



Education Supplies and Students Meals During COVID-19

Preparation and Service Safety Precautions as of 4/7/2020

This document provides safety guidance to school districts on educational supplies and meal service during the COVID-19 pandemic with the goal of keeping staff and families safe and preventing the spread of the virus. These precautions are accurate as of **Tuesday 4/7/2020**. Information about COVID-19 continues to evolve. Contact Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Communicable Disease Epidemiology at 406-444-0273 for most recent information.

Sanitation of Materials

It is very challenging to disinfect schoolbooks without damaging the books. Therefore, if at all possible, do not recommend. Possible options would be, copy pages from the necessary texts and distribute copies to students on a weekly basis. Do not request those documents be returned to the school or shared amongst students.

As a last option, if books must be shared between students the first thing to do is determine if there is a case or symptomatic individual in the household. If there is, that book should not be shared. If there is not, then a book may be shared based on the following recommendations:

1. The primary recommendation for disinfection is time – essentially quarantine the book. If it is possible to rotate the book out of use for a week between student uses this would be ideal.
2. If this is not possible, consider laminating the cover of the book (because it's the most commonly touched surface) in some way and wiping the books down with COVID-19 approved disinfectants and then limiting the distribution of that book to the same 2-4 students. In other words, if a math book was needed by 8 students and only 4 books were available then each of those books would only be handled by the same two students.

Again, the safest recommendation is not to share and try to use dedicated or copied materials for each student. Follow CDC recommendations on using [face masks](#) and [hand hygiene](#). (Please emphasize maintaining 6-feet social distance remains important to slowing the spread of the virus.)

[Child nutrition](#) programs play a critical role in responding to the nutrition needs of at-risk communities during a pandemic response. The federal school nutrition programs administered by the Montana Office of Public Instruction has approved flexibility to support local communities during COVID-19 school site closures. For information on meal service guidance, please contact Office of Public Instruction, School Nutrition Programs at (406) 444-2501 or email Christine Emerson, State Director at cemerson@mt.gov

Grab and Go Meals Preparation and Service Guidance

School Nutrition Program Directors/Head Cooks should follow the recommended [food safety guidance](#) and [standard operating procedures](#) for grab and go meals as they have been previously trained in preparing school meals.

Follow [precautions](#) to ensure the safety of school food service professionals and families by following the recommended practices:

Social Distancing – Stay 6 Feet Apart

- Stay 6 feet apart from others, including coworkers and families.
- Set up prep stations, work areas, carts, and tables so that people stay 6 feet apart.
- Educate families and staff about social distancing through signs and social media. These Lunch Assist [Social Distancing Cards can be used](#) to communicate to staff and families.
[Spanish version of social distancing cards](#)

Hygiene Habits

- Stay home when you are sick or have any [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- Wash hands frequently using [proper handwashing methods](#).
- [Sanitize hands](#) when hand washing is not possible.
- Wear disposable gloves and change them frequently.
- Wear aprons that are single-use or laundered daily.
- Clean and sanitize high-touch surfaces regularly.
- Follow CDC recommendations on using [face masks](#) and [hand hygiene](#). Please emphasize maintaining 6-feet social distance remains important to slowing the spread of the virus.
- [WHO videos \(gloves & masks\)](#)

Point of Service

- Distribute meals (this makes it sound like meals on a tray rather than bags of food) outdoors. If not possible, distribute meals at the entrance of a building.
- Use traffic cones or tape to space workers and families 6 feet apart as they wait in line or pick up food.
- Arrange separate tables or carts for food staging and food pickup. Space them more than 6 feet apart. Use signs, such as the [Social Distancing Cards](#), to communicate to staff and families.
- Sanitize hands and surfaces regularly.
- Transfer only enough meals for one family to the pick-up station, table or cart.
- For drive-thru meals, use a cart or a tray to pass meals to families. Practice no contact hand-offs. When you give food to families, do not touch or reach into vehicles, or make physical contact with others.
- School Bus, Truck, Van Meal Delivery: Practice no contact hand-offs. When you give food to families, do not touch or make physical contact with others. Sanitize hands and surfaces regularly.

COVID-19 Food Service Resources

- [COVID-19 Public Health Resources – Montana DPPHS](#)
- [COVID-19 School Nutrition Program Information – Montana Office of Public Instruction](#)
- [Pandemic Response Standard Operating Procedure](#)
- COVID-19 School Nutrition Program Information – [Lunch Assist](#)
- [COVID-19 Food and Drug Association](#)
- [Tip Sheet: School Food Service Safety Precautions, English & Spanish](#) – Lunch Assist
- [Social Distancing \(6 feet\) Cards for Grab and Go Meal Delivery Service](#) – Lunch Assist
- COVID-19 Resources – Institute of Child Nutrition <https://theicn.org>
- [Food Safety Standard Operating Procedures](#) – Institute of Child Nutrition
- ["Keep Food Safe" Cards, English & Spanish](#) – Lunch Assist
- [Tip Sheet: Face Mask Safety](#) – Lunch Assist
- Centers for Disease Control COVID-19 [Frequently Asked Questions](#) and [Fact Sheets](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)

References

This information was adapted with permission from resources provided by Center for Ecoliteracy and [Lunch Assist](#) Updated March 24, 2020; [Centers for Disease Control](#), [Institute of Child Nutrition](#), and Dayle Hayes, MS, RD, and Jeanne Reilly, SNS, NDTR, from [Tips for School Meals that Rock](#).

This document is provided by the *Montana School Safety Advisory Committee* represented by Office of Public Instruction Superintendent's Office, OPI-Health Enhancement & Safety, Montana Disaster and Emergency Services, Montana School Boards Association (MSBA), MT Department of Health and Human Services, University of Montana Safe Schools Center, Salish Kootenai College, Montana School Counselor Association, Lewis & Clark Public Health, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Montana Department of Justice, School Administrators of Montana (SAM), Montana Rural Education Association, Montana Small Schools Alliance, Governor's Office of Community Service, National Center for Health Care Informatics - Praxis Center, Kalispell Police Department, Butte Central, T.E.S.T., Inc, and Reflex Protect.