reducing the number of people in a restaurant may take the shape of capacity limits (e.g., 25%, 50%, 75%), equations (e.g., limit of 10 customers per 500 square feet), and/or table-level restrictions (e.g., "no more than five guests per table," and/or "only those you've been sheltered with").

Partitions/seating configurations

- Restaurants are being advised to space all tables 6 feet apart and all barstools 6 feet apart - which frequently involves reducing the number of tables in dining areas and blocking off seats to enforce distancing minimums.
- Physical barriers - things like plexiglass partitions, oversized sneeze guards, and clear shower curtains - are being used to break larger dining areas into smaller areas and modify dining rooms where there's less space to spread diners out.

Fresh air dining

- Restaurants are being advised to bring more outdoor air in through their ventilation systems, in addition to regular cleaning and disinfecting stove hoods that circulate air in food prep areas.
- Outdoor areas are now believed to pose a lower risk of person-to-person transmission than enclosed spaces, but restaurants with patios or the ability to extend seating into parking lots will still be expected to practice social-distancing measures.

Call-ahead seating/requiring reservations

- Virtual waitlists enable restaurants to eliminate some of the risks posed by having diners co-mingle while waiting for tables.
- Some restaurants are having guests wait in their cars until their tables are ready.
- Requiring reservations gives restaurants a way to control headcounts while enabling them to schedule proper sanitization between seating parties.

Signage

- Restaurants are optimizing their workflows and staff zones to enable traffic patterns that minimize unnecessary exposure for all parties.
- Key areas where they are being asked to enforce social distancing and/or clearly designate traffic flows include lobbies, hostess stands, restrooms, and pathways for food pickup and deliveries.

Social distancing guidelines recommend staying 6 ft. apart from others.

WHAT DOES 6 FEET LOOK LIKE?



SERVICE LOOKS A LITTLE DIFFERENT

Prior to March 2020, the restaurant industry was already grappling with the best ways to offer takeout and delivery. Both are resource-intensive service levels that affect every aspect of a restaurant's operations. The pandemic shutdown, however, moved these activities from optional to essential.

Just as diners make individual decisions on when to return to restaurant dining rooms based on their comfort and risk levels, restaurants must decide when and how to reopen; expect to see some of your favorite restaurants opening up their dining rooms, while others choose to provide takeout and/or delivery only (or even remain temporarily closed).

Even as more dining rooms open, diners can expect to see these low-risk alternatives to in-restaurant dining continue to evolve, even at high-end eateries not traditionally associated with meals to-go.

RE:PACKAGING

With the new emphasis on meals-to-go - and the importance of consumer confidence that their food have minimal contact from kitchen to table - restaurants are using a variety of packaging and service offerings. As you research, take note of options like individually packaged meals, tamper-proof containers, and more single-use items.



3. SERVICE OFFERS

WHAT ABOUT THIRD-PARTY DELIVERY APPS?

Before you click on that third-party delivery app, be sure to visit the restaurant's website first to see if they offer inhouse delivery. While third-party services have helped more restaurants than ever be able to offer delivery, there are good reasons to order directly from the restaurant whenever possible. Not only can ordering direct cut down on hefty service charges, restaurants appreciate being able to better control the experience for you - and may even offer special menus or discounts for ordering directly. So explore your options and weigh the full costs and benefits before choosing.

Dinova customers, please note: Third-party orders do not count toward rebates for your company or myDinova Rewards points for you.

WHEN TO USE



Curbside Pickup

- You're familiar with the area or able to receive clear instructions regarding the setup prior to arrival; or
- The restaurant has an ample parking area that allows employees to place your order directly into your vehicle's trunk; or
- You're comfortable picking up your order yourself, but still want to minimize contact with others.



Contactless Delivery

- You need to stay in your current location and have food brought in, but want to have the least possible interaction with others; and
- The restaurant has clearly documented information regarding its tamper-proof packaging and procedures; and
- Your location has a way for you to visually verify the delivery as it happens, reducing the possibility of someone else carrying off your meal.



Takeout to Your Hotel Room

- You're more concerned about controlling the environment where you'll be eating your food than you are about getting to or from the restaurant.



4. CLEANING UP

THE ENVIRONMENT MAY LOOK DIFFERENT, TOO

The consensus is that restaurants are ahead of the curve, as they have to constantly focus on safe food-handling practices. While most of those involve food prep areas, restaurants are now following additional sanitization protocols - "Overt Sanitization" - that diners will be able to see in action for themselves

Keep an eye out for QR codes. Some restaurants are using them to enable quick access to their menus - so you may want to go ahead and download a QR reader app before you head out to dine!



Download iOS app to search with COVID safety filters

PROMOTING CLEAN ENVIRONMENTS

WHAT RESTAURANTS MAY BE DOING

- ✓ **Requiring Masks**
Expect to see them worn by kitchen staff, hosts, servers, bartenders and support staff.
- ✓ **Providing Individual Servings**
Instead of the shared salt and pepper shakers or ketchup bottles you're used to seeing, expect to see individual packets (perhaps available by request only).
- ✓ **Eliminating Self-Serve Stations**
Beverages, for example, may be served in cans or bottles instead.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ **Carry Your Own Mask**
Some restaurants may require you to wear one until your food arrives, so it's a good idea to have one handy (along with a bag to store it in).
- ✓ **Wash Your Hands Frequently**
Many restaurants are providing hand sanitizer, but it doesn't hurt to bring your own sanitizer and wipes.
- ✓ **Take Advantage of Mobile Technology**
Use your phone to view the menu, order ahead through the restaurant's app, or even pay your tab, at some restaurants (using your mobile wallet or apps like Venmo and Zelle).
- ✓ **Never Bring Outside Silverware or Beverages**

One thing is for certain, everyone should bring an extra dose of patience when they dine out. Restaurants may be working with reduced menu options in order to serve with fewer employees or compensate for supply chain issues (e.g., meat shortages). Service may run a little slower, but they're working hard to keep you safe. So be sure to tip fairly and smile, even if you are wearing a mask.



THE COVID-CONSCIOUS DINER CHEAT SHEET

Navigating the new restaurant dining landscape

What's your comfort level?

Mood:

I'm so ready to eat in a restaurant again!



Recommendation:

Go for it! But bring your patience and be prepared for some changes.

Mood:

I'm hungry now, but still unsure about dining in.



Recommendation:

Keep calm and carry out.

Mood:

I prefer to avoid any contact.



Recommendation:

Support restaurants and feed your cravings with contactless delivery.

VENTURING IN? WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Your favorite restaurants may look different. Expect to see partitions, spaced-out tables, new signage, and staff wearing masks.

Building and table capacity may be lower. This is to ensure proper social distancing. If there's a wait, you may need to wait in your car; some restaurants have also adopted "virtual waitlists."

You may be screened upon entry Some restaurants may require temperature checks or health declaration forms.

You have the right to refuse to participate, just as they have the right to refuse you service if you refuse to participate or are deemed a risk.

CONTACT TRACING 101

What is it? A disease control measure that seeks to curtail transmission by identifying and notifying people who may have been exposed.

What does it look like?

Some restaurants are keeping a more detailed file on each customer. That might include:

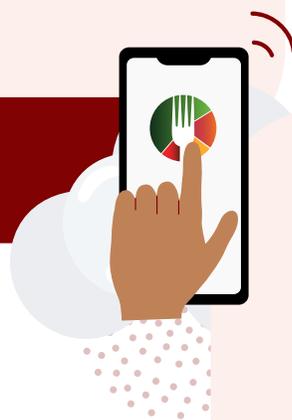
- Your name/contact info
- What you ordered
- Where you sat
- Who served you

Bonus Resources:

When you're ready to resume business dining, here are a couple of helpful coronavirus information links to keep handy:

- 1) **CDC**, for general information on the latest developments: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- 2) **CDC's Health Department Directory**, for direct links to local resources in all 50 states and the District of Columbia: <https://www.cdc.gov/publichealthgateway/healthdirectories/healthdepartments.html>
- 3) **Johns Hopkins COVID-19 Visual Dashboard**, which gives you the ability to drill down into the latest available data on cases in the U.S. at the county level: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/us-map>

Use the Dinova iOS app to learn more about the safety measures your favorite restaurants are taking and find options that meet your needs.



A LITTLE PREPARATION GOES A LONG WAY

Simple ways to make your meal more enjoyable.

- ✓ **Look up restaurant policies ahead of time.** Hours and procedures may have changed.
- ✓ **Get familiar with the menu by looking it up online.** Some restaurants are eliminating printed menus, for now.
- ✓ **Make a reservation, if possible.** With reduced capacity, this can ensure you're not late for your post-lunch meeting (or having to wait out in the car).
- ✓ **Set up your phone with contactless payment apps.** It'll minimize the exchange of cards or cash.
- ✓ **Bring the mask and hand sanitizer, just in case.** Better yet: bring a paper bag with you to hold your mask while you dine.

Dinova's desktop restaurant search tool: <https://search.dinova.com>