



COVID-19 GUIDANCE: Community Feeding

The goal of these actions is to protect the public, volunteers, and employees attending and working at community feeding locations. The service that volunteers and employees are providing to ensure Pennsylvanians continue to have access to a safe, reliable food supply is critical during the COVID-19 mitigation phase. Equally important is taking steps to ensure the safety of people attending and volunteering at these feeding locations during the COVID-19 mitigation phase. Please read through the guidance for community feeding locations found below.

Feeding Location:

- Transition indoor or outdoor community feeding sites to take out or pick up options to minimize or eliminate congregate settings and groups of more than 10 people whenever possible.
- Pre-package or assemble meals for clients to pick up on site.
- Eliminate or modify indoor and outdoor communal feeding areas to avoid congregate settings and encourage social distancing when consuming prepared foods.
- Whenever possible, separate take out or pick up stations to limit crowds and allow for social distancing
- Remove tablecloths and sanitize tables regularly.
- Increase frequency of cleaning of condiment holders, writing instruments, door knobs, light switches, restrooms, and all other non-food contact surfaces frequently touched by clients and employees.
- Increase frequency of cleaning and sanitizing per the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection guidance](#) of all hard surfaces, including tables, counter tops, and any serving utensils that are being utilized by employees and clients during pickup/delivery options.
 - Some food pantries are sanitizing hourly or more frequently. Please contact your local health department if you have questions about best practices in sanitizing your space.
 - If you are using a bleach cleaning agent, do not mix it with ammonia.
- Ensure that social distancing of six feet per person for non-family members is maintained and make clear that family members can participate together, stand in line together, etc.
- Limit the number of people in lines.

Clients:

- Ensure all clients are aware of any new procedures.
 - Post notices in areas where clients will be picking up food
- Whenever possible, make hand sanitizer available for client use when arriving at the site and as needed. If possible, request that clients wash or sanitize their hands before selecting their food, or wear disposable gloves, if available.
- Pre-bag produce so people do not touch produce in self-select model pantries.
- Consider keeping the amount of food on display low and restock more frequently to reduce the amount of food touched by different clients.
- Instead of making food available for clients to browse, consider a menu-only option with volunteers taking orders from clients and packing bags for them.
- If meals are provided, consider providing boxed or bagged meals only, and eliminate buffet line or salad bar style service.
- Ensure that social distancing of six feet per person for non-family members is maintained and make clear that family members can participate in activities together, stand in line together, etc.
- Limit the number of clients at any given time as necessary to reduce outdoor/indoor crowding and monitor lines to meet social distancing guidance.

Volunteers and Employees:

- Remind volunteers and employees of best hygiene practices, including washing their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Send home sick employees.
- Encourage volunteers and employees to practice social distancing at home and during off-hours to avoid risk of exposure and remain healthy.
- Ask volunteers who intend to volunteer at more than one location in a single day to thoroughly wash their hands and sanitize all equipment, and perhaps consider changing their clothes before entering an additional site to avoid the risk of carrying the virus from one location to another.

Additional Resources:

- [Pennsylvania Department of Health](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

Contact Information:

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Food Assistance
1-800-468-2433
RA-Fooddist@pa.gov