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## Reopen

The guidance outlines a series of steps that should be taken to keep employees and customers safe, including encouraging hand-washing, social distancing and how to check for symptoms of potential Covid-19 cases.

May. 15, 2020



New guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advising states on how to reopen bars, restaurants and workplaces was posted by the agency on Thursday.

The [guidance](#) outlines a series of steps that should be taken to keep employees and

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But in the absence of guidance from the CDC, providing rules and advice had largely been left to state and local groups, or not dispensed at all. Some businesses that have reopened have said they've seen few customers as people are reluctant to resume shopping, dining out and socializing while still worried about the illness.

[Bars](#) and restaurants, for example, shouldn't reopen until they can follow applicable state and local orders, and until they're ready to protect people who are at higher risk for severe illness, the guidelines say. Then they should encourage social distancing — add spacing of tables and stools; encourage drive-through, delivery and curbside pick up; limit party sizes and occupancy; avoid self-serve stations; and restrict employee shared spaces. Employers should check staff for signs and symptoms of illness as they arrive, "as feasible."

[Mass-transit operators](#) should limit routes to and from high-transmission areas before increasing to full service, as well as space out passengers by closing every other row of seats, according to the guidelines. Youth programs, [camps](#) and [childcare programs](#) should change activities and procedures to limit shared toys and supplies, according to the guidelines.

## Making Progress

The new CDC guidelines are valuable and may be a step in the right direction, said

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parts of the country have been hit harder than others.

A White House official said the guidelines were the result of a collaboration between the CDC and the administration's coronavirus task force. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, disputed the claim that the guidance had ever been quashed.

Earlier reports by the Associated Press and the Washington Post described pushback inside the administration over a draft of the guidelines. A version of the guidelines posted by the AP contained far more detailed instructions to churches, camps and other businesses and gathering places, setting up small groups to limit interactions, or suggested restrictions on how to serve food, for example.

At a Tuesday Senate hearing about reopening, Senators Patty Murray and Chris Murphy, Democrats representing Washington and Connecticut, respectively, both criticized the delay in getting the guidelines out.

"We need it. My state needs it," Murphy said. "We don't have all the experts that you guys have and we rely on you."

"Why didn't this plan get released?" Murphy asked.

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Small Business

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