

Coronavirus Guidance for Food Banks and Other Emergency Food Programs

March 18, 2020

Food banks and other emergency food programs provide essential services to vulnerable populations in our communities. It's important for food banks and other emergency food programs to continue to support clients, especially at times when need is greater than usual.

Please take time to reassure volunteers/staff and discuss the many things that they can do to keep everyone healthy, including:

Keep your facility clean:

- Follow [cleaning and disinfection](#) protocols, paying extra attention to high touch surfaces and use appropriate cleaners.
- If possible, place alcohol-based [hand sanitizer](#) dispensers in prominent locations.

Consider adjusting schedules:

- Suspend all non-essential programming in your facility.
- Schedule only essential volunteers/staff; ask others to be available to be called in if necessary.
- Try to rely on volunteers/staff who are not in an at-risk population (such as people over 60 years of age and/or with underlying medical conditions).

Limit the number of people in your facility:

- Ensure adequate social distance between people (ideally to two meters).
- Avoid gathering people in groups, for example cooking classes and waiting areas, as these do not allow adequate social distance.
- Eliminate self-serve/buffet style service.
- If you offer meals, provide a take-away option instead of eating in groups.
- If possible, arrange for clients to enter the facility individually to pick up their orders. Ask that clients limit the number of family members coming inside the facility to pick up the food.
- If clients are sick, consider delivering food to their door or have a healthy person pick it up on their behalf.

Display [Coronavirus Public Health Advice poster](#) to encourage people to:

- [Wash hands](#) often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth.
- Cough or sneeze into your arm or tissue, and wash hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after coughing or sneezing.
- Minimize close contact with others (such as shaking hands).
- Avoid sharing foods/drinks.
- Stay home when sick.

Visit www.gnb.ca/coronavirus for the latest information, including how to self-monitor, how you can protect yourself, and what to do if you suspect you are at risk.