

MINIMUM STANDARD HEALTH PROTOCOLS



CHECKLIST FOR BARS OR SIMILAR ESTABLISHMENTS

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Effective May 22, 2020, bars or similar establishments may operate for in-person service up to 25% of the total listed occupancy inside the bar or similar establishment, and may not offer valet services except for vehicles with placards or plates for disabled parking; there is no occupancy limit outdoors at a bar or similar establishment; and bar or similar establishment employees are not counted towards the occupancy limitation. For these purposes, bars or similar establishments are establishments with a permit from TABC that are not otherwise considered restaurants. Any components of the bar or similar establishment that has interactive functions or exhibits, including child play areas, interactive games, and video arcades, must remain closed. Interactive amusement venues, such as video arcades, amusement parks, or water parks, remain closed.

The following are the minimum recommended health protocols for all bars or similar establishments choosing to operate in Texas. Bars or similar establishments may adopt additional protocols consistent with their specific needs and circumstances to help protect the health and safety of all employees, contractors, and customers.

The virus that causes COVID-19 can be spread to others by infected persons who have few or no symptoms. Even if an infected person is only mildly ill, the people they could spread it to may become seriously ill or even die, especially if they are 65 or older with pre-existing health conditions that place them at higher risk. Because of the concealed nature of this threat, everyone should rigorously follow the practices specified in these protocols, all of which facilitate a safe and measured reopening of Texas. The virus that causes COVID-19 is still circulating in our communities. We should continue to observe practices that protect everyone, including the most vulnerable.

Please note, public health guidance cannot anticipate or address every unique situation. Bars or similar establishments should stay informed and take actions based on common sense and wise judgment that will protect health and support economic revitalization. Bars or similar establishments should also be mindful of federal and state employment and disability laws, workplace safety standards, and accessibility standards to address the needs of both workers and customers.

Health protocols for serving your customers:

- Customers should not be permitted to loiter at the bar or in commonly trafficked areas, and should remain seated at tables inside the bar.
- Only provide service to seated individuals.
- Parties should maintain at least 6 feet of distance from other parties at all times, including while waiting to be seated in the establishment or for admission to the establishment.
- Activities that enable close human contact, including but not limited to dancing, are discouraged.
- Pathways for patrons' ingress and egress should be clear and unobstructed.
- Designate staff to ensure customers maintain a 6-foot distance between parties if customers are waiting to enter the bar or similar establishment.
- A hand sanitizing station should be available upon entry to the establishment.
- No tables of more than 6 people.
- Dining:
 - Do not leave condiments, silverware, flatware, glassware, or other traditional table top items on an unoccupied table.
 - Provide condiments only upon request, and in single use (non-reusable) portions.
 - Use disposable menus (*i.e.*, a new menu for each patron).
 - If a buffet is offered, bar employees should serve the food to customers.
- Ensure spacing of individuals within the establishment to keep a 6-foot distance between individuals in different groups.**

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- Tables or chairs must be installed to seat all customers to maintain social distancing, and may not be moved.
- Consider positioning an unoccupied table or other object adjacent to each occupied table, creating space to permanently maintain a 6-foot distance between groups.
- Take orders from customers seated at a table or by web/phone application.
- Contactless payment is encouraged. Where not available, contact should be minimized. Both parties should wash or sanitize hands after the payment process.

Health protocols for your employees and contractors:

- Train all employees and contractors on appropriate cleaning and disinfection, hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette.
- Screen employees and contractors before coming into the bar or similar establishment:
 - Send home any employee or contractor who has any of the following new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19:
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Chills
 - Repeated shaking with chills
 - Muscle pain
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - Loss of taste or smell
 - Diarrhea
 - Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
 - Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19
- Do not allow employees or contractors with the new or worsening signs or symptoms listed above to return to work until:
 - In the case of an employee or contractor who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual meets all three of the following criteria: at least three days (72 hours) have passed *since recovery* (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications); and the individual has *improvement* in symptoms (*e.g.*, cough, shortness of breath); and at least ten days have passed *since symptoms first appeared*; or
 - In the case of an employee or contractor who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and does not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, the individual should be assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to work until the individual has completed the same three-step criteria listed above; or
 - If the employee or contractor has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to work before completing the above self-isolation period, the individual must obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis.
- Do not allow an employee or contractor with known close contact to a person who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 to return to work until the end of the 14-day self-quarantine period from the last date of exposure (with an exception granted for healthcare workers and critical infrastructure workers).

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- Have employees and contractors wash or sanitize their hands upon entering the bar or similar establishment, and between interactions with customers.
- Have employees and contractors maintain at least 6 feet of separation from other individuals. If this distancing is not feasible, measures such as face covering, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, cleanliness, and sanitation should be rigorously practiced.
- Consistent with the actions taken by many businesses across the state, consider having all employees and contractors wear cloth face coverings over the nose and mouth. Employees and contractors should consider wearing non-medical grade face masks if available.

Health protocols for your facilities:

- Consider having an employee or contractor manage and control access to the bar or similar establishment, including opening doors to prevent attendees from touching door handles.
- Physically block off the bar and remove or block off bar stools so customers may neither sit nor order at the bar itself.**
- Regularly and frequently clean and disinfect any regularly touched surfaces, such as doorknobs, tables, and chairs.
- Regularly and frequently clean restrooms, and document the cleanings.
- Disinfect any items that customers contact.
- Make hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, soap and water, or similar disinfectant readily available to employees and customers.
- Consider placing readily visible signs at the bar or similar establishment to remind everyone of best hygiene practices.
- Clean and disinfect the area used by customers (*e.g.*, tables, chairs, etc.) after each group of customers depart, including the disinfecting of tables, chairs, stalls, and countertops.
- Clean and sanitize the bar daily.
- For bars or similar establishments with more than 10 employees and/or contractors present at one time, consider having an individual wholly or partially dedicated to ensuring the health protocols adopted by the establishment are being successfully implemented and followed.
- TABC staff should monitor bars throughout the state of Texas to ensure compliance with these protocols. TABC has the authority to suspend any license that poses an immediate threat or danger to public safety. Failure to follow these protocols may result in a 30-day license suspension for the first infraction, and a 60-day suspension for a second infraction.