

Frequently Asked Food Business Questions

Q Can restaurants and other food service facilities stay open?

A Yes. They are limited to carry out, delivery, and drive-thru ordering. Food cannot be consumed on the premise at this time.

Q Are company employee cafeterias required to close or eliminate dining room seating?

A We advise the following for employee cafeterias:

- Do not allow self-service or buffet style dining
- Containerize meals for the employees
- Ensure employees can eat meals while observing social distancing.
 - Recommend allowing employees to take meals to workstations on to other parts of the complex to eat
 - Encouraging employees to in shifts

Q Can mobile food units continue to operate?

A Yes, as long as they do not have seating outside their mobile unit.

Q Can customers wait inside the facility while food is prepared for take-out?

A We advise against this practice. We recommend delivery and curbside service only service. We also recommend promoting online and phone ordering

Q Can convenience stores sell unpackaged, take-out food (e.g. slices of pizza, hot dogs)?

A We advise against this practice and encourage pre-containerizing foods.

Q Can facilities provide self service take out orders?

A We advise against all self-service of food. We recommend all food are containerized by food facilities staff.

Q Who will enforce this if facilities refuse to cooperate?

A View enforcement information at the following link:

https://dps.iowa.gov/dps-and-dph-explain-legal-authorities-under-disaster-emergency-proclamation?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Q Where do I go to find information about financial business assistance?

A Iowa Economic Development:

<https://www.iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/our-agency-detail-resources/6710>

Q Where do I find information for employee financial assistance?

A Iowa WorkForce Development <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/>

Q Can hotels remain open and serve food?

A Yes, dining areas must be closed but hotels can provide curbside, delivery or room service. Do not allow self-service of unpackaged foods.

Q Can hotels offer alcohol beverages via room service?

A Contact Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division regarding question about the sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages - Education@iowaabd.com, phone # 515-281-7400

Q When will Proclamation end?

A Please visit: <https://dia.iowa.gov/about/novel-coronavirus-covid-19>

Q The Senior Centers are to be closed as per the Governor's Proclamation. Can a licensed congregate meal site still make or receive meals and package and deliver them to the Senior Citizens?

A Senior Centers that offer meals to the elderly may provide delivery and curbside meals.

Q Can a non-profit provide food to families in need without a license?

A Based on current Food Bureau Policy, if there is no cost to the consumer, a non-profit may provide meals free of charge to the needy without obtaining a food establishment license. On premises dining is not advised. Curbside and home delivery are encouraged.

Q Where can I get updated COVID-19 information from the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals?

A <https://dia.iowa.gov/about/novel-coronavirus-covid-19>

Q Where to call to report if someone has contracted Coronavirus

A IDPH Disease Reporting Hotline: 1-800-362-2736

Outbreak Reporting - The disease reporting hotline is answered 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It should be used to immediately report outbreaks or instances of disease that occur in unusual numbers or circumstances, unusual syndromes, or uncommon diseases. Outbreaks may be infectious, environmental or occupational in origin and include food-borne outbreaks or illness secondary to chemical exposure (e.g., pesticides, anhydrous ammonia).

Q Can a Food Establishment cater to a business? How should the food be served?

A A caterer can deliver the food. They serve catered food at the business. We recommend offering delivered meals in containerized individual serving units.

Guidance for for the business or other parties receiving the food:

- Do not allow self-service or buffet style dining
- Order foods that are already containerized into individual serving units

- Ensure employees can eat meals with social distancing space and monitor spacing by either eating in shifts or allow meals to be taken by employees to be consumed at work stations or other areas of the facility where social distancing can be achieved.

Q As we see supplies in grocery stores decline and restaurants may have excess food supplies due to only being open for drive thru or carryout. Are restaurants allowed to sell things like eggs and chicken instead of prepared meals?

A Restaurants could provide these type of sales under a Food Service Establishment license up to \$20,000 annually. If the restaurant also holds a Retail Food Establishment License, there is not a sales cap.

Q Can a retail store (grocery or convenience store) allow self-service beverages?

A We ask that each operation assess this situation and consider discontinuing self-service beverages and implement measures to encourage social distancing and mitigate customer to customer contamination risks.