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## WNYCOSH Issues REVISED Guidance for Grocery Stores

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## WNYCOSH Issues REVISED Guidance for Grocery Stores

### Abstract

Grocery stores across Western New York have made significant changes to encourage social distancing and hand washing. Additionally many stores have gone beyond our recommendations by issuing PPE and installing plexiglass shields. However, these changes require additional training and procedures to protect worker and customers alike and limit community spread. WNYCOSH is releasing the revised guidance to include the additional recommendations.

### Keywords

grocery stores, COVID-19, coronavirus, health and safety, workers' rights

### Comments

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## WNYCOSH Issues REVISED Guidance for Grocery Stores

*April 3, 2020*

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*In [COVID-19](#), [Health and Safety](#), [Workers Rights](#)*

*Tag [coronavirus](#), [COVID-19](#), [health and safety](#), [New York State](#), [workers' rights](#)*

Grocery stores across Western New York have made significant changes to encourage social distancing and hand washing. Additionally many stores have gone beyond our recommendations by issuing PPE and installing plexiglass shields. However, these changes require additional training and procedures to protect worker and customers alike and limit community spread. WNYCOSH is releasing the revised guidance to include the additional recommendations:

### **REVISED WNYCOSH Guidance for Cashiers in Retail Establishments**

#### **For Businesses**

1. Install floor markings to require customers to stand behind, until it's time to complete the transaction.
2. Schedule handwashing breaks. Assign a relief person to step in for cashiers so they can wash their hands with soap for a full 20 seconds. Provide hand lotion so workers hands don't crack.

3. Schedule cashier station sanitation breaks. Assign a relief person to rotate through the store and sanitize all frequently touched surfaces.
4. Relax all existing production standards and productivity monitoring systems.
5. explore ways to reduce handling of paper coupons, including substitutes that will not present a hardship to customers.
6. Explore scheduling adaptations to accommodate childcare arrangements.
7. For employers working overtime and shift workers, make sure that there are at least 12 hours from the end of one shift to the beginning of the next shift so that workers working extra hours have plenty of time to travel to and from home and get 8 hours of sleep.
8. Find out which members are at increased risk – older workers, immune-compromised workers, people with respiratory or heart disease, people with asthma.
9. Stores waive pick-up fees to avoid in-store crowds.
10. Encourage the use of credit cards over cash.
11. Post CDC guidelines in breakrooms.
12. Be alert for racism or discrimination against workers of Asian descent.
13. Understand the difference between cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing.
14. Using gloves as personal protective equipment (PPE) requires training in how to properly to apply, use, and discard. Additionally, it requires an adequate supply to keep employees safe and limit infection spread. Please note, cleaning latex gloves with alcohol-based sanitizer can cause pin-holes and make the gloves useless for reasons of infection control.
15. Plexiglass shields can be effective in protecting employees as long as they provide enough coverage to create a physical barrier between the worker and the customer. Partial shields only assist with infection control with strict enforcement of appropriate social distancing policies. Even properly installed shields must be cleaned regularly: the worker side should be cleaned between

change of shifts at a minimum and B. the customer side should be cleaned once an hour or more frequently if customers are coughing or sneezing.

16. The use of masks or face coverings can offer protection only if there is an ample supply and there is proper training on how to apply, remove and seal. Please note if employees have respiratory ailments such as asthma they should first consult a physician before using. There has also been a lot of encouragement to use homemade masks utilizing cloth and household products that weren't meant as breathing apparatus and may include chemical or particles that could damage a worker's lungs.
17. Temperature checks of customers and personnel upon entering establishments could significantly limit the spread of COVID-19 by denying entry to symptomatic individuals.

WNYCOSH CAN HELP WITH GRANT-SUPPORTED TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

#### **For Businesses Outside of NYS**

1. Paid leave time to cover quarantine, isolation and COVID-19 related illnesses.
2. Waive any waiting or accrual period outlined in leave time policy or union contract.

#### **For Workers**

1. Retail workers are among the heroes of the COVID-19 pandemic response. We need to protect the health of retail workers throughout the duration of the pandemic.
2. Many workers are feeling the pressure of trying to keep shelves stocked. They are working faster, skipping breaks, and working more hours. Stress, fatigue, and constant exposure to the public can make retail workers more vulnerable.
3. Take your breaks! Other people's urgency is real, but it cannot come at the expense of your health.
4. Take extra handwashing breaks. Hand sanitizer is helpful, but it is not a substitute for handwashing, especially if hands are dirty. Keep in mind that

- everything you scan at the cash register was handled by multiple people including customer; also you handle money, coupons, and credit cards or store cards. Use the hand scanner if possible for store cards.
5. Secure your hair, to avoid having to touch your face to adjust stray hairs.
  6. If you use a cellphone, remember that you touch it with your hands and hold it against your face. Use a disinfecting wipe on it regularly and before you take it home where family members might use it.
  7. Get plenty of sleep.
  8. Get the flu shot, keep all your other vaccinations up-to-date, including tetanus.
  9. Please understand gloves don't offer significant additional protection. If you touch your face while wearing gloves there is the same risk of infection as bare skin. If using gloves they must not be reused and must be removed properly to avoid infection.
  10. Using gloves as personal protective equipment (PPE) requires training in how to properly to apply, use and discard as well as an adequate supply to keep employees safe and limit infection control. Please note cleaning latex gloves with alcohol-based sanitizer can cause pin-holes and make the gloves useless for reasons of infection control.
  11. The use of masks or face coverings can offer you protection only if there is an sufficient supply and there is proper training in how to apply, remove, and seal. Please note if you have respiratory ailments such as asthma you should first consult a physician before using. There has also been a lot of encouragement to use home-made masks utilizing cloth and household products weren't meant as breathing apparatus and may include chemical or particles that could be damage your lungs.

Download the Revised Guidance Here: [WNYCOSH Guidance for Cashiers in Retail Establishments rev2](#)

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