DATE: March 19, 2020

TO: Food Facility Operators

FROM: Rebecca Ng, R.E.H.S., Deputy Director

SUBJECT: Marin County Shelter at Place of Residence Order

This memorandum is being sent to you to ensure that you are aware of the Health Officer Order to “Shelter at Place of Residence” (Shelter Order) that became effective at 12:01 am on March 17, 2020. It is in effect until 11:59 pm on April 7, 2020 unless extended or suspended. A copy of the Health Officer Order and Frequently Asked Questions can be found at: https://coronavirus.marinhhs.org/. The intent of the Shelter Order is to discourage the gathering of people to slow the transmission of communicable diseases, specifically Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Below are food-related businesses that have been deemed “Essential Businesses”. Please see the complete listing at the above link.

- Grocery stores, certified farmers’ markets, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, and other establishments engaged in the retail sale of canned food, dry goods, fresh fruits and vegetables, pet supplies, fresh meats, fish, and poultry, and any other household consumer products (such as cleaning and personal care products). This includes stores that sell groceries and also sell other non-grocery products, and products necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences;
- Food cultivation, including farming, livestock, and fishing;
- Businesses that provide food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals;
- Restaurants and other facilities that prepare and serve food, but only for delivery or carry out. Schools and other entities that typically provide free food services to students or members of the public may continue to do so under this Order on the condition that the food is provided to students or members of the public on a pick-up and take-away basis only. Schools and other entities that provide food services under this exemption shall not permit the food to be eaten at the site where it is provided, or at any other gathering site;
- Businesses that ship or deliver groceries, food, goods or services directly to residences;

Emphasis is placed on restaurants and facilities that generally prepare and serve food because during the Shelter Order, they are restricted to serving food for delivery or carry out only. Food may not be eaten at the food facility to avoid the gathering of people.

The Shelter Order is legally enforceable under California law and it is considered a crime to violate this Order. I urge you become familiar with the Shelter Order and comply with its provisions.
You may consider the following recommendations for grocery stores and supermarkets. These are not requirements of the Shelter Order.

- Designate shopping times for at-risk populations (seniors, pregnant people, and people with underlying health conditions);
- Limit the number of people in a store at one time to encourage social distancing; implement a line system with distancing;
- Cease sampling but still operate a bakery and a deli;
- Limit or eliminate self-serve salad (food) bar and bulk bins. If not eliminated, change serving utensils frequently (hourly);
- Clean and sanitize “high touch” areas frequently (touch pads, counters, etc.);
- Shorten hours to allow for additional cleaning and re-stocking;
- Restrict the purchase of highly sought-after items;
- Provide hand sanitizers and/or wipes. (Hand sanitizer should contain at least 60% alcohol.);
- Increase security;
- Offer pick up or deliveries of grocery items.

If you have any questions, please call (415) 473-6907 or email marinehs@marincounty.org.