The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced several new terms. One of those is “social distancing” or sometimes referred to as physical separation.

What do I need to know about the CDC guidance on social distancing?

The CDC released guidance for large events and mass gatherings including conferences, festivals, parades, concerts, sporting events, weddings, and other types of assemblies. For the next 8 weeks, organizers (whether groups or individuals) are to cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 50 people or more throughout the United States. This guidance does not apply to the day to day operation of organizations such as schools, institutes of higher learning, or businesses. However, some states and municipalities are imposing new limitations on restaurant operations.

What is social distancing?

The definition of social distancing is to deliberately increase the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness.

- Expert advice is to remain at least 6 feet (2-meters) away from other people.
- The distance is recommended because when someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain the virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.
How to Integrate Social Distancing in Your Facility

Creating a safe environment:
- Remain at least 6 feet (2-meters) away from other people.
- Download, and print the social distancing floor decals from your Pop Up Shop toolkit.
- Place decals in the path of the pop up shop where customers will be shopping and also as a best practice in the back of the house.
- Limit the amount of customers in smaller areas.
- Monitor the traffic flow in and out of your facility.
- Have staff dedicated to crowd control and social distancing.
- Distribute wipes or hand sanitizer at entrance for customers for added precaution prior to them obtaining their basket or cart.

Storing product:
- Utilize your space efficiently for easy traffic flow.
- Sanitize bus tubs/baskets between each use.
- Adhere to local municipality guidelines.

Social distancing during checkout:
- Wear gloves while collecting payment.
- If available, use mobile payment options over cash or card. Example: Apple Pay.
- Keep a safe distance during the transaction by stepping back or to the side while the customer completes payment.
- Keep sanitizer or wipes nearby if available.

Back of house guidelines:
- Create more start time schedules of smaller groups. Stagger employees’ start times by a minimum of 20 minutes to reduce congestion in back of house and storage areas. Try to create at least 4 different start times.
- Employee gatherings at lunch should be staggered with smaller groups to support social distancing. Include a 10 minute gap between lunch breaks to facilitate cleaning. Try to create at least 4 different lunch times.
- Employee gatherings at break should be staggered to allow for separation. Include a 10 minute gap between breaks to facilitate cleaning. Try to create at least 4 different break time schedules.
- Re-imagine your product receiving area to accommodate 6 feet of separation for your Sysco delivery.