



MINISTRY OF HEALTH

PROTOCOL FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESTAURANTS
AND EATERIES DURING THE PERIOD OF COVID-19
PANDEMIC

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Acronyms and Definitions

COVID-19	Is an infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. The new virus and disease was unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. COVID-19 is now a pandemic affecting many countries globally.
Eatery:	Is a small premises with food business as its main focus.
Food Workers:	Food workers include food handlers, staff who may come into contact with food contact surfaces or other surfaces in rooms where open food is handled, managers, cleaners, maintenance contractors, delivery workers, and food inspectors.
FSMS:	Food Safety Management Systems.
HACCP:	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point.
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment.
Restaurant:	Is a premise where people sit, eat, drink and pay for meals.

Foreword

On 22 March 2020, the Cabinet Secretary for Health ordered the closure of all bars and clubs in the country, effective midnight to curb the spread of COVID-19 in Kenya. Restaurants and Eateries were also directed to only serve take-away orders up to 7PM for a period of thirty (30) days.

Following a review of the situation of the COVID-19 disease outbreak across the country a month later, the Cabinet Secretary, in line with Public Health Act Cap 242 Laws of Kenya issued a directive allowing Restaurants and Eateries to undertake minimal operations while maintaining stringent measures that mitigate the spread of the virus such as social distancing, frequent hand washing and reduction of contacts between persons.

The opening and operating of these premises will take a structured and gradual approach; operators will be expected to redesign their space and work processes to ensure agreed upon physical distancing, hand washing/hygiene, reduction of contacts between persons and adequate sanitation are adhered to so as to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 disease.

The operation of the premises will have in place a Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) to manage food safety risks and prevent food contamination and the priority will be to keeping all workers in the food production and supply chains and their clients healthy and safe.



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Introduction

It is a requirement that the food industry should have Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) based on the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles in place to manage food safety risks and prevent food contamination. If a business does not have a FSMS and/or HACCP team established, it needs to appoint one person responsible for determining whether food safety risks could arise from additional measures. This designated person must liaise with food safety authorities for advice.

Keeping all workers in the food production and supply chains healthy and safe is critical for the country to survive current pandemic.

Current scientific findings have demonstrated that *corona* viruses do not multiply in food because the virus needs an animal or human host to multiply. Transmission is however possible when a person touches contaminated surfaces, objects, or the hand of another infected person and then touching his/her own mouth, nose, or eyes.

There is an urgent requirement for the food industry to ensure compliance with measures to protect workers and customers from contracting COVID-19, to prevent exposure to or transmission of the virus, and to strengthen food hygiene and sanitation practices.

This document provides the protocols that will be utilized for the management of restaurants and eateries during this period when the spread of corona is still possible. The protocols highlight these additional measures so that the integrity of the food chain is maintained, and that adequate and safe food supplies are available for consumers.

1. Prerequisites for Restaurants during COVID-19 Pandemic

All Restaurants must submit an application for a permit from the County Director Public Health, using *Form A* attached to these protocols, to operate during COVID-19 Pandemic. Restaurants and Eateries must observe the following:

- a) Shall only operate between 5.00am and 4.00pm Kenyan time until further notice, upon reading and implementing the provisions of this protocol. The protocol is accessible from the Ministry website, www.health.go.ke
- b) Install hand wash facility complete with hot and cold running water, hygienically operated taps, detergent/soap, sanitizer and appropriate hand drying at the entry of the kitchen.
- c) Restaurants can reopen safely during the coronavirus pandemic by limiting diners to four people for every 10 square metres space.
- d) Tables in the dining areas must be spaced 1.5 meters apart in dining areas or seat customer groups at least 1.5 meters apart;
- e) Postpone or cancel events / banquets with 15 or more attendees.
- f) Distance from back of one chair to the back of the other would be not less than a metre and guests face each other from a distance of at least one metre.
- g) If events/banquets are held at the facility for smaller groups, work with event organizers to ensure that individuals who are sick with coronavirus symptoms do not attend; attendees are spaced at least 6 feet apart.
- h) Temporarily discontinue self-service of ready-to-eat foods such as salad bars or buffets.

1.1. Food Service

- i. Customers shall have their meals delivered individually to the dining table by appointed restaurant stewards.
- ii. Take-way and waiter service are encouraged

2. Prerequisites for Eateries During COVID-19

All Eateries must submit an application for a permit from the County Director Public Health, using *Form A* attached to these protocols, to operate during COVID-19 Pandemic. Eateries operating during COVID-19 Pandemic must observe the following:

- a) Follow the 4 key steps to food safety: Always — Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill.
- b) Wash, rinse, and sanitize food contact surfaces dishware, utensils, food preparation surfaces, and beverage equipment after use.
- c) Frequently disinfect surfaces repeatedly touched by employees or customers such as door knobs, equipment handles, check-out counters, and grocery cart handles, etc.
- d) Frequently clean and disinfect floors, counters, and other facility access areas using registered disinfectants.
- e) Prepare and use sanitizers according to label instructions.
- f) When changing your normal food preparation procedures, service, delivery functions, or making staffing changes, apply procedures that ensure:
 - i. Cooked foods reach the proper internal temperatures prior to service or cooling.
 - ii. Hot foods are cooled rapidly for later use – check temperatures of foods being cooled in refrigerators or by rapid cooling techniques such as ice baths
 - iii. The time foods being stored, displayed, or delivered are held in the danger zone (between 41°F and 135°F) is minimized.
 - iv. Proper training for food employees with new or altered duties and that they apply the training according to established procedures.
- g) Help customers maintain good infection control and social distancing by:
 - i. Discontinuing operations, such as salad bars, buffets, and beverage service stations that require customers to use common utensils or dispensers.
 - ii. Finding ways to encourage spacing between customers while in line for service.
- h) Verify that your ware-washing machines are operating at the required wash and rinse temperatures and with the appropriate detergents and sanitizers.

- i) Remember that hot water can be used in place of chemicals to sanitize equipment and utensils in manual ware-washing machines.
- j) Have adequate portable running water and accessible hand-wash basins for hand washing purposes
- k) Have alcohol based-hand sanitizers at the entrance and exit points
- l) The premises must be properly lit and ventilated

3. General Screening and Hygiene measures

Restaurants and Eateries operating during COVID-19 Pandemic must observe the following measures at all entry points

- a) Install a contact free thermometer and ensure that every person entering the premises has his/her body temperature taken
- b) All restaurants and eateries must provide a hand washing station with clean water and soap at the main entrance to the premises. The effluent water from the hand wash station must drain into an established sewerage system and not flow freely onto road surfaces
- c) All restaurants must provide 70% alcohol-based sanitizers at entrances, and other areas where there are shared surfaces such as dining tables and counters.

3.1. Medical screening and testing for Food Workers

The following measures shall be implemented by all Food Business Operators (FBOs):

- a) Any staff member or reveler with temperature above 37.5 degree shall not be allowed entry into the premises and the premises shall immediately notify the Ministry of Health through the toll free no 719 for guidance
- b) All food workers deployed to work for or in restaurants and eateries must be tested and certified to be COVID-19 Negative by a Government certified laboratory
- c) Staff who have symptoms of Coronavirus disease (such as a fever with cough) shall not be allow to work in restaurants and eateries.

4. Responsibilities of Food Workers in Prevention of COVID-19

All restaurants and eateries operating during COVID-19 Pandemic must observe the following:

- a) Have written instructions and training on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 for all staff
- b) Staff who are unwell or have symptoms of COVID-19 should not be at work and should be informed about how to contact medical professionals.
- c) All personnel working in the food industry, regardless of their apparent health status, to practice personal hygiene and appropriately use PPE.
- d) Prerequisite Programmes must ensure that COVID-19 infected workers and their contacts are excluded from food premises.
- e) A procedure to allow staff to report illness by phone (or email) should be established
- f) Food safety practices in food premises should continue to be delivered to the highest hygiene standards in line with established FSMS.

5. Good Staff Hygienic Practices

All food workers must observe and adhere to good hygienic practices, which include:

- a) proper hand hygiene – washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- b) frequent use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers;
- c) good respiratory hygiene (cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing; dispose of tissues and wash hands);
- d) All staff shall wear a face mask and head cover at all times.
- e) frequent cleaning/disinfection of work surfaces and touch points such as door handles, fridge doors, food preparation table-tops.
- f) avoiding close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing.

6. Food Workers: Use of Disposable Gloves

Use of disposable gloves is recommended for those who are handling food, especially foods to be eaten raw. However, wearing of gloves can allow bacteria to build up on the surface of the gloves and hands, so handwashing is extremely important when gloves are removed to avoid subsequent contamination of food.

The following measures and practices must be implemented during use of disposable gloves:

- a) Gloves must be changed frequently and hands must be washed between glove changes and when gloves are removed.
- b) Gloves must be changed after carrying out non-food related activities, such as opening/closing doors by hand, and emptying bins.
- c) Avoid touching mouth, nose and eyes when wearing gloves.
- d) Adequate sanitary facilities must be provided with soap and warm adequate running water for handwashing.
- e) Hand sanitizers should be provided but shall not replace handwashing.

Disposable gloves should not be used in the food work environment as a substitute for handwashing. Handwashing is a greater protective barrier for COVID-19 infection than wearing disposable gloves.

The COVID-19 virus can contaminate disposable gloves in the same way it gets onto workers' hands.

7. Food Workers: Physical Distancing in the Work Environment

Physical distancing (1.5 metres - 4 feet) in food preparation areas is very important to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

It is a requirement for the management of restaurants and eateries to implement practical measures which will prevent transmission of COVID-19. These include:

- a) Stagger workstations on either side of processing lines so that food workers are not facing one another;

- b) Provide PPE such as face masks, hair nets, disposable gloves, clean overalls, and slip reduction work shoes for staff. The use of PPE would be routine in high-risk areas of food premises that produce ready-to-eat and cooked foods. When staff are dressed in PPE it is possible to reduce distance between workers;
- c) Space out workstations, which may require reduction in the speed of production lines;
- d) Limit the number of staff in a food preparation area at any one time;
- e) Organize staff into working groups or teams to facilitate reduced interaction between groups.

8. Transport and Delivery of Food Ingredients and Food Products

The coronavirus will enter food premises only when an infected person enters or contaminated products or items are brought into the premises. It is therefore paramount that drivers and other staff delivering to food premises must:

- a) Not leave their vehicles during delivery of food supplies, products, documents and other items.
- b) Have a hand sanitizer, a disinfectant, and paper towels.
- c) Use a hand sanitizer before and after passing delivery documents to food premises staff.
- d) Disinfect surfaces most likely contaminated with the virus. These include frequent touch surfaces such as steering wheels, door handles, mobile devices, etc.

All food supplies must be delivered in disposable containers and packaging. All transport containers should be kept clean and frequently disinfected; foods must be protected from contamination; and must be separated from other goods that may cause contamination.

9. Retail Food Premises

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the food retail sector faces the greatest challenge in maintaining the highest standards of hygiene, protecting staff from the risk of infection, maintaining physical distancing when dealing with large numbers of customers, remaining open, and ensuring that adequate supplies of foods are available on a daily basis.

Food workers must:

- a) Always follow standard, good personal hygiene practices (such as frequent handwashing, use of hand sanitizers, use of protective clothing, good respiratory hygiene,) that reduce the risk of transmission.
- b) Practice more frequent handwashing and maintaining good hygienic practices, and of more frequently cleaning and disinfecting surfaces that are touched regularly.
- c) Maintain physical distancing in retail food premises which is critical for reducing the risk of transmission of the disease.

Practical measures that may be used by retailers include the following:

- a) Regulating the number of customers within the premises to avoid overcrowding;
- b) Placing signs at entry points to request customers not to enter the shop if they are unwell or have COVID-19 symptoms;
- c) Managing queue control consistent with physical distancing advice both inside and outside the premises;
- d) Providing hand sanitizers, spray disinfectants, and disposable paper towels at store entry points;
- e) Floor markings to guide the physical distancing within food premises;
- f) Regular announcements to remind customers to follow the protective guidelines issued.
- g) Introducing plexiglass barriers at tills and counters as an additional level of protection;
- h) Encouraging the use of contact-less payments such as MPESA;
- i) Customers to be advised to clean their shopping bags before every use in the food retail premises

9.1. Open Food Display in Retail Premises

Currently there is no scientific evidence suggesting that open food displays is associated with transmission of the COVID-19 virus. However, it's important to

maintain good hygiene practices around open food displays, such as salad bars, fresh produce displays, and bakery products. Consumers should always be advised to wash fruits and vegetables with potable water before consumption. Both customers and staff should strictly observe good personal hygiene practices at all times around open food areas.

Open food displays retailers should ensure:

- a) Frequent washing and sanitizing of all food contact surfaces and utensils is undertaken;
- b) Food service workers to frequently wash hands, and, if using gloves, these must be changed before and after preparing food;
- c) Food service workers to frequently clean and sanitize counters, serving utensils and condiment containers;
- d) Availability of hand sanitizer at premises entry and exit points;

10. Food Workers: Staff Canteens

High standards of the public health measures for handwashing and respiratory etiquette need to be maintained in work canteens.

Operational standards staff canteens shall include:

- a) Maintaining a physical distance;
- b) Staggering staff work and break times;
- c) Restricting non-essential physical contact as much as possible;
- d) Visible notices for staff promoting hand hygiene and physical distancing;
- e) Cleaning and disinfection procedures for equipment, premises, contact surfaces/high touch points, e.g. counter tops/tongs/service utensils/open self-service displays/door handles.

11. Environmental controls and Cleaning process

To reduce the risk of infection transmission from the environment and utensils, cleaning and disinfection is critical. Well trained cleaners should be assigned for cleaning and disinfection following the decontamination procedure and monitored frequently.

11.1. Cleaning process

The following procedure shall be followed to the letter:

- a) Cleaning should be done first with detergents/soaps and water to remove stains. Disinfection is then done to remove pathogens such as COVID 19
- b) Using soap and water, clean the furniture and other equipment first, then surfaces and lastly clean the floor.
- c) Commonly touched surfaces such as door handles, telephones, switches, and furniture should be cleaned frequently.
- d) Develop a cleaning schedule and ensure cleaning is done at least twice a day and as and when necessary.

11.2. Cleaning progress:

Cleaning should start from the least soiled to the most soiled areas and the following shall be observed to detail:

- a) The cleaning tools (e.g., mops, buckets, cleaning cloths) must be disinfected and hang to dry before next use.
- b) The recommended disinfectant should contain a diluted bleach solution (that is, 1-part bleach to 99 parts water). For surfaces that cannot be cleaned with bleach, 70% ethanol can be used.
- c) Clean hand towels using regular laundry soap and water or machine wash at 60-90°C with common laundry detergent, and dry thoroughly.
- d) Cleaning personnel should wear heavy duty gloves when cleaning surfaces (if handling clothing or linen soiled with body fluids wear disposable gloves), and they should perform hand hygiene before putting on and after removing their gloves.

11.3. Disinfection process

The following procedure shall be followed to the letter:

- a) Prepare fresh chlorine solution because it loses strength with time. Store any remaining chlorine solutions safely in closed containers for not more than 24 hours. Keep the solution away from direct sunlight to avoid further inactivation of chlorine.
- b) Wipe equipment and surfaces with a cloth soaked in the disinfectant and mop the floor using a mop soaked in chlorine solution prepared at least 30 minutes before use.
- c) Use Chlorine solution mainly on hard, non-porous surfaces. Adequate time is required to kill the virus, i.e., at least 10 minutes contact time.

Heavy duty gloves and protective clothing (e.g., plastic aprons) should be used when cleaning surfaces or handling clothing or linen soiled with body fluids. Depending on the context, either heavy duty or single-use gloves can be used. After use, heavy duty gloves should be cleaned with soap and water and decontaminated with 0.5% chlorine bleach solution. Perform hand hygiene before and after removing gloves

11.4. Use of toilets

Provision of toilets in all premises is mandatory. Restaurants and eateries must ensure that:

- a) Toilets for customers and hotel workers should as much as possible be separated
- b) If toilet facilities are shared, the restaurant shall ensure proper disinfection of these facilities after use using regular recommended disinfectant

12. Roles and Responsibilities of the Public Health Officers

Public Health Officers working for the County Governments and National Government have the following roles and responsibilities:

- a) Oversee the implementation of the contents of this protocol to the letter
- b) Conduct inspection of premises using **Form B** upon submission of application by the FBO. All application shall be submitted using **Form A**

- c) Take necessary action including closure of restaurants, and eateries contravening the provisions of this protocol
- d) Submit data to the County Director Public Health/Ministry of Health on general screening and testing of food workers
- e) Adhere to and take note of the contents of other guidelines and protocols issued by the Ministry of Health on prevention and control of COVID-19 Pandemic.