

Farmers Market COVID-19 Plan Requirements (updated 4/5/2021)

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, Public Health – Seattle & King County is requesting additional information from Farmers Market Coordinators prior to approval. The plan will include information on how the market will control for health screening, physical distancing and sanitation. The following information should be included in the plan and submitted to PHSKC:

1. Health Screening

- **Market staff** - Describe how you will ensure all market staff are screened for COVID-19 before beginning work. Include what you plan to do with market staff who either have symptoms or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or symptoms.
 - **Recommendation:**
Please follow DOH Guidelines on quarantine and isolation when staff or vendors have COVID-19 symptoms or are exposed to someone who is sick. This is summarized in our document, [What Should I Do if a Food Worker is Diagnosed with COVID-19](#).
- **Vendors** - Describe how you will ensure that all vendors are screened for COVID-19 symptoms before beginning work.
 - **Recommendation:**
Identify ways to check on vendors before they arrive at the market.
- **Customers** - Describe how you will ensure customers who exhibit symptoms are excluded. Customers should self-screen for symptoms before attending the market.
- Describe how you plan to discourage/communicate with customers, staff, vendors who are at a higher risk of illness
 - **Recommendation:** Include the full definition of the high-risk category.
People at higher risk include:
 - Over 60 years of age
 - With underlying health conditions including heart disease, lung disease or diabetes and weakened immune systems
 - Those who are pregnant
- **Market staff** - Identify market staff who will be charged with the responsibilities of health screening staff, vendors and customers.
- **Vendors, customers, market staff**- Describe how you will ensure that face coverings are worn at the market to help prevent the spread of Covid-19.
- **Maintain a daily log of all customers** who voluntarily provide contact information, including customer names, phone/email, and time/date they were at the market. Maintain the log for 30 days to help with contact tracing.

2. Physical Distancing

- Describe how you plan to ensure adherence to physical distancing requirements at all times (vendors, customers, market staff).

- Describe how you are ensuring market vendors are keeping adequate physical distancing during set up and tear down.
- Describe your plan to prevent customers from crowding a booth.
- Describe your plan to prevent customers that are waiting to get into the market from congregating.
- Describe how you plan to space booths, customers in line, and customers walking through the market so 6-foot physical distancing is followed.
- Describe the signage you will use to notify customers about physical distancing expectations, not to gather in groups, staying home if sick, face coverings and where you will have these posted (required at entrances).
- Identify market staff who will be charged with the responsibility of ensuring the physical distancing plan is followed.
- Describe how you will intervene with customers, vendors and staff that aren't complying with the physical distancing requirements?

Recommendations:

- Have specific market entry and exit points so the number of customers coming in and going out of the market can be counted and controlled.
 - The number of customers in the market at any given time should be kept at or below the maximum capacity to allow adequate space for the required physical distancing. Other customers must follow physical distancing requirements while in line to enter.
 - Consider expanding market hours to prevent overcrowding by spacing out the number of customers at the market.
- **UPDATED 4/5/2021:** Vendor booths must be placed at a minimum of 6 feet apart with up to 4 customers allowed per booth (maximum capacity). If physical distancing cannot be maintained with a customer count of 4 per booth, market manager will need to reduce capacity in order to maintain physical distancing.
 - Back-to-back vendor booths are allowed provided that there is a physical barrier wall between the booth backs. Barrier must be at least 6 feet high.

3. Sanitation

- Describe your overall sanitation plan, including sanitizing common contact surfaces, and disinfection of restrooms.
- Ensure all market staff and visitors have the means to clean their hands. Install temporary, portable handwashing stations or alcohol-based hand antiseptic dispensers for market staff, volunteers, and customers:
 - Handwashing stations must have soap; running, potable warm water; and single-use towels.
 - Antiseptic hand rubs must have at least 60% ethyl alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol.
 - Provide a hand wash station for staff use.
 - Provide hand sanitizer or hand wash stations at market entry points.
- Describe how you will provide adequate restroom access with adequate hand wash stations to the vendors, customers, and market staff.
- Identify market staff that will be charged with the responsibility of ensuring sanitation plans are met.

4. Vendors

- Provide a list of vendors who will be participating at the market.
- A temporary handwashing station will be required in every food vendor booth which is preparing/packaging food and/or sampling food or beverages, this includes farmers selling unpackaged produce.
- **UPDATED 4/5/2021** – SAMPLES: Product sampling is prohibited, except for single portions offered in response to a customer’s request at the vendor booth. If samples are provided, a seating area (*see next item*) must be available for customers to sit down, remove their masks, and try the sample. The food vendor providing samples must communicate with the customer that samples should be eaten in the provided seating area (signs suggested). Consuming food/beverages while walking/standing in the market is not permitted. WINE/BEER SAMPLES: in addition to the above, the applicable Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board rules must be complied with.
- If an onsite eating area is provided, it must be separated from customer shopping areas and walkways. Market staff must be designated to monitor the dining area for compliance with the Governor’s Requirements for [Restaurants, Taverns, Breweries, Wineries and Distilleries](#) and the [open-air and outdoor dining guidelines](#) (including but not limited to number of people per table and spacing between seats at separate tables).
- Foods prepared at the market (in booths or mobile food trucks) must be sold to consumers in “to go” packaging. Consider where vendors preparing food will be placed to minimize congestion; we encourage limiting onsite food preparation steps to shorten customer wait time. Consuming food/beverages while walking through the market is not permitted.
- There is no restriction on the type of vendors that may sell at the market.
- For prepackaged food vendors (not sampling) and for nonfood vendors, a hand wash station and/or a dispenser with hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethyl alcohol or 70% isopropyl alcohol is required for vendors and recommended to be in the booth for customers. The Governor’s [In-Store Retail Requirements](#) and the Governor’s [Miscellaneous Venues Requirements](#) must be followed as appropriate.
- If live entertainment is offered it must follow the Governor’s Requirements for [theater and performing arts](#).

The option for customers to select their own produce will be allowed only if both the vendor and market manager agree to offer this to customers. If both agree to allow customers to select their own produce, the following will be required: hand sanitizer available to customers; a six foot distance between the vendor and where the produce is placed; and a message urging customers to minimize their time at the produce booth. Whole fruits and vegetables are not considered ready to eat. Before consumption, they should be washed.

5. Summary report

- Describe your plan to document what went well, what didn’t, and needs for improvement at the end of each market day.
- Provide a summary report to Public Health monthly that includes each component:
 - Health checks
 - Physical distancing
 - Sanitation

- Identify market staff that will be charged with documenting and submitting the summary report to Public Health.

6. Further Recommendations

- PHSKC strongly recommends that vendors offer prepaid delivery and/or preorder options to customers to further reduce social interactions at the market.
- Prohibit pets (except for service animals) to help minimize congestion.

A farmer's market plan will be considered approved only on a contingency basis. Continued approval will be dependent on the monthly review of your end of day market reports. In addition, we will be monitoring your plan of operation while the market is open to verify that the procedures and plans as described are being followed.

Under the following circumstances, Public Health can require the market to discontinue:

- PH receives multiple legitimate complaints regarding a lack of compliance.
 - Lack of verification/documentation.
 - Lack of follow-up with identified issues. Reports of exposures to COVID-19, or of illnesses resulting from exposure and failure to manage the situation.
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Please review employee health policies and procedures with staff. **Employee health policies should prohibit food workers from working in food establishments while sick.**

The following are links to handouts on recommendations for food establishments as well as original document sources for the above information.

- [Guidelines for restaurants and other food businesses](#)
- [What to do if you have confirmed or suspected coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [What to do if you were potentially exposed to someone with confirmed coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [What to do if you have symptoms of coronavirus disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) and have not been around anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19](#)
- [Food Worker and Establishment Guidance on COVID-19](#)
- [What to do if an Employee has COVID-19 and What Not to Do](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidance for Food Workers & Food Establishments \(wa.gov\)](#)