

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD  
COVID-19 PATH TO RECOVERY



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COVID-19  
OUTDOOR RESTAURANT  
DINING GUIDELINES

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May, 2020

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# BUSINESS RE-OPENING TASK FORCE

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The Town of Fairfield shares your determination to reopen your establishments and return your employees to work. To support these goals, the Town of Fairfield has established a Business Reopening Task Force. The Task Force is designed to assist businesses with their reopening and guide them in the safety protocols provided by the Public Health Department. Members of the team include the First Selectwoman and members of the Health, Fire, Police, Zoning, Building, and Economic Development Departments. We have prepared this document to assist with expanding outdoor areas for restaurants. We now have included a streamlined process to enlarge or establish an outdoor dining area throughout the pandemic period. When restrictions for indoor dining are eased, we stand ready to work with your team to implement safety protocols for those future operations.

Our Task Force will work with you and your staff to address the many challenges ahead. We are committed to supporting your operations and return to profitability. For assistance, please contact [Mark Barnhart](#), Director of Economic Development at (203) 256-3120 or for specific questions regarding the permit process.

The Town of Fairfield will be following the guidelines established by Governor Lamont in the [REOPEN Connecticut](#) guidelines. The guide also contains helpful links to guide you through the reopening process. The guide can be found on the State of CT website or by clicking the link attached.

# New/Expanded/Tent Outdoor Seating

## Outdoor Seating Permit

- Expansion of a previously approved outdoor dining area or establishment of new outdoor dining requires an Outdoor Seating Permit (which can be found at the end of this document) to be approved by the Building Official, Fire Marshal, Health and Zoning Officials (ALL FEES WAIVED).
- Temporary outdoor dining permits and expansion of existing permits will be valid until full indoor dining restrictions are lifted by the State of CT.
  - Outdoor Seating Permit MUST include:
    - Property owner signature/authorization
    - A site plan sketch is required with permit indicating new, expansion or tent area. Depending on circumstances a survey may be requested.
    - Outdoor dining area must be clearly delineated by railings, stanchions, or other suitable barriers and shown on the plan. No service shall be permitted outside delineated area.
    - Handicap access to and from the seating to the building, restrooms, and parking areas must be shown on the plan.

## General

- Patio space and tents shall not block fire department access.
- Customers shall be served only when seated at tables. No standees.
- No outdoor food or beverage prep shall be permitted.
- No outside music or sound system shall be permitted.
- Social distancing must be maintained.
- No parties greater than 5.
- Outdoor area must close no later than 10:00 p.m. (Sunday-Thursday) 11:00 p.m. (Friday and Saturday)
- Must maintain clear path for pedestrians a minimum of 6'. Failure to abide by the required criteria can be cause for the Town of Fairfield to revoke the right to have outdoor seating.

## Tent Requirements

- Tents of all sizes require completion of a permit. Tents over 900 sq. feet will require a physical inspection from the Office of the Fire Marshal and the Building Department prior to permit use. All tents must comply with the following:
  - No Sides
  - No heaters under the tent
  - No cooking under the tent
  - All tents up to 900 sq. ft. can only be occupied by 50 people or less
  - Electricity is permitted with a Building Department Inspection
  - Any tent in excess of 10,000 square feet should not be closer than 12 feet to another structure.
  - No smoking, fireworks or open flames of any kind shall be permitted in any tent or shelter.
  - NO SMOKING signs shall be posted.
  - No flammable liquids or gases (this includes LP gas) shall be brought into any tent.
  - Fire extinguishers are required.
  - Tents shall have at least TWO means of egress remote from each other. Means of egress shall have suitable exit indicating signs.
  - Tents with center poles shall have them securely lashed (figure 8s) to ground driven stakes.
  - Tents shall not be erected for more than 180 consecutive days per CSFSC 3103.5.
  - Dining areas must be protected from vehicle traffic with an approved method (ex. Cement block/barrier) when appropriate but must not interfere with access for first responders.

## Helpful Links

[State of Connecticut REOPEN Guidelines](#)

[Office of Economic Development](#)

**Outdoor Seating Permit**

[FDA: Food Safety during Pandemic](#)

[FDA: Best Practices for Food Stores and Restaurants](#)

[CDC: Reopening of Public Spaces](#)