



The South Carolina Palmetto Priority

We Make Safety & Health A Priority

Purpose:

The Palmetto Priority restaurant commitment will instill confidence with customers as they choose dine-in service at South Carolina restaurants. The formal commitment made by the restaurateurs demonstrates real precautions that they are taking to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

When customers see the Palmetto Priority endorsement seal, they can be certain that the restaurant is taking all necessary steps to protect their employees and customers and is committed to playing a leadership role in protecting our communities. The commitment also empowers customers to learn what they can do to help keep everyone safe. With restaurants and customers working together, we can make the restaurant industry as vibrant as it was prior to the impact of COVID-19.

Overview:

Restaurants that choose to participate in the program will comply with a checklist of operational assurances as outlined in the restaurant reopening guidelines, participate in required free online education and participate in a DHEC limited scope food safety inspection.

Recognition:

Restaurants that agree to adhere to the checklist and sign a commitment to their employees and customers will earn the endorsement of the program. They will be required to post the “Palmetto Priority Seal” that clearly outlines their commitment to their guests and staff with website links to learn more about the program. Digital icons and images will be made available for the restaurant to use to market and promote their participation to their customers. Lastly, the restaurants commitment will be listed on a website, *palmettopriority.com*, that allows guests to review the commitment standards, learn more about the program and search for participating restaurants (search feature coming soon).

Governance:

The SC Restaurant and Lodging Association will oversee this consumer-driven program by providing patrons with the opportunity to share their experience, both positive and negative, through a short survey. This form, available at palmettopriority.com will also be used to file a report if a restaurant not honoring their commitment.

Marketing and Promotion:

SC PRT, DHEC and SCRLA will actively promote the program and encourage restaurants and food-service businesses across the state to make a formal commitment for a clean and safe environment for their staff and customers.

Design a multi-channel social media campaign targeting two audiences: 1) Restaurant and foodservice businesses across the state to make a commitment 2) the dining public and traveling public instill confidence in the dining public and traveling public that SC is safe and open for business.

Program Standards:

Restaurants must agree to the following commitments to protect their employees and customers and demonstrating leadership in safe sanitation practices with all employees on every shift.

- Complete either a DHEC Virtual Food Safety Check or, after July 1st, a Limited Scope Food Safety Inspection
 - Available for free by scheduling with the restaurant's food safety inspector or by contacting the DHEC food safety office
 - Confirmation available on the DHEC website
 - More information below
- Managers must complete the ServSafe Reopening Guidance: COVID-19 Precautions.
 - 13-minute course available free on the ServSafe.com website.
 - Certificate of completion available at the end of the course
 - All employees will be trained on appropriate cleaning and disinfection, hand hygiene, proper face covering and respiratory etiquette.
 - More information below
- Adhere to the minimum standards, as outlined below of the SCRLA Restaurant Reopening Guidance.
 - Post required signage advising customers not to enter if symptomatic
 - Appropriate signage to promote social distancing and walking traffic patterns
 - Select one person per shift to be in charge of safety and sanitation during the shift, observing and ensuring that hand washing is done appropriately, and sanitation of dining room areas, restrooms, lobbies and door areas is done regularly and consistently (minimum of hourly).
 - Signs reminding of hand hygiene and proper handwashing posted for customers and staff

- Execute the restaurants plan to clean and disinfect common areas and surfaces regularly using chemicals appropriate for COVID-19 disinfection
- Health safety checks for all employees before each shift
- Require each employee to wear a face covering (i.e., cloth or paper face coverings, face masks, full face shields)
- Hand sanitizing stations will be available to all customers and employees, including upon entry
- Parties will maintain at least 6 feet of distance from other parties at all times, except when seated at tables or booths with partitions.
- Only provide condiments (consider using PC products when appropriate), silverware, flatware, glassware, or other traditional tabletop items upon service/request. When table is unoccupied, all items should be removed.
- Tables are cleaned and disinfected in between seating
- Self-service items such as a buffets or drink stations are eliminated unless an attendant is provided to serve those items to guests or to supervise the use of gloves by the patrons
- Menus are available digital, single use or disinfected between guests

Information on required training and support



ServSafe Reopening Guidance Online Training

Online training video includes best practices for safety, hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting, and social distancing available in English and Spanish

[ServSafe](https://www.servsafe.com), the nation's leader in food safety training, released the ServSafe Reopening Guidance: COVID-19 Precautions training video to help restaurant and foodservice employees learn best practices to employ during the coronavirus outbreak. The course provides best practices for employees of a restaurant preparing to reopen a dining room following a state shutdown. The video is free of charge, available in English and Spanish, and can be viewed on-demand at [ServSafe.com/freecourses](https://www.servsafe.com/freecourses).

The course covers the latest information and current best practices including:

- How the coronavirus is passed
- Symptoms to watch for
- How and when to wear face coverings
- When to wear gloves
- Cleaning and disinfecting
- Social distancing
- Pickup and delivery

DHEC Virtual Food Safety Check and Limited Scope Food Inspections

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) has developed an innovative emergency procedure for conducting virtual food safety checks and inspections during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Utilizing a variety of video conferencing services, DHEC inspectors can virtually evaluate retail food operations at establishments around the state, allowing the agency to continue its food safety oversight while also protecting public health by adhering to social distancing measures.

During the virtual visits, DHEC staff can discuss current operational challenges and address any concerns restaurant operators may have. Afterward, the restaurant operator will receive a completed DHEC Food Safety Check or Limited Scope Inspection report via email, and the check/inspection report will be posted on the S.C. Food Grades website.

A limited scope food safety inspection is a modified version of the food safety checks and will replace Food Safety Checks on July 1st. It will include additional observations and discussions on risk-based practices. These inspections will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis, and follow-up inspections will be required for correction(s) within 10 days.

To schedule with DHEC a food safety check or limited scope inspection at your facility, please contact a [regional DHEC office](#). For a brief look at what a virtual food check looks like, please see a video [here](#).