March 24, 2020

Guidance for Serving Unpackaged Foods at Grocery, Convenience Stores

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) wants to provide you additional guidance on Gov. Tony Evers’ emergency order limiting public gatherings to fewer than 10 people.

The directive exempts grocery stores and convenience stores with the following requirements:

- **Close all seating** intended for use by customers consuming food.
- **Cease self-service operation** of salad bars, beverage station and buffets.
- **Prohibit customers from self-dispensing** all unpackaged food.

For unpackaged or bulk food products, these are the requirements for how they can be served:

- Customers may not serve themselves items including, but not limited to: coffee, fountain soda and refill water jugs.
- Customers may not handle unwrapped bakery items.
- Employees may serve a customer items including, but not limited to: coffee, fountain soda, refilling or handing a requested bakery item.
- Employees may package bulk food per a customer request.
- Employees may grind coffee beans per customer request.
- Employees may prepare/reheat food items in the kitchen area, package and place the food item in a case for customer self-service. For example, hot dog rollers may be placed in the kitchen to reheat hot dogs for packaging by employees and placement in a customer self-serve hot case.
- Food items may not be reheated in the customer area. All equipment used for reheating (e.g., hot dog or tornado rollers) must be moved into the kitchen for use.
- Packaging operations are limited to facility-provided containers only.

This order remains in effect for the duration of the public health emergency declared in Order No. 72, or until a superseding order is issued.

The [State of Wisconsin created a webpage](https://www.datcp.wi.gov) that offers resources from various agencies and answers to critical questions. Here are a few other resources from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) that might be helpful during this challenging time:

- [COVID-19 Information](https://www.datcp.wi.gov)
- [COVID-19 Facts: Why Social Distancing](https://www.datcp.wi.gov)
- [COVID-19 Facts: Protect Your Family](https://www.datcp.wi.gov)

Thank you for keeping Wisconsinites safe by reducing the spread of COVID-19. If you have questions, email datcpdrsrsetail@wisconsin.gov.