

HEALTH ADVISORY



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 TASK FORCE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 29, 2020

CHCC Issues Guidance for Restaurant Re-Opening

On Wednesday, May 27th, in response to Governor Torres's latest Executive Order, the Bureau of Environmental Health (BEH) at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) issued guidance for restaurants who are re-opening for dine-in services, and have begun conducting inspections for certification of compliance.

According to the May 25th amendment to Emergency Directive 14, the CNMI has transitioned from operating under community vulnerability level red to community vulnerability level yellow, which allows restaurants to serve dine-in customers at 25% of originally permitted occupancy limit in accordance with supplemental regulatory guidance from the CHCC. The CHCC-BEH, which regulates food handlers and sanitation permitting, among other responsibilities, set forth rules for restaurants operating at level yellow, and has begun on-site visits to restaurants to issue certifications of compliance for dine-in services.

While bars are still ordered to remain closed in level yellow, restaurants and bars during all community vulnerability levels must adhere to the following:

- Enforce hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and use of face coverings by employees when near other employees and customers.
- Ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hand hygiene practices for both employees and customers.
- Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks to ensure that customers remain at least six feet apart in queues or ask customers to wait in their cars or away from the establishment while waiting to pick up food.
- Post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, how to properly wash hands, provide notice that no one with symptoms will be permitted inside, and how to properly wear a face covering. Sample signage is available for download at <https://www.chcc.gov.mp/coronavirusinformation.php>
- Post "one-way" flow signs for entrance and "one-way" flow signs for exit to maintain crowd control.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Wash, rinse, and sanitize all surfaces which come in contact with food after each use.
- Send employees with symptoms home.
- Discontinue preset tables- condiments, utensils, and tableware removed from table.
- Ensure that all staff complete online ServSafe trainings specific to COVID-19 transmission reduction within one week of offering services.

Restaurants which offer dine-in services during level yellow must adhere to the following additional rules:

- Limit occupancy to 25% of their originally permitted occupancy limit.
- Require that patrons make reservations to control volume, and maintain records of one point of contact for each party for contact tracing purposes.
- Limit parties dining in together to no more than 4 people. All parties must remain at least six feet apart, and are encouraged to use outdoor seating whenever possible.
- Not offer self-service food or drinks, such as buffet style dining or beverage refill stations.

Restaurant owners can request an inspection for compliance certification online at the CHCC's COVID-19 page at chcc.gov.mp or can call the CHCC BEH at 664-4870/2/3 between 7:30am and 4:30pm Monday through Friday.

Restaurant patrons should look for posted certification of compliance with level yellow requirements. Valid certificates of compliance are signed by BEH inspectors and include the restaurant's sanitation permit number for reference. If you believe a restaurant is operating out of compliance with the rules, you may contact 664-4677 to alert regulators. The BEH may order an establishment to close if it is found to be non-compliant.

Restaurant patrons should plan to make reservations for dine-in service, limit parties to 4 people, and respect a six-foot distance from other parties dining in. The CHCC recommends that restaurant patrons choose outdoor seating if it's available, and see if the restaurant will accept food orders ahead of time to reduce your wait time.

A listing of restaurants open for dine-in service will be updated daily at the CHCC's COVID-19 page of its website chcc.gov.mp.

STAY AT HOME, STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklist-household-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene:

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic:

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
 - Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
 - Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
 - Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
 - Limiting visitors

The CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, please contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday 7:00AM-7:00PM.

For medical information about COVID-19, please reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1542/1672/1352/1854. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday 7:30AM-8:00PM

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis please call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday 7:30AM-4:30PM. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, please call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, please follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit governor.gov.mp and please follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor Control – Stop the Spread of Misinformation

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

CHCC Point of Contact:

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Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Point of Contact:

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