

Food for thought

Spring 2021, Volume 13 Issue 1

A newsletter for Fairfax County food establishment owners and operators and their employees

New Food Code: Chapter 43.2

Fairfax County has a new Food Code, Chapter 43.2 that went into effect immediately upon Board of Supervisors approval on January 26, 2021. Chapter 43.2 adopted the 2017 FDA Code (9th edition) by reference with modifications. Some of the most significant improvements you will find in the new Food Code include but are not limited to:

- Process for Registration of Cottage Food Products
- Requirements for Land Use Permits for Mobile Food Vending
- Food Safety Training School for the Safe Preparation of Cottage Food Products

- Allowance of Doggie Dining without a Variance
- Issuance of Conditional Food Permits
- Establishment Health Department Notice Stickers
- ShareWare to Promote Environmental Stewardship
- Requirements for Open Air Barbecues and Outdoor Wood-Burning Ovens

More information on the new Food Code, Chapter 43.2 will soon be available on the Fairfax County Health Department website at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/codes>.

Reminder: Register your Account in PLUS

The new electronic database Planning and Land Use System (PLUS) is our online portal that allows you to apply for permits, track the status of your application, update information, upload documents, pay fees, and request inspections.

It is important that you Register for an Account in PLUS. REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED in order to access your record information and renew online.

Once you create your account, you may proceed to the My Records tab and see your Establishment(s) listed under Environmental Health. Feel free to look through your electronic records!

Visit the PLUS website at <https://plus.fairfaxcounty.gov/CitizenAccess/Welcome.aspx>.

We have created videos and guide sheets to help walk you through our new online processes, including how to Register for an Account by visiting www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/food.

If you have any questions, please call the Fairfax County Health Department at (703) 246-2201, option 2, TTY 711.

When Are Face Masks Required in Food & Beverage Establishments

Employees working in customer facing areas (indoors or outdoors) are required to wear a face covering (face mask) over their nose and mouth at all times. Employees working in other areas of the facility are encouraged to wear face coverings especially when physical distance of 6 feet cannot be maintained. Employees with a medical condition that limits their ability to wear a face covering must be assigned to a role/task that is not in a customer facing area.

Where a mandatory business sector requirement in [Executive Order 67](#) conflicts with a requirement to wear a face covering in [Executive Order 63](#) and Order of Public Health Emergency Five (2020), **the business sector-specific requirement governs.**

Patrons aged 10 and over shall wear a face covering over their nose and mouth when entering, exiting, traveling through, and spending time inside food and

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Fourth Amended Executive Order 72

Starting Thursday, April 1, Governor Northam has amended Executive Order Seventy-Two with the next steps of the “Forward Virginia” plan to safely and gradually ease public health restrictions while mitigating the spread of the virus.

One of the key changes in the Fourth Amended Executive Order Seventy-Two includes the maximum number of individuals permitted in a **social gathering**. This will **increase to 50 people for indoor settings and 100 people for outdoor settings**. Social gatherings were earlier limited to 10 people indoors and 25 people outdoors.

The full text of Fourth Amended Executive Order Seventy-Two and Order of Public Health Emergency Nine is available [online](#). Updated guidelines for specific sectors can be found [online](#). Visit www.virginia.gov/coronavirus/forwardvirginia for more information and answers to frequently asked questions.

Safety Checklist for Managers of Food establishments

- **Urge employees to stay home** if they feel unwell, tested positive for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days.
- **Require employees to frequently wash their hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- **Develop a schedule for increased routine cleaning** and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, bathrooms, cash registers, tables, countertops, receipt trays, and condiment holders.
- **Encourage the use of cloth face coverings** among all staff, especially when staying 6 feet apart is difficult.
- **Make sure there are enough supplies to support healthy hygiene**, such as soap, paper towels, disinfectant wipes.
- **Prioritize outdoor seating** and open windows and doors to increase circulation of outdoor air if possible.
- **Change layouts**, such as spacing out tables and chairs, to make sure customer parties remain at least 6 feet apart.
- For more resources and to download a copy of this daily checklist for your establishment visit: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/business-employers/bars-restaurants.html

Let The Health Department Know

If there has been a recent change of ownership, additions of new equipment, major changes in the menu, or establishment name change, the Health Department must be notified and appropriate application forms submitted. All new equipment must be approved by the Health Department. For more information visit our webpage at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/food/operators.

To apply for Food Establishment, Mobile Food Unit, and Change of Ownership Applications, please go to the [PLUS Citizen Portal page](#) and complete the application.

Tips for a safe workplace

The Health Department has an infographic that provides tips to business owners to keep their workplace stays safe for workers and customers during COVID-19: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/sites/health/files/assets/documents/pdf/coronavirus/healthy&safeworkplace.pdf.



*face mask requirements
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beverage establishments, including but not limited to, restaurants, dining establishments, food courts, breweries, microbreweries, distilleries, wineries, tasting rooms, and farmers markets. Patrons may remove their face covering while seated, and while eating or drinking.

For more information visit vdh.virginia.gov or visit the [FAQs page](#).

