

## HELPISNEXTDOOR.CA – SAFE FOOD-SHARING GUIDE



### Safe Food Sharing in Covid-19

The sharing of food is important in every culture around the world. It binds us together as families and friends and as communities. With the pandemic underway, most people have had to hold back from this practice as large gatherings around food have been identified as a source of outbreaks for the virus. There will be times when no food sharing of any kind is allowed. So we have to keep listening for the latest instructions from our leaders, but we will be allowed to do it sometimes, as long as we do it safely.

Current guidelines can be accessed at the following link: [COVID-19 info for Albertans | Alberta.ca](https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-info-for-albertans.aspx)

Traditionally, most people drop off meals or baking to a neighbour or family member who:

- Have a new baby in the house.
- Are grieving the death of a friend or family member.
- Are struggling to feed themselves or their family.
- have experienced a major loss.
- We just want to encourage and share a special moment with.

How do we plan gatherings that involve some food sharing? Let's learn together.

The following resource pulls together advice from Alberta Provincial and Health Services guidelines that are recommended to restaurants, caterers and professional cleaners in order to provide a safe way to do together what people across the whole world love to do: **Share Food!**

## Step One: Screen Yourself!

Please go through each question in the following questionnaire. If you can answer yes to any of these items, please isolate yourself and do not attempt to connect with anyone.

### SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

1.	Do you or anyone in your household have any of the below symptoms?	Circle one	
	• Fever	YES	NO
	• Cough	YES	NO
	• Shortness of breath / Difficulty breathing	YES	NO
	• Sore throat	YES	NO
	• Runny nose / Nasal congestion	YES	NO
	• Feeling unwell / fatigued	YES	NO
	• Nausea / Vomiting / Diarrhea	YES	NO
	• Muscle aches	YES	NO
	• Headache	YES	NO
	• Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	YES	NO
	• Loss of sense of smell or taste	YES	NO
2.	Have you or anyone in your household, travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3.	Have you or your children attending the program had close <u>unprotected</u> * contact (face-to-face contact within 2 meters/6 feet) with someone who is ill with a cough and/or fever?	YES	NO
4.	Have you or anyone in your household been in close <u>unprotected</u> * contact in the last 14 days with someone who is being investigated or confirmed to be a case of COVID-19?	YES	NO
5.	Current temperature	°C	

\*"unprotected" means close contact without appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE).

If you have answered "Yes" to any of the above questions, please keep yourself isolated from contact with people outside your household.

To access the Province's official assessment tool, click on the following link:

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Journey/COVID-19/Pages/Assessment.aspx>

## Step Two: Ask Permission!

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***“Would it be alright if I brought you some food? I’m going to use the Safe Food Sharing Resource from helpisnextdoor.ca. If you are comfortable with me making food for you, do you have any food restrictions?”***

Not everyone will feel safe accepting food from someone in this time. Please try to ask first and respect their answer. Feel free to share resources from helpisnextdoor.ca to show your plan to be safe.

*If they do have some food restrictions, please include a list of the ingredients you used.*

## Step Three: Prepare yourself!

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### **Wash your hands!**

Personal practices, such as proper hygiene help reduce the risk of infection or spreading infection to others:

- wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the washroom and when preparing food.
  - use alcohol-based hand sanitizers if soap and water are not available
  - keep hand sanitizers out of reach of children and always supervise them when using hand sanitizers, as ingesting even small amounts of sanitizer can be fatal
- when coughing or sneezing:
  - cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand
  - dispose of the tissues as soon as possible in a lined waste-basket
  - wash your hands right away
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands

### **Clean your cooking/baking area!**

Be sure to clean each surface you will use thoroughly with a strong disinfectant or cleaner.

The Government of Canada keeps a current list of disinfectants that have evidence to support their use against Covid-19. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html#tbl1>

Alternatively, you can make a 1000ppm bleach water solution by mixing 20 ml (4 teaspoons) of unscented, household bleach with 1000 ml (4 cups) of water. Ensure the surface remains wet with the bleach water solution for 1 minute.

Use bleach in a well-ventilated area and never mix with other chemical products. Be sure to prepare the solution fresh, when you are intending to use it, and only dilute bleach in water (and not with additional chemicals).

Source: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/ppih/if-ppih-covid-19-environmental-cleaning-public-facilities.pdf>

## Step Four: Preparing Food

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Please wear a mask as you prepare the food and wash your hands in between different ingredients. What kind of mask do I wear?

Current guidelines around proper mask procedures are available [here](#):

## Step Five: Serving food

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If you are welcoming people to an in-person gathering within the current restrictions, please ask each person to screen themselves via the checklist included as **step one** in this guide.

When planning to set out food, consider the following guidance:

- All food items should be individually pre-portioned, packaged and labelled.
- If appropriate, consider packaging full meals into a single container or plate.
  - For example: sandwich, side and condiments in a single container, labelled with a list of contents.
- Avoid the use of grab bins for plates, utensils, cups or straws. Roll silverware ahead of time and consider using single-use disposable serving utensils and napkins.



## **Planning for a Safe In-Person Gathering (beyond cohorts or household groups)**

Small in-person gatherings are sometimes permitted outdoors or in larger and well-ventilated indoor spaces. As of mid-January 2021, outdoor gatherings of up to ten people were permitted, but that number may change. Current limits can be accessed at the following site: [COVID-19 info for Albertans | Alberta.ca](https://www.alberta.ca/info-for-albertans-alberta.ca) The following advice will help you arrange for a safe in-person gatherings within current guidelines.

Please group people according to family or household units. All participants should wear masks outside their designated seating area.

- Arrange tables and chairs so that a two-metre distance is maintained between the outer perimeter of chairs at each dining table.
- Physical barriers may be installed where tables cannot be adequately separated.
- Aisles should be wide enough to allow room for people to maintain physical distancing. Consider using one-way traffic flow to help maintain distancing.
- Prior to the event, cover chairs and tables with a freshly laundered covering, or thoroughly clean and disinfect each chair and table.
- Encourage the use of assigned seating to minimize multiple persons using the same chairs and place settings. This reduces the potential for transmission and the need for cleaning and sanitizing during the event.
- If you are using a buffet style serving table, please assign a few people wearing masks and gloves to pour drinks, put food on people's plates and hand out utensils. Minimize lineups by asking household or family groups to come through one at a time.
- If a bathroom will be accessible to attendees, please clean every surface beforehand and plan to do one or more cleanings during and following the event. (See surface cleaning guidelines in Step Three)
- Please keep a list of people who attended to aid contact tracing efforts if there are any incidents.

This advice comes largely from Provincial health guidance provided to catering companies: <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-relaunch-guidance-food-catering.pdf>



*Religious and spiritual communities working to end homelessness in Edmonton and area*

## **Helpisnextdoor.ca is a program of Edmonton's Interfaith Housing Initiative**

Our diverse faith communities share important common values: *“respect for human dignity, solidarity with those who are poor and vulnerable, and an affirmation of the importance of inclusive and welcoming communities where individuals and families can thrive.”* (Interfaith Statement, 2011)

[www.interfaithhousing.ca](http://www.interfaithhousing.ca)

Interfaith Housing is grateful for the help of these partner organizations who assisted us in creating and translating these resources for **helpisnextdoor.ca**

