



COVID-19: FOOD SAFETY & HANDLING

Sound food safety practices are imperative to help prevent foodborne illnesses and the potential spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). Currently, the FDA has not confirmed that the transmission of COVID-19 occurs through food consumption or from food packaging. Evidence indicates that person-to-person transmission of COVID-19 is mainly by respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. Infectious droplets can be present and live on surfaces. Therefore, it is possible that a person can contract the virus from touching a contaminated surface, followed by touching his or her own eyes, nose, or mouth.

As details continue to develop on the spread of COVID-19, companies within the food service industry should monitor information and recommendations published by the FDA, CDC, State Health Departments, etc. Implementing the recommended practices below can help prevent the spread of COVID-19. However, these outlined practices are not a comprehensive list.

Food Safety Recommendations:

- Frequently wash your hands before, during, and after handling food with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds. Wash and sanitize your hands after touching frequently used equipment and surfaces. Hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol) should supplement hand washing, but not used as a substitution.
- Prior to consumption, thoroughly rinse and wash fresh fruits and vegetables under tap water. Use a clean produce brush for scrubbing produce with skins or rinds.
- Clean and/or wipe down food packaging for added precaution. Clean canned food lids prior to opening.
- Refrigerate or freeze all purchased perishable food items within 2-hours. Maintain foods at safe temperatures - hot food hot and cold food cold.
- Properly store and separate raw and cooked foods. Use separate cutting boards and knives / utensils for raw meat, poultry, seafood and fresh produce.
- Regularly clean and sanitize all touched surfaces such as counters, tables, door handles, etc. Use EPA- registered disinfectants and manufacturer product labels should be reviewed for effectiveness, precautions, and if safe to use around food.



Remember the Four Basic Food Safety Steps:

CLEAN – wash and sanitize hands, surfaces, packaging, fresh fruits and vegetables

SEPARATE – raw from fresh foods

COOK – all foods thoroughly meeting recommended safe minimum internal temperatures

CHILL – refrigerate foods at 40° F or below and freeze at 0° F or below

Questions? Contact BNPLossControl@berkleypac.com

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Other Considerations:

- If you feel ill or you are sick, stay home.
- Wear cloth face coverings in public settings and in the workplace particularly where social distancing is difficult. Surgical masks and N95 respirator masks are critical PPE that should be reserved for healthcare workers.
- Practice social distancing (a minimum of 6-feet apart) for customer and employee safety in both work and public settings.

Resources:

Safe Food Handling

[Shopping for Food During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

[Food Safety and the Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)

[What Grocery and Food Retail Workers Need to Know about COVID-19](#)



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