

Advice for Grocery Stores/Related Settings during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Requirements of Chief Medical Officer of Health Order:

As per Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) [Order](#) on March 27, 2020, any place of business that is still permitted to operate in Alberta that offers or provides services to the public at a location that is accessible to the public must:

- Prevent the risk of transmission of infection by a worker or member of the public.
- Provide for rapid response if a worker or member of the public develops symptoms of illness while at the place of business.
- Maintain high levels of workplace and worker hygiene.

Please review the [CMOH Order](#) and ensure that your facility is operating according to the Order.

Additional Public Health Advice for Consideration

AHS recognizes and appreciates that grocery stores play a critical role in Alberta's response to COVID-19. They provide the necessities of life to the community and protect the public's health and safety. Extraordinary attention to enhanced environmental cleaning, food protection, and social distancing is required to prevent the spread of the disease.

Below is a list of additional recommendations for supermarkets, grocery stores, and public markets to consider, in order to protect their staff, customers, and the community.

Please note that all [Public Health Act](#) requirements remain in force.

Action	Recommendations
<p>Enhance Environmental Cleaning</p> <p>Especially in: Checkouts Stations, Carts and Baskets, & Public Washrooms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow AHS Public Health guidelines for cleaning and disinfection. Ensure all disinfectants used in public settings have both a DIN and a virucidal claim. Focus on surfaces frequently touched by staff and customers including: conveyor belts, cart handles, basket handles, self-checkout stations, keypads, shelves, door handles, public washrooms, etc. Clean and disinfect these surfaces at least every 4 hours. Cycle cleaning times to minimize disruption to customer service, e.g., rotate shut down of checkout conveyors so that the majority of tills are always open. Provide disinfectant wipes for customers to use on carts and hands (if possible). A complete clean of the store should be conducted at the end of the day with frequently touched surfaces cleaned and disinfected.

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<p>Protect Food & Necessities</p> <p>Including:</p> <p>Self-service foods</p> <p>Bulk foods</p> <p>Paper bagged foods e.g. fresh baked loaves of bread</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffet style self-service is not permitted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stores should suspend this type of service altogether; or ○ Staff can prepackage or pre-portion self-serve foods (e.g., soups.) Stores selecting this option are required to move food items to areas where only employees can portion the food. • Samples and sampling are not permitted. • Bulk foods that are self-serve should be removed or modified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scooping bins and gravity-fed bulk dispensers should be closed. Food items can be prepackaged by staff for customers to select. ○ Self-serve olive bars, marinated mushrooms, etc. should be closed. Food items can be prepackaged in containers and stored in refrigerated line for customers to select. • Add signs reminding the public that produce must be washed before consuming. • Add signs reminding the public to only handle or touch the produce they are purchasing. • Bagged fresh bread/baking bags normally left open should be taped closed before being put on display in retail areas. There must be no exposed bread for customer handling.
<p>Protect People & Social Distancing</p> <p>Including:</p> <p>Customers, Staff, & Seniors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use signage for social distancing, hand washing, and staying home when sick. Resources can be found on ahs.ca/covid or alberta.ca/covid19. • Ensure social distancing of 2 meters or 6 feet (the length of a bicycle): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Limit the number of customers in the store and/or encourage spacing of customers in lines (at checkout or waiting to enter the store). ○ Place tape on the floor indicating 2 meters separation when lining up at checkouts. • Set up hand sanitizer stations and encourage the use of hand sanitizing amongst customers entering the store, while shopping and when leaving. • Ensure hand soap is stocked in public washrooms. • Close customer eat-in or dining areas. • Encourage spacing or protection between customers and staff (physical barriers, personal protective equipment for staff, etc.) • Encourage online shopping, delivery and pick-up services. • Reduce traffic by putting common items in easily accessible areas, to decrease customer traffic around the store. • Equip each check out cashier with hand sanitizer for their use. Encourage them to use sanitizer after every customer. • Ensure adequate spacing of staff in break rooms by staggering break times. • Modify or revise sick leave policy for stricter reporting, and adherence to mandatory isolation periods (e.g., 14 days.) Plan for staff absences and have contingency workers on standby. • Reserve the first part of each day for seniors and high-risk customers only.