

Guidance for Food Services in Outbreaks

Personal Care /Group/Residential Homes

For Dining Room (always follow Public Health’s recommendations)	
Entrance and Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage proper hand hygiene prior to entering the dining room. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alcohol-based hand sanitizer should be available prior to entering the dining room, or if necessary, dispensed by staff to incoming residents (depending on expected compliance of residents). • Promote good respiratory hygiene (cover all coughs and sneezes). • Screen residents for illness prior to entering the dining room. Any ill residents must stay in their rooms and receive tray service (unless it is known that the illness is not infectious in nature). <p>All known COVID-19 positive residents should receive tray service to their room whether symptomatic or not.</p>
Social Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage physical distancing of 2 metres: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Diners sharing a room may share a table. • Do not overcrowd dining room: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider having two sittings. ○ If dividers are used, they should be cleaned and disinfected after each meal sitting. Ensure dividers are not interfering with airflow or posing a hazard to residents and staff. • Implement measures to ensure residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Go directly to their table and do not congregate in the entrance area, and ○ Return to their rooms in a timely manner; no loitering. • Consider allowing healthy residents to have a “buddy” for mealtimes in dining room where applicable. This pair/group would be set for the duration of the outbreak and should not be changed. It allows people to have a dining partner and some socialization.
Food Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove all communal food (fruit bowl, snacks, coffee, etc.) from self-serve. Have staff serve instead. • Remove commonly touched items from tables (e.g., salt and pepper, napkins, vases, etc.). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Single-service packets of condiments can be given directly to each resident rather than self-serve in a bulk container. Staff may also portion or serve condiments to residents. ○ Discard unused packets served to residents. • If staff are assisting residents with eating, they should perform hand hygiene prior to assisting and before assisting any other resident. Hand sanitizer may be used if hands are not visibly soiled. • Where possible, pre-set tableware to minimize resident contact with multiple sets of cutlery and plates.
Other Precautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close dining rooms or restrict resident access when not in use. • Clean and disinfected surfaces following each meal service, including chairs (including the underneath edge of the chair seat), tables, and railings. • Close common washrooms in dining areas. Remind residents to use washroom facilities in their rooms prior to meals. • Stagger mealtimes according to cohort (i.e., staggered to let residents on a single wing or floor eat at one time; if someone becomes ill, it is easier to identify cohorts, isolate, and contact trace.)