



QUESTION AND ANSWER SHEET FOR FOOD ESTABLISHMENT OPERATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNOR’S EXECUTIVE ORDER

On March 16, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker signed Executive Order 2020-07 (“the EO”). In accordance with this order, beginning March 16, 2020 at 9:00 p.m. through the end of the calendar day on March 30, 2020, all businesses in the State of Illinois that offer food or beverages for on-premises consumption, including restaurants, bars, grocery stores, and food halls must suspend service for and may not permit on-site consumption.

The following are some commonly asked questions and answers regarding the nature and scope of the EO. These answers are based on guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Illinois Liquor Control Commission and in some instances the answers have been tailored to refer specifically to the City of Park Ridge.

Q: Who enforces the EO?

A: The City of Park Ridge’s Environmental Health Officers will serve as initial contacts for inspecting businesses, responding to complaints, or assisting businesses regarding the EO. In the event any business is found to be ignoring or otherwise incorrectly following the EO, the Environmental Health Officers will provide corrective guidance, which may—depending on the nature of the violations—take the form of written warnings. The City’s intent is not to punish businesses, but to ensure that in the interests of public health they operate in accordance with the EO. Additional local responses and actions, if necessary, may come from the Park Ridge Police, Fire Marshal, or Local Liquor Commissioner.

Q: Are patrons allowed to enter a food establishment and place an order for carry-out?

A: Yes. Patrons may enter to order and carry-out. On-site consumption of food or beverages is prohibited, and once receiving their order, the patrons should immediately leave the food establishment. Patrons should exercise caution to maintain safe social distancing when entering a food establishment and queuing for service.

Q: What is the definition of “carry-out?”

A: The EO provided no definition. Common sense should prevail here; it was clear from the EO that on-site consumption is prohibited.

Q: Is delivery allowed?

A: Yes.

Q: Can a food establishment provide catering to an off premises event?

A: Yes, but the EO prohibits gatherings of 50 or more people, so such large events should not be held. Liquor licensees holding a catering endorsement are prohibited from selling or serving alcoholic liquor or food at private events of fifty (50) or more guests.

Q: Is there a limit to the number of food establishment workers and patrons who may gather in an establishment?

A: The EO prohibits gatherings of 50 or more people, so food establishments need to adhere to the 50-person limit, e.g. if they had five workers only 44 patrons (total of 49) could queue up, order, and wait for their food on site. Food establishments are encouraged to have their employees practice safe social distancing to deter the spread of the virus by person to person contact.

Q: Can a food establishment host a private event?

A: No. On site consumption is prohibited under the EO.

Q: Must food establishments post any type of warning or rules?

A: Food establishments are not required to post any particular messages, but still must adhere to the EO. They may post notices if they desire.

Q: Are there restrictions on salad bars or hot bars?

A: There are no restrictions beyond normal food safety rules, so long as the food is for carry-out and not on-site consumption. IDPH recommends stringent controls on operation of salad bars, e.g. staff serve the food instead of allowing patrons self-service. The City's Environmental Health Officers can provide additional guidance and recommendations.

Q: Are there any restrictions on re-fillable containers, e.g. coffee cups, being used?

A: There are no restrictions, so long as the food is for carry-out and not on-site consumption. IDPH recommends stringent controls on operation of salad bars, e.g. staff serve the food instead of allowing patrons self-service.

Q: Are there any restrictions on convenience stores and self-serving of coffee, doughnuts, hotdogs, etc?

A; There are no restrictions, but food must not be consumed on site. Again, IDPH recommends self-service not be provided, and that an employee serve food to patrons.

Q: Any restrictions on shelters or other family-style offerings of food?

A: Communal settings for food consumption are discouraged. Shelters, retirement homes, etc., should seek to provide opportunities for food service to individuals in rooms or other settings where (large) groups do not need to assemble.

Q: Can concessions stands, for example at Costco or Walmart, continue to operate?

A: Yes, but the food would be for carry-out only and must not be consumed on site.

Q: If a food establishment worker tests positive for COVID-19, must the food establishment close?

A: The content of the case would need to be examined by health officials, and any decisions on continued operation or closing would be on a case-by-case basis. The City will assist health officials with the implementation of their order.

Q: Can movie theaters and bowling alleys serve food?

A: Yes, but not for on-site consumption. So patrons could not purchase food or beverages and take into the movie, but would need to exist the establishment to consume the items.

Q: If an office building has a cafeteria, or a shopping area has a food court, can it continue to operate?

A: Yes, but patrons must take food and carry away from the cafeteria or food court and consume in a non-communal setting, e.g. their office.

Q: If a food establishment has a liquor license which permits on site consumption, can it continue to serve alcohol?

A: All liquor license holders shall cease the sale and service of all beverages and food for consumption on the licensed premises.

Q: If a business has a package liquor license, can it continue to sell alcohol?

A: All license holders authorized to sell alcoholic liquor at retail for consumption off the licensed premises may conduct "in-person" sales on a "to go" basis only but not for the consumption on the licensed premises. Licensees may permit patrons to enter licensed establishments to conduct sales for off-premises consumption if the licensees maintain a suitable environment where patrons can maintain adequate social distancing. The CDC recommends social distancing of at least six feet.

Q: Can Advocate Lutheran General Hospital continue to serve food?

A: On-premises license holders located at hospitals are exempt from the Executive Order.

Please note that further guidance from IDPH may be forthcoming. The City will seek to distribute any additional information as widely as possible.