Nevada Health Response:
Guidance on Protecting Grocery Store Personnel
April 8, 2020

On March 17, 2020, Governor Sisolak issued a nonessential business closure order. This order determined grocery stores to be an essential business. In addition to this declaration, and upon receiving advice from the COVID-19 Medical Advisory Team, Governor Sisolak announced Nevada Health Response's Risk Mitigation Initiative. All Nevadans wishing to frequent public spaces, including grocery stores, are expected to abide by social distancing protocol – employers are expected to ensure social distancing for employees and customers; frequent and adequate hand washing; and that sick employees stay home. Employers must also provide adequate workplace hazard training about coronavirus and how to prevent transmission in languages best understood by employees.

Workplace Discrimination:

It is against the law for any employer to take any adverse action such as firing or threats against a worker for exercising safety and health rights such as raising safety and health concerns to their employer, participating in union activities concerning safety and health, filing a safety and health complaint or participating in an Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) investigation. Workers have 30 days to file their complaint with The Department of Business and Industry's OSHA and/or with Federal OSHA.

Guidance for an Effective Social Distancing Plan:

- Limit the number of customers entering the store to facilitate social distancing at store entrances, throughout store and at check-out lines.
- Require all workers to stay at least six feet away from customers and coworkers.
- Temporarily mark six-foot increments (using adhesive colored tape, chalk, etc.) on the ground or floor to ensure social distancing
- Post large print attention-grabbing signs readable from a far distance (or use portable, electronic reader boards) that inform customers of social distancing practices.
- Designate workers to monitor and facilitate distancing at check-out lines.
- Per Emergency Directive 013 (4/8/2020), grocery stores **must** discontinue self-serve food stations, salad bars, and bulk produce bins, including nuts, seeds, trail mix, coffee, or beans. These products may be sold only if offered in pre-packaged portions.

Guidance for an Effective Handwashing Plan:

- Install hand-sanitizing dispensers at store entrances and at key locations inside for customers.
- Ensure all workers know why and how to effectively wash hands for at least twenty seconds.
- Require workers to wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least twenty seconds, such as when they arrive at work, leave their workstations for breaks, eat, use tobacco, and after handling money.
- Ensure gloves are used for cart retrievers, handling money, common use of the same cash register or keypad by different cashiers, food safety and cleaning.
- Set up a schedule to keep these supplies well stocked and trash emptied.

Ensure Sick Workers Are Not at Work:

- Monitor employees for signs of illness and require sick workers to stay home.
- Ensure employees know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 caused by coronavirus exposure.

Guidance for Providing Basic Workplace Hazard Education About Preventing Coronavirus Transmission:

- Instruct all workers on social distancing, handwashing, and other store-wide safety procedures related to coronavirus.
- Teach workers the importance of hand washing before eating, drinking, or using tobacco.
- Advise on respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes and not touching eyes, noses, and mouths with unwashed hands or gloves.
- Prohibit sharing utensils, phones, work tools, and other workplace items that are not sanitized.
- Communicate important safety messages/ updates daily with methods such as posters, reader boards, etc.

Checkout Stands and Counters Considerations:

- Consider closing self-check stands if not all surfaces can be sanitized between customers and if it is not possible to ensure at least six feet between users.
- Consider installing “sneeze shields” at check stands, and ask customers to stand behind them, or relocate pay station keypads further away from worker.
- Have customers handle their own loyalty and payment cards for a contact free transaction.
- When supplies are available, provide disposable wipes/hand sanitizer at check-out stands for employees and customers (e.g. at keypads, registers, bagging area).
- Prohibit reusable shopping bags and provide single use bags for groceries.
- Offer Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as gloves and face masks to employees when supplies are available.

Stocking and Surface Cleaning:

- Schedule as much stocking and deep cleaning as possible during closing hours. If a 24-hour store, stock during the slowest period of the night.
- Appoint a designated sanitation worker(s) at all times to continuously clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces on a significantly increased schedule.

Use the environmental cleaning guidelines set by the CDC. www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html

- When disinfecting for coronavirus, the EPA recommends using the longest recommended contact time and/or most concentrated solution per the label.
- Be sure to follow the label directions for FOOD CONTACT SURFACES when using the chemical near or on utensils and food contact surfaces.
- Use protective gloves and eye/face protection (e.g. face shields and/or goggles) when mixing, spraying, and wiping with liquid cleaning products, like diluted bleach.

Other Protective Measures

- Provide ways for workers to express any concerns and ideas to improve safety.
- Alert store managers or shift supervisors of strategies on handling customers or workers who are not following social distancing practices or demonstrate signs of illness during the visit. For example, it might be helpful to move a coughing customer out of line to a separate checkout station distant from others.
- Cap at 50% of store capacity based on local fire code to maximize spacing between customers. Staff should maintain a count of the number of customers exiting and entering stores.
- Communicate via signage, PSA, or advertisements that there should only be one person per household during shopping trips, whenever possible.
- Discourage the use of reusable bags.
- Provide disinfecting wipes or other methods for customers to use on carts, handles, touch pads and any other human contact points.
- Update store Accident Prevention Program (APP) to include awareness and prevention measures for diseases and viruses.

Customer Considerations:

To better protect our grocery store personnel, please consider the following recommendations while shopping for groceries:

- Minimize grocery shopping trips. Only go once a week or once every other week.
- Consider utilizing grocery delivery services.
- Shop during off-peak hours as much as possible.
- If you can, go to the grocery store alone – if possible, without children.
- Wipe down the handle of your shopping cart prior to touching it.
- Avoid picking up products you do not intend to buy, including testing produce for imperfections. If you pick it up, please purchase the product.
- Use hand sanitizer before entering and after exiting the store.
- Leave your phone in your pocket; utilize a paper shopping list instead.
- Wear a cloth face covering while you shop.
- If you use a reusable shopping bag, wash it every single time you use it.
- Consider using contactless pay methods. Wash your hands as soon as you are finished paying.

Resources:

- Southern Nevada Health District Grocery Store Guidelines
- Nevada Health Response
- OSHA Grocery Store Guidelines
- Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health
- Carson City Health and Human Services
- Southern Nevada Health District
- Washoe County Health District