Interim Guidance for Grocery Stores During COVID-19 Outbreak

General Information about COVID-19

What is Coronavirus (COVID-19)?
The 2019 Novel (New) Coronavirus is a virus that causes a disease called COVID-19. The most common symptoms include: fever, cough, and shortness of breath. The virus is spread person-to-person, either in close contact (about 6 feet) or through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Older adults, pregnant women, and individuals of any age with serious chronic medical conditions (e.g. heart disease, diabetes, lung disease).

Who can I contact about general questions about COVID-19?
Please call the Madison County COVID-19 Hotline 315-366-2770 or Upstate University Hospital Triage Line: 315-464-3979

Executive Orders Issued for Public and Private Sector Entities during the COVID-19 Outbreak
In an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19, the Governor enacted new restrictions for both public and private sector entities. This includes temporary closures of non-essential services, occupancy limits, and in-person workforce reductions. Recognizing that your establishment is an essential service and continuing to conduct business, it is highly recommended that you adjust how business is conducted to protect staff and community members.
For the most up-to-date information, please visit: https://www.governor.ny.gov/news.

What Supervisors Can Do to Prevent Spread of Germs

All employers are responsible for creating plans to adhere to the Executive Orders issued by Governor Cuomo, particularly limiting the in-person staff and incorporating social distancing into their protocol. Please consider the following:

- Ensure staff are aware of sick leave policies and are encouraged to stay home if they have any symptoms of illness, especially respiratory.
- Implement flexible worksites (e.g. telecommuting) and flexible work hours (e.g. staggered shifts) for all staff, to increase the physical distance among employees
  o Live stream meetings (e.g. Zoom video conference)
- Make contingency plans for increased absenteeism caused by illness and recent school closures. Planning for absenteeism could include extending hours, cross-training current employees, or hiring temporary employees.
- Assist your staff manage the stress & anxiety
  o Encourage staff to take breaks from news media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
  o Take care of your body. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, meditate, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol & drugs.
  o Call the Madison County Mental Health Crisis line at 315-366-2327 or text TalkWithUs to 66746
- Promote social distancing among employees
  o Stay at home as much as possible – avoid public gatherings and unnecessary appointments
  o Keep 6 feet of distance from others in public and in the workplace
  o Cancel unnecessary travel plans

What Staff Members Can Do to Prevent Spread of Germs

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid close contact with people, especially those that are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home as much as possible outside of work – avoid all public gatherings and unnecessary appointments
- **Stay home when you are sick.**

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces (work stations, pens, doorknobs, etc.)
  - For more information on disinfection methods and products:
    https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html

Best Practices for Risk Mitigation
- Limiting the number of customers at any given time as necessary to reduce outdoor/indoor crowding and lines to meet social distancing guidance.
  - Designate shopping hours for vulnerable populations (i.e. older adults, pregnant women, people with underlying medical conditions)
- Increase cleaning and sanitizing frequency of restroom and other high contact areas (cash registers).
- Remove samples for food tasting; make deli and other café items grab-and-go only
- Install Plexiglas between customer and cashier
- Customers should wait 6-feet behind the next person in-line
- Cashiers should disinfect the credit card keypad after each customer
- Direct all cash exchanges to self-checkout
- Cashiers and other employees should disinfect their workspace at shift changes with disposable wipes
- Add staff to disinfect shopping carts between customer uses with disposable wipes
- Provide prevention supplies for staff and patrons (i.e. handwashing, hand sanitizers, tissues)
- Increase access to handwashing stations
- **Enhance environmental cleaning:**
  - Disinfect all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label.
  - Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (doorknobs, shopping carts) can be wiped down by employees before each use (see above for CDC link for products and methods).

IMPORTANT: Maintaining social distancing in the absence of effective hygiene practices may not prevent the spread of this virus. Facilities should be vigilant in their hygiene practices, including frequent and proper hand-washing and routine cleaning of all surfaces.

Employee Travel
The current recommendation is to avoid all non-essential travel.

What to do if an Employee has a Possible Exposure to COVID-19
- Encourage your employee to call their primary care provider (PCP)
  - If they do not have a PCP, they can call the Upstate University Hospital Triage Line: (315) 464-3979
- Encourage them to stay home, except to receive medical care
- **Contact the Madison County Department of Health at (315) 366-2361**
- *If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, Madison County Department of Health will reach out to your organization to determine who else may be at risk. The course of action will be determined as a joint decision between the Department and your Executive leadership.*

Governor's Executive Order: Mandatory Face Coverings for Essential Workers
To protect the health of employees and public, all employees of essential businesses are mandated to wear face coverings when in direct contact with customers or members of the public. It is the responsibility of the employer to provide face coverings for their employees effective Wednesday, April 15 at 8pm.

To learn more, visit: https://www.madisoncounty.ny.gov/2562/CDC-Recommendation-Cloth-Face-Covering-i

For more information:
CDC Webpage – Guidance for Employers
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html

About Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html