

# FOOD BANKS & DISTRIBUTION SERVICES CHECKLIST

## SAFE RETURN TO BUSINESS



WINDSOR-ESSEX REGIONAL  
Chamber of Commerce

For more detailed recommendations and links to additional helpful resources, please review the **“Safe Return to Business: A Public Health Toolkit for the Windsor-Essex Business Community”** document from the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit. *This checklist is meant to be a guide for businesses and should not take place of any legal advice or rules put in place by any governing body or legislation.*

Follow additional recommendations as outlined in the WECHU **Recommendations for Emergency Food Distribution Staff and Volunteers**.

Stay updated on the latest federal actions, current provincial restrictions, and local orders by visiting WECHU’s **Restrictions & Guidance webpage** and visit WECHU’s **Workplace Specific Webpage** to find other Safe Return to Business Checklists providing specific guidance to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

*\*\*This document is subject to change and is current as of September 22, 2020*

## COMMUNICATION TO STAFF AND CUSTOMERS

- Inform volunteers and clients about your re-opening timeline and changes to how your business will operate. Use as many methods of communication as possible, such as subscribed email lists; direct customer phone calls for urgent matters, social media, and your website.
- Encourage staff and event attendees to download the **COVID-19 Alert App** so that they may receive notifications if they were in close contact with someone who was tested positive for COVID-19.
- Post signage at entrances and throughout the building that clearly communicate procedures for physical distancing between staff and customers. This include posters and floor markings such as instructional tape/stickers that direct the flow of people or customers waiting for services, including any outdoor waiting areas. Examples of signage can be found in Appendix B in the **Toolkit** or at or the **Resources & Signage** section of the WECHU website.
- Displaying **“Stand Here”** and **“Do Not Enter...If You Are Sick”** signage can serve as important components of a broader communication strategy to minimize the risk of COVID-19 spread between employees, staff, and customers. The two signs noted above (i.e., floor sticker and window cling) are available in English in limited supply by completing the **“Business Reopening Signage Order Form.”**

- Post signage to communicate entry procedures such as **hand sanitizing, sneeze and cough etiquette**, wearing of cloth masks, and/or screening for symptoms.
- Ensure employees are aware of common **COVID-19 symptoms** and instruct them to complete a daily **COVID-19 self-assessment** before reporting to work.
- Ensure customers and staff know to stay home if they are sick.
- Provide training to employees on effective **hand hygiene practices** and if required, the **proper way to put on and remove PPE** such as masks, face shields, gowns, and gloves.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Create policies and procedures that outline roles and responsibilities of the employer and the employee, including **cleaning and disinfection of the workplace**, how workers can report signs of illnesses, how to handle potentially high levels of employee absenteeism, staff return to work after COVID-19 illness, and how work will be scheduled.
- Create a response plan to handle an employee or customer who becomes ill while at work or in your business.
- Consider adopting an appointment only policy if possible, so that the number of people within the space can be limited and controlled. Minimize gathering of clients by scheduling staggered client pick-ups and/or extending program hours.
- Decide which staff will be returning to work and what job function they will be assigned to. Consider staggered staff return dates and times to minimize large groups arriving at once.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- Order an adequate supply of **approved disinfecting solution or wipes**, and an alcohol-based hand rub (hand sanitizer) with a minimum of 60% alcohol content, liquid hand soap, and paper towels. These should be easily accessible to employees and volunteers.
- Print and display **posters** describing proper methods of hand washing and hand sanitizing.
- If a building has been shut down for an extended period of time, it is important to perform a general building inspection that includes:
  - Security system checks.
  - First aid supply checks.
  - Ensuring all tools and equipment are in good working order.
  - Discarding any expired or spoiled inventory.
  - Checking for evidence of pest/rodent infestation such as droppings.
  - Checking the HVAC system to ensure it is in good working order and replace filters if necessary.
  - Flushing all drinking water taps for at least 5 minutes.
  - Performing a deep cleaning and disinfection throughout the business.

- Complete any needed modifications in areas where there will be staff and/or customers, to assist with physical distancing and proper cleaning and disinfection. For example:
  - Install Plexiglas barriers at check-outs and/or between workers who must work in close proximity to each other.
  - Replacing fabric/plush furniture with hard surfaces that can be easily cleaned and disinfected if possible.
  - Providing additional garbage bins for safe disposal of used PPE, tissues, and paper towels.
- Choose your information sources wisely. Check the [WECHU website](#) regularly for updates and helpful resources and bookmark official municipal, provincial and federal government websites.
- All staff, volunteers, and clients are required, to wear face coverings in common areas. Ensure adequate PPE [supplies](#) are available, including disposable masks for customers and disposable or reusable masks for staff. Print and display posters describing [proper usage](#).

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is strongly recommended that all individuals wear a face covering in all indoor spaces, public spaces and in outdoor spaces where physical distancing may be a challenge.
  - Local municipalities may have enacted by-laws in addition to the Section 22 class order issued by Windsor-Essex County's Medical Officer of Health under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, mandating the use of face coverings in commercial establishments across Windsor-Essex. **Refer to [WECHU's 'Face Masks and Coverings' webpage](#) or your local municipality's webpage for more information.**
- Consider installing a physical barrier (e.g., plexiglass) in the reception/waiting area. If the waiting area is small and does not allow for physical distancing, advise clients to wait in their vehicles or in a designated area outside until their scheduled appointment time.
- Ensure that employees and volunteers are trained to regularly clean and disinfect their workstations and equipment such as computer/laptop accessories and work phone. Delivery truck drivers should wipe down pens, delivery containers, and high touch areas of the truck between each delivery.
- Sanitize the facility, including work areas, thoroughly and often, with an emphasis on frequently touched objects and surfaces in common areas, such as door handles, entryways, touch pads/buttons, washrooms, kitchen surfaces and appliances, meal trays, kitchen serving utensils and other shared office equipment such as staplers and printers.
- Restrict the number of employees, volunteers and clients in shared spaces, including kitchens, food pantries, break rooms, and offices to maintain a physical distance of at least 2 metres between each person.
- Implement staggered shifts, remote work arrangements, or appropriate and use of non-medical PPE as required.

- Use contactless and/or virtual communication methods, whenever possible. If in-person meetings can't be avoided, choose safe spaces (indoor or outdoor) with proper ventilation, practice physical distancing, and wear face coverings when physical distancing is difficult.
- All drivers, volunteers, and staff should practice regular hand hygiene and maintain proper physical distance from others when receiving or providing food donations. Avoid shaking hands and use other non-physical forms of greeting.

## FOOD PICK-UP & DELIVERY SERVICE PROTOCOLS

- When possible, have takeaway food boxes/bagged meals prepared ahead of time so that they can be taken away without the individual necessarily having to enter your facility. These should be labelled and left in an area separate from the people coming in to pick up their food.
- When unloading food donations from a truck with other staff or volunteers, be sure to place food donations on the edge of the truck, while keeping a physical distance of at least 2 metres from the edge of the truck. Try not to pass the food donations directly to staff or volunteers by hand.
- Volunteers and staff who are making deliveries to apartments and homes should avoid entering the client's home, if possible, delivering packages for clients at their front door without entering their home to limit contact.
  - When delivering food to individuals in the community, if delivering to someone's home: Call in advance to notify them of the time of delivery. Let clients know you will be leaving the food for them at their front door.
  - Knock loudly or ring the doorbell, and leave the food in front of their door. If it is an apartment building with a secure entrance, ring the buzzer to let the person know that their food is in the lobby and that you will be waiting in your vehicle until they come down and get it. If they are unable to come down to the lobby, ask them to buzz you in and you may leave at their door and knock to let them know it is there.
  - When you return to your vehicle, always sanitize your hands with hand sanitizer containing a minimum of 60% alcohol. If warranted wait in your vehicle to ensure the person accesses the delivery.
- If providing food to individuals in any other circumstance (e.g., those that are homeless): Stay at least 2 metres from those receiving the donation. Wash your hands with soap and water, or sanitize your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after each interaction.

## RESOURCES

**Government of Ontario**

[Guideline for professional meeting and event facilities during COVID-19](#)

**Public Services Health & Safety Association**

[Health and Safety Guidance During COVID-19 For Employers of Office Settings](#)

**Toronto Public Health**

**COVID-19 Guidance for Food Banks/Donation Centres**