

Management of Staff Food and Beverages In Health Care Environments

The following guidelines have been developed to support the safe management of staff food and beverages in health care environments to reduce the risk of droplet/contact transmission of COVID-19. In addition to normal restrictions regarding the consumption of food and beverages in specific areas, the following requirements are now in place:

1. Physical distancing protocols must be practiced in all meeting rooms, staff lounges and lunch room areas:
 - Place signs with suggested maximum persons per room
 - Wherever possible, re-arrange or decrease seating in staff areas to adhere to appropriate distancing
 - Consider altered meal break times for staff or using alternate unused space to meet physical distancing requirements, i.e. unused meeting rooms
 - Disinfect any surfaces you touch in common areas prior to eating, i.e. if touching any shared condiments (saltshaker, ketchup etc.)
2. Proper hand hygiene protocols must be followed at all times.

Personal Staff Food in Staff lounge/Lunch Room

- Staff can continue to bring their own personal food and related supplies for their shift.
- Personal food can be stored in staff fridges and microwaves available for staff use. Containers and lunch bags placed in fridges and microwaves must be made of a material that can be easily wiped and disinfected. Anything placed into a staff fridge must be disinfected with a site-approved disinfectant prior to storing in the fridge or using in the microwave.
- Individual staff beverage containers are permitted in the health care environment however, they must not be used for direct access to water, ice and coffee dispensers. Clean facility beverage containers must be used to access water, ice and coffee dispensers.
- Site-approved disinfectant product and supplies with instructions for use are provided in staff lounges and lunchrooms. High-touch areas must be frequently cleaned/disinfected by all individual staff members in addition to housekeeping's scheduled cleaning. High-touch areas include but not limited to the table, microwave handle and keypad/knobs, counter, fridge handle and cupboard handles.
- Staff must bring their personal food and related supplies home at the end of their shift.

Food Brought in by Staff for Staff Sharing

- The staff member bringing in the food must maintain clean food preparation practices and wash surfaces and hands prior to preparing food and managing food containers.
- Food brought to work by staff for staff sharing must be packaged to allow for cleaning/disinfection upon arrival (i.e. plastic container). Cardboard boxes or Styrofoam are not permitted.

- These steps are observed:
 1. Wipe the exterior of the container with a site-approved disinfectant upon arrival to the site, taking efforts to ensure food inside the container is not exposed to the disinfectant during the enhanced cleaning.
 2. Allow the container to air dry.
 3. The container is then immediately delivered to the appropriate area for staff consumption.
 4. All staff must perform hand hygiene prior to handling food and food containers.
 5. Food intended for more than one staff member must be portioned into individual servings by one individual staff member, to comply with physical distancing and control of the number of individuals in close proximity to food intended for more than one individual staff member.
 6. All staff are responsible to clean the food supplies and high touch surfaces before leaving the room.
 7. The staff member bringing in the food is responsible to take the container home at the end of their shift.

External Food Deliveries for Staff

These guidelines apply to individual staff and staff group food deliveries and corporate or restaurant donations for staff.

- One entrance is to be designated for staff food deliveries.
- Staff should inform the food provider of the entrance to be used for delivery and that the packaging complies with requirements, i.e.
 - Food must be packaged to allow for cleaning/disinfection upon arrival (i.e. plastic container). Cardboard boxes or Styrofoam are not permitted
 - Only single serving beverages are permitted (i.e., coffee/tea, pop)
- These steps are observed:
 1. Prior to receipt of food delivery, staff must perform hand hygiene. Physical distancing must be maintained at the hand off.
 2. A minimum number of staff should remove food from outer transport container/warmer/bag (dispose or return to the delivery person as appropriate) AND wipe the exterior container with a site-approved disinfectant wipe. Every effort must be made to ensure food inside the container is not exposed to the chemicals during the enhanced cleaning process.
 3. Allow the container to air dry.
 4. Perform hand hygiene following cleaning of the container.
 5. Move container to an appropriate area for consumption (normal restrictions regarding food and beverage consumption in specific work areas continue to apply).
 6. Hand hygiene is performed by all staff prior to handling or eating food.
 7. Food deliveries intended for more than one staff member must be portioned and labelled into individual servings by one individual staff member to comply with physical distancing and mitigate the number of individuals in close proximity to food intended for more than one individual
 8. Staff are responsible for cleaning food supplies and high-touch surfaces before leaving the room.