

New York Wine Industry Association Guidance for Winery Tasting Rooms and Retail Shops in response to COVID-19

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Introduction

There are many key factors in operating a healthful, socially responsible tasting room and retail shop in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Several of these factors include: employee safety, customer safety, sanitation, and social distancing, among others. The guidelines established here are just that – *guidelines*. They have been assembled with careful attention to the best practices published by the Food and Drug Administration as well as the Centers for Disease Control, but may not be exhaustive nor representative of the most up-to-date information, as this situation may continue to evolve.

Managing Employee Health¹

- Instruct employees with symptoms associated with COVID-19 to report them to their supervisors. Instruct sick employees to stay home and to follow the CDC's [What to do if you are sick with coronavirus disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#). Consult with the local health department for additional guidance.
- If an employee is sick at work, send them home immediately. [Clean and disinfect](#) surfaces in their workspace. Others at the facility with close contact (i.e., within 6 feet) of the employee during this time should be considered exposed. Follow-up with employee regarding their health status and return to work procedure.
- Instruct employees who are well, but know they have been exposed to COVID-19, to notify their supervisor and follow CDC-recommended precautions.
- Inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace, if an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, while maintaining confidentiality.
- Implement workplace controls to reduce transmission among employees, such as those described in [CDC's Interim Guidance for Implementing Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers Who May Have Had Exposure to a Person with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19](#).
- Employers - Disinfect and clean work spaces and equipment; more frequent cleaning of high touch surfaces.
- Employees - Regularly self-monitor (e.g., take temperature and assess [symptoms of coronavirus](#)).
- Employees - Follow [CDC](#) and [FDA](#) information on PPE (i.e., gloves, face masks/coverings, and protective gear).
- Employees - Practice NYS mandated social distancing.

¹ <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/best-practices-retail-food-stores-restaurants-and-food-pick-up-delivery-services-during-covid-19>

- For additional information when employees may have been exposed to COVID-19, refer to CDC's [CDC's Interim Guidance for Implementing Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers Who May Have Had Exposure to a Person with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19](#).
- For additional information on employee health and hygiene and recommendations to help prevent worker transmission of foodborne illness, refer to [FDA's Employee Health and Personal Hygiene Handbook](#).
- If FDA recommendations differ from CDC's regarding employee health and COVID-19, follow CDC.
- For returning previously sick employees to work, refer to [CDC's Guidance for Discontinuation of Home Isolation for Persons with COVID-19](#).
- Frequently review CDC's [CDC's Interim Guidance for Business and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019](#).
- Understand risk at the workplace — use [OSHA's Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#).

Personal Hygiene for Employees²

- Emphasize effective hand hygiene including washing hands for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Always wash hands with soap and water. If soap and water are not readily available, then use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol and avoid working with unwrapped or exposed foods.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Use gloves to avoid direct bare hand contact.

Customer Health and Safety³

- Frequently disinfect surfaces repeatedly touched by employees or customers such as door knobs, equipment handles, check-out counters, registers, and grocery cart/basket handles, etc.
- Frequently clean and disinfect floors, counters, and other facility access areas using [EPA-registered disinfectants](#). Prepare and use sanitizers according to label instructions.
- Help customers maintain good infection control and social distancing by:
 - Encouraging open-air tasting opportunities.
 - Creating spacing between customers while in line service or check out and while tasting in accordance with the applicable State or local requirements.
- Verify that your ware-washing machines are operating at the required wash and rinse temperatures and with the appropriate detergents and sanitizers.
- Ensure that you are complying with all social distancing requirements and recommendations at your tasting counter, cash registers, restrooms, and waiting areas. Clearly post signage communicating social distancing requirements.
- Ensure that you are complying with all capacity limitations and restrictions as required by state and local laws, mandates, and public health recommendations. Clearly post signage communicating any capacity limitations and restrictions.

² <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/best-practices-retail-food-stores-restaurants-and-food-pick-up-delivery-services-during-covid-19>

³ <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/best-practices-retail-food-stores-restaurants-and-food-pick-up-delivery-services-during-covid-19>

- Where possible, establish one-way traffic in and out of your building, tasting room, and retail shop, to limit customer proximity and lingering. Clearly post a sign communicating this expectation.
- Each day, designate an employee who will be responsible for maintaining and enforcing social distancing requirements and protocols.
- Allow couples and small groups travelling together in one vehicle to taste together.
- Hold regular staff meetings on COVID-19 control strategies and update and remind staff on COVID-19 guidelines, protocols and policies.