



## **COVID-19 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADJUSTING FOOD DISTRIBUTION GUIDELINE CONSIDERATIONS**

*March 13, 2020 (Adapted from [WFP Guidance](#))*

As the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread in an unpredictable manner it presents a growing risk to Catholic Charities staff, volunteers, community partners and clients; particularly during food distributions.

This guidance offers considerations for Catholic Charities with existing Food Distribution Programs. It assumes food distribution will occur as non-perishable commodities and/or prepared “grab and go” meals. These guidelines can help to minimize the risk of exposure of personnel, volunteers, partners and clients. As with any public health crisis, adjustments to existing food distribution should be made in alignment with latest CDC, State, Local public health specific guidance, as available.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- **Allocate special areas for In-building food distribution.**
  - Consider creating areas for: Reception point, verification point (if applicable), collection point and site exit to channel and reduce traffic flow and allow for personal space of at least 6 ft. between each beneficiary.
  - Set up hand-washing/sanitizing area with adequate supply of hand washing/sanitizing solution
  - Allow areas for health/temperature checks by local public health officials (if required.)
    - Establish sheltered area for clients that do not receive clearance at the body temperature check point. The allocated area should be spacious enough to allow clients to sit/stand at least 6 ft. from each other
  - Ensure there are clearly marked entrance and exit points in the food distribution area.



- **Organize and clearly mark allocated spaces at sites for both Drive-Thru and In-building distribution** *(see Annexes 1 and 2 as a Sample)*
  - Reception point, verification point (if applicable), collection point and site exit to channel and reduce traffic flow. If distribution is provided inside a building, allow for personal space of at least 6 ft. between each beneficiary.
  
- **Organize rations ahead of the scheduled distribution**
  - If not already prepositioned, offload the food supplies into a temporary storage area and organize rations ahead of the scheduled distribution.
  - Separate storage areas from distribution points whenever possible.
  
- **Prevent crowding around the distribution point**
  - If conducting a drive-thru distribution, keep beneficiaries in their vehicles. Vehicle drivers should be instructed to lower their window a couple inches to speak with the staff person controlling traffic.
  - If distribution is inside a building, Instruct clients to maintain a safe distance of 6 ft. from each other throughout the distribution process
    - For inside distribution, allow for a 6 ft. area around the desk to be visibly sectioned off at the collection point. This will ensure that the collection point is accessible to only one beneficiary at a time.
  
- **Manage the flow of traffic at the distribution site**
  - For Drive-thru distribution, ensure the driving path is clearly marked for traffic control purposes and directed by staff.
  - For In-Building distribution, identify a hand-washing/sanitizing area. Direct beneficiaries to this area before they access food supplies. As governed by your Local/State health department, direct beneficiaries to a health/temperature check area to have their body temperature assessed by public health official.
    - If a beneficiary is detected to have a fever, they should be directed to the specified sheltered/covered area for a follow up by local government or health official. These clients need to know they can still receive rations irrespective of the results of the health screening.



- Beneficiaries cleared at the temperature check area are to be directed to the (identity) verification checkpoint.
  
- **Consider hygiene and sanitation measures**
  - There should be no physical contact between staff and clients or clients with each other.
  - For Drive-thru distribution, instruct the driver to unlock the trunk or back gate lift. Workers should place food/commodities inside the vehicle and safely close the trunk/back lift gate.
  - For In-building distribution, workers should place the food/commodities on a tarp or table and step back, permitting the beneficiary to collect their items.
  - Following the collection of items, clients are to be directed to exit the collection site and encouraged to depart the distribution area.
  - Clients should not pass through the distribution point more than once daily.

## **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR STAFF/VOLUNTEERS AT THE DISTRIBUTION SITES**

- Monitor the entry of clients into the distribution flow.
- Instruct clients to maintain a distance of 6 ft. apart at all points during distributions.
- Ensure that the hand washing point is supplied with appropriate quantities of hand-wash/sanitizing solution
  - Ensure that all clients wash their hands at the hand washing point and (where applicable) have body temperature checks before proceeding in queue
    - If a client presents high temperature, they should be directed to the sheltered/covered area and referred to the relevant health authorities.
- Oversee organizing rations before distributions are scheduled to start.
- Instruct clients to leave the distribution site after the collection of goods occur.
- Following completion of distribution, ensure that the distribution area is swept clean and sprayed with disinfectant (0.5% chlorine solution). Once dry, any material used (i.e. tarps) should be folded away for storage/transportation. The broom may be used again after bleach spraying to remove any debris.



- All staff at the distribution site perform hand sanitation and follow general hygiene practices.

## HYGIENE AND SANITATION

*Washing hands with clean water and soap is mandatory for all Catholic Charities staff, volunteers, clients, as well as any other party involved in the process/present at the distribution site.*

**Disinfectant solution (0.5% bleach solution)** can be made from a variety of chlorine bases available in the market. All washing and disinfecting solutions must be prepared prior to dispatching to distribution point and marked clearly.

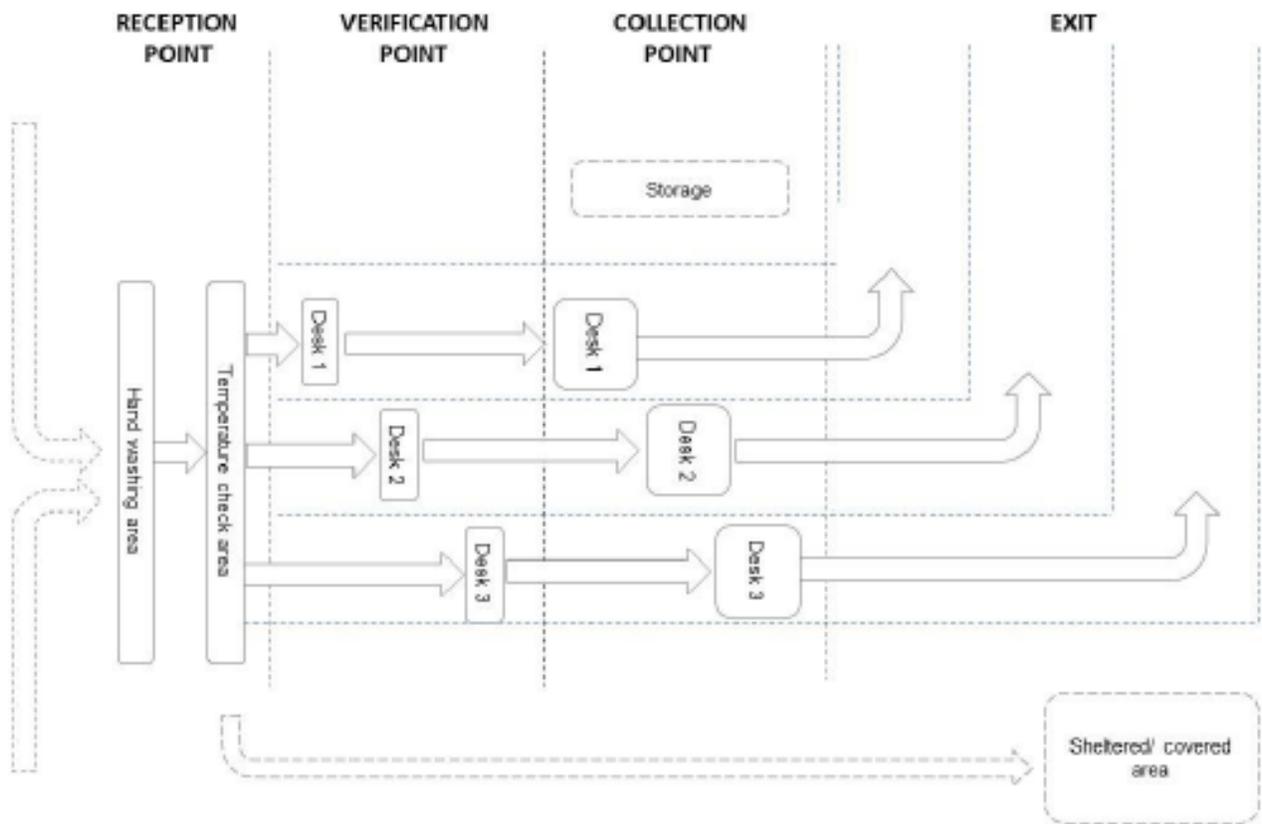
- **[CDC Instructions](#) for making disinfectant solution (0.5% bleach solution) from liquid bleach**

**Note:** Concentrated chlorine and bleach are highly toxic substances that can cause irritation and inflammation to eyes, throat and nose. When mixing and using 0.5% disinfecting solution, appropriate PPE (including impermeable coverall, apron, N95 mask, goggles and double glove i.e. inner disposable latex gloves and outer heavy-duty latex gloves) must be worn.

This document is adapted from the World Food Programme guidance to international NGO's. Please contact your local health department for specific guidelines you should follow.

## Annex 1

### *In-building Food Distribution*



## Annex 2

### *Drive Thru Food Distribution*

