

## COVID-19/EMERGENCY RURAL GROCERY

### Tips for Small Town Stores: Curbside Pickup and Delivery Model

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#### PURPOSE

On March 18, 2020, Governor Walz declared grocery workers as emergency personnel. Grocery stores are not only the backbone of our communities, they are also the frontline for community resources during emergencies.

This tip sheet provides basic instructions for your grocery store to include a curbside pickup and delivery model. Stores with smaller staff numbers may consider curbside pickup and delivery to both protect worker safety and address COVID-19 concerns while still maintaining the movement of groceries into communities for distribution.

#### SAFETY FIRST

- ✓ The MN Department of Health and MN Department of Agriculture put together a comprehensive guide, *Food Safety for Delivery and Pick-up Services* (see [z.umn.edu/MDHfoodsafety](https://z.umn.edu/MDHfoodsafety)), to help food establishments.
- ✓ Volunteers: Many communities are seeing offers of volunteerism which could support a delivery model.
- ✓ Ensure that everyone working in the store is healthy and not displaying any signs of illness.

#### STEPS TO TRANSITION FROM IN-STORE SHOPPING TO TELEPHONE ORDERS WITH IN-STORE SHOPPER (GROCERY STAFF)

1. Put up sign with telephone number for customers (see sample on page 2).
2. Announce via social media, local newspaper, word of mouth, etc. that your store is open for business and for the health and safety of all is moving to telephone orders with curbside pickup and delivery.
3. As calls come in, have a numbered list of customers who want to order groceries. When customers call, take down their name and phone number, and inform them of the call-in rules (see section below for suggested customer call-in “rules”).
4. Staff works through the customer call-in list one by one. Staff calls the next customer on the list and walks through the store, with a cart, fulfilling the order and letting the customer know what products are available in various categories and any limits that are in place (ex. only two pounds of beef per family).
5. Once the order is finished, staff rings up the cart, with the customer still on the phone, and the customer pays by credit card, SNAP, or check (to reduce COVID-19 spread, avoid cash if possible).
6. Load grocery order into boxes or new bags (not reused) and put in food safe location for curbside pickup or delivery.
  1. Observe recommended 6 foot distance from customer
  2. Grocers do not touch customer vehicle

3. Maintain proper temperatures of food (see [z.umn.edu/MDHfoodsafety](https://z.umn.edu/MDHfoodsafety))
7. If there is a quantity of orders, it may be most efficient to organize delivery based on geography (ex. hold all the orders that go to the next town over until tomorrow when there is a larger amount for that delivery).

#### RULES FOR CUSTOMERS

- You will be called back by a staff person who will real-time shop with you via phone call. When our staff calls you when it is your turn and you do not answer the phone, you may be moved down the customer call-in list.
- Grocery orders are for a whole week of food (no small orders for the one thing you forgot).
- Be prepared for limits on the number of items you can buy (ex. toilet paper).
- Be prepared to make substitutions, for example if pineapple is not available, enjoy mandarin oranges.
- Save your bags and boxes in a place with limited contact, in the event that they could be reused in the future.

#### SAMPLE FRONT DOOR NOTICE LANGUAGE

**For the health and safety of customers and staff, this store is offering telephone ordering.**

**To be placed on a customer list to order your groceries with a personal shopper, please call:**

**Thank you for your business and understanding!**