

Yellowstone County Health Officer Order of March 16, 2020
Guidelines for eligibility to re-open food establishments

The COVID-19 outbreak is an unprecedented, rapidly evolving situation. The March 16, 2020 Health Officer Order will remain in effect until at least midnight on Monday, March 23, 2020. The very earliest that affected establishments will be allowed to re-open is Tuesday, March 24, 2020. At this point, it is not possible to say whether the current Health Officer order will remain in place or be modified.

Given the dynamic situation with COVID-19 and its spread throughout the community, state, nation, and world, completely rescinding the order and returning to “business as usual” on March 24, 2020 will not happen and should not be expected by owners or operators. In the interest of the public’s health, it is imperative that businesses operate in a safe and efficient manner. The decision to extend or modify the March 16, 2010 Health Officer Order will be based on the following key factors:

1. The current understanding of the epidemiology of COVID-19, the extent of community spread, and current CDC recommendations for containment and mitigation.
2. The agreement of operators and establishments to comply with the requirements of these guidelines until such time as the Yellowstone County Health Officer rescinds or modifies them.

In order *to be eligible* for re-opening an establishment closed under the terms of the Yellowstone County Health Officer Order of March 16, 2020, each establishment must produce and have approved a social distancing plan. At a minimum, the plan must include the following elements:

1. A specific way to increase the distance between patrons or groups of patrons to an acceptable distance;
2. Employee illness considerations;
3. A plan for enhanced cleaning of surfaces;
4. Required signage, provided by RiverStone Health; and,
5. Signed commitment to compliance to the approved plan, including acknowledgement that failure to comply with the approved plan will result in closure by order of the Health Officer for an indeterminate time.

Upon receipt of a proposed re-opening plan, the Yellowstone County Health Officer will review the plan for completeness and compliance with these guidelines *prior to allowing* the establishment to re-open. If a plan is fully approved, the establishment(s) will be eligible to re-open when allowed by Health Officer Order.

1. The attached template addresses all required elements. It provides examples of compliant practices and in some cases, practices that would not be compliant.
2. Using that template, each establishment must indicate its acceptance by initialing *each of the terms* of this guidance and submit it to RiverStone Health. In the event that a single owner or operator has multiple licensed sites, the same plan can be used by indicating all applicable license numbers.
3. Once completed, submit the plan to RiverStone Health’s Environmental Health Services.
4. When the re-opening plan is approved by the Health Officer, the applicant will be notified in writing.
5. At the point that the Health Officer allows re-opening of establishments subject to the terms of the March 16, 2020 Health Officer Order, establishments with approved plans under this guidance may begin to serve customers.

Please note that completion and approval of the plan described herein does not authorize re-opening of establishments affected by the March 16, 2020 Health Officer Order. Re-opening will require both an approved plan AND rescission or modification of the current Health Officer Order that authorizes re-opening.

The dynamic nature of the COVID-19 outbreak will require changing prevention, containment, and mitigation strategies as the outbreak unfolds. This guidance is likely to change over time. In addition, this plan and any future related plans are subject to applicable state or federal guidelines and rules, including future changes to existing requirements.

Re-opening Plan for Food Service Establishments

Establishment Name(s): _____

License number(s): _____

Owner / operator: _____

Please initial each item below indicating your understanding of the requirement.

Plan to increase the distance between patrons or groups of patrons to an acceptable distance:

_____ There must be ***tangible evidence of actions*** to optimize the distance between patrons or groups of patrons.

_____ Examples of acceptable actions to meet this requirement include but are not limited to:

- Removing half or more tables from a dining area and spreading remaining tables throughout the available seating space
- Removal of chairs from every other table.
- Blocking entrance to every other booth (e.g., by visible tape)
- Affixing a sign on every other table or booth stating clearly that it is closed and not available for patrons' use
- No table may accommodate more than ten (10) patrons and tables cannot be combined to accommodate more than ten (10) patrons.
- For bar areas, physically making two bar stools unavailable between every available bar stool (e.g., remove seats or affix an object large enough to make the seat unusable)
- For gaming areas, disabling machines to allow at least 6 feet between players
- Plans and processes are in place to limit waiting areas to no more than ten (10) people

_____ Examples of unacceptable actions to meet this requirement include but are not limited to:

- A sign or statement to the effect of "We will seat patrons apart from one another" ***without definitive action***
- A sign or statement to the effect of "Please practice social distancing and sit apart from other patrons or groups" ***without definitive action***
- Closing one section of the establishment but keeping the same concentration of in-use tables and booths within the section that is open

Employee illness requirements:

_____ Employees who have fever, cough, or shortness of breath will not be allowed to work until symptoms are resolved.

Plan for enhanced cleaning:

_____ There must be an enhanced cleaning plan available to all staff

_____ The plan must include at least the following components

- Frequency of cleaning (e.g., before opening, hourly for gaming machines, after each patron / group of patrons)
- Extent of cleaning (e.g., table tops, chair seats and backs, arm rests, gaming machines)
- Cleaning products including type of cleaning product and type of cleaning cloth used

_____ A plan for limiting self-service operation or buffet-type service must include specific guidelines for the process and frequency of replacing used serving utensils and cleaning surfaces, including “sneeze guards” and the buffet table

_____ There must be a training plan for all existing and new staff on cleaning protocols. Records of training must be retained by the owner / operator and be made available to the Health Officer or his designee upon request.

Required signage

_____ All entrances must have a sign, provided by RiverStone Health, placed on every exterior entrance to the establishment that provides general infection prevention messages.

_____ A copy of the re-opening plan approval notification from the Health Officer must be placed on every exterior entrance to the establishment.

Attestation:

By my signature below, on behalf the establishment(s) identified on this plan, I commit to comply with the plan shown above, as approved by the Yellowstone County Health Officer. I acknowledge that failure to comply with the approved plan may result in closure by order of the Health Officer for an indeterminate time.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Please return complete plan to RiverStone Health:

- E-mail: Environmental.Health@riverstonehealth.org
- Fax: 406-256-2767
- In person: 2121 1st Avenue North (Lil Anderson Center) – Environmental Health