

# THE NORTH CAROLINA RESTAURANT PROMISE

## *for North Carolina's Restaurant & Lodging Industry*

### **Section 1 — Introduction**

#### *What is the North Carolina Restaurant Promise?*

The North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association (NCRLA) and health officials across the state in particular have requested that individual restaurant owners and operators make a set of voluntary commitments to their employees and customers constituting “North Carolina Restaurant Promise” for the COVID-19 recovery period. When customers see The North Carolina Restaurant Promise, they know that the restaurant has committed to taking appropriate action to protect their employees and customers and that they are taking a leadership role in protecting their community.

Participants will continue to comply with federal, state, and local guidance as a reopening process begins. The North Carolina Restaurant Promise also empowers customers to learn what they can do to help keep everyone safe. With restaurants and customers working together, we can make the restaurant industry as vibrant as it was prior to the impact of COVID-19. For more information, please visit [ncrla.org/ncrestaurantpromise](http://ncrla.org/ncrestaurantpromise).

#### *Who can participate in the North Carolina Restaurant Promise?*

Any restaurant or foodservice establishment or hotel that is reopening its dining room and other foodservice areas.

### **Section 2 — Restaurant Responsibilities & Options**

#### *How do restaurants participate in the North Carolina Restaurant Promise?*

Restaurants agree to comply with governmental guidance for all phases of reopening and recovery. We also commit to protect our employees and customers in the following ways:

- We will continue to be a leader in safe sanitation practices and have all team members understand safe food handling and we will have certified manager on every shift.
- All staff will complete a health survey prior to each shift.
- All indoor and outdoor seating options will comply with the appropriate physical distancing guidelines.
- Hand sanitizer or hand washing stations will be available upon entry and exit for guests and staff.
- We will clean and sanitize common areas, bathrooms, and high-touch surfaces regularly – using the CDC recommended sanitizing products and practices.
- All tables and hard surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized after every use.
- Place settings, utensils, menus, and condiments will either be single-use or will be cleaned and disinfected after every use.
- We will post the North Carolina Restaurant Promise at our entrance, so everyone understands the steps we have voluntarily taken to help keep our communities safe.

## Section 3 — Best Practices

### *What are some best practices restaurants can, but are not specifically required to follow, in order to comply with the commitments in the North Carolina Restaurant Promise?*

Importantly, restaurants are already experts in safe food handling and sanitation, and so many of their routine practices will go a long way towards fulfilling the commitments in the North Carolina Restaurant Promise. Different strategies will be appropriate for different restaurants at different times, but the following are ideas that can be implemented or adapted to fit a restaurant's needs:

- Complete the NC Hospitality Industry Covid-19 Best Practices Courses for Restaurant Managers, Back of the House Employees, and Front of the House Employees.
- Designate a single employee per shift, ideally with a clearly identifiable uniform or badge for customers to recognize, to oversee safety and sanitation measures.
- Employees shall wear gloves and/or masks and other protective equipment in keeping with public health guidelines relating to COVID-19.
- Limit table capacity in accordance with recommended guidelines.
- As an alternate option to physical distancing, consider the use of physical barriers when appropriate.
- Tables should be moved apart, removed, or taken out of service. For tables that are unable to be moved, physically block off or take out of service so they are clearly not in use.
- Use signage and/or floor markings to help customers comply with social distance guidelines in common areas.
- Encourage contactless payment options like credit cards or online ordering
- Temporarily close self-serve, unattended buffets, topping bars, and other communal serving areas.
- Have each staff member complete a health survey prior to their shift.\*

#### *\* What kinds of questions should a restaurant ask its employees to perform health screenings before each shift?*

Yes or no questions/statements like these can help strike the balance between obtaining the necessary health information and respecting privacy concerns. Recommendation is to have all employees complete a simple pre-shift screening that includes answering questions like:

- Do you have any of these symptoms: fever, aches, cough, shortness of breath?
- Have you come in contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19?
- Are you currently waiting for the results of a COVID-19 test?
- Have you traveled outside North Carolina over the last 14 days?
- I understand my responsibility to not come to work if I have symptoms of COVID-19 or have recently come into contact with someone who has COVID-19.
- I understand my responsibility to comply with the restaurant's health and sanitation standards.

### *How should participating restaurants communicate the commitments of the North Carolina Restaurant Promise?*

It's vital that restaurants communicate the commitments directly to their staff and monitor compliance. Restaurants should also take steps to communicate their enrollment in the North Carolina Restaurant Promise by posting the required notice at entrances, and if the restaurant uses a website or social media, through those channels as well.

## Section 4 — Customer Responsibilities & Options

### *Why are customers included within the North Carolina Restaurant Promise?*

Customers are included because we all have a responsibility to follow public health authority guidance to prevent the spread of COVID-19. By partnering together, we can keep everyone safe.

### *What commitments does the North Carolina Restaurant Promise ask customers to make to restaurants?*

- If you have been exposed to COVID-19 recently or have symptoms of COVID-19 (including a fever, cough, or shortness of breath), please help us keep everyone safe by using our contactless delivery options.
- If you have underlying health conditions or are otherwise concerned about contracting COVID-19, please feel free to use our contactless delivery options.
- If you have any questions about the North Carolina Restaurant Promise, please ask for a manager who will be happy to assist you.

### *What can restaurants do to help customers meet these obligations?*

Restaurants are encouraged to maximize the use of contactless delivery options and advertise those options to potential customers. Publicizing information about the North Carolina Restaurant Promise should also increase customers' compliance.

## Section 5— Restaurant Reopening & Training

NCRLA has a long history of promoting food safety programs to restaurants foodservice establishments across the state. NCRLA will subcontract with NCSU to develop a COVID-19 specific training and deliver it through their proven delivery system known as the North Carolina State Extension Safe Plates Training and Educational Programs. The COVID-19 program will provide a consistent, evidence-based program for nearly 20,000 eating and drinking establishments in the state. The program is designed to incorporate the best available science in food safety and is presented considering adult education and behavior theories. A rigorous content development and review process is followed for all trainings and materials. These materials will be created in conjunction with NC DHHS Food Protection and NCRLA to ensure consistency with standards and a pragmatic, industry-friendly approach. Training The proposed training will serve to provide specific guidance to restaurants and food businesses best practices upon reopening using a phased in approach returning to full dine-in after the COVID-19 stay at home order. Each of these short training sessions are designed to be less than 30 minutes long and are delivered online in an engaging and interactive format.

## Section 6— Additional Resources & Next Steps

### *What resources and support are available related to the North Carolina Restaurant Promise?*

NCRLA will share information about the North Carolina Restaurant Promise with elected officials, the public, allied groups, and the media to assure the public and policymakers that North Carolina restaurants stand ready to reopen safely in keeping with these commitments. NCRLA will also be available to help answer questions and provide support to restaurants as they reopen their dining and other full-service spaces. Also, the National Restaurant Association has created a COVID-19 Restaurant Response Kit, and continues to provide ServSafe training products like Food Handler and Manager's Certification. These resources can be found at:

- [National Restaurant Association COVID-19 Restaurant Response](#)
- [NC Hospitality Industry COVID-19 Training for Managers, Back of the House, and Front of the House](#)

- [ServSafe Takeout: COVID-19 Precautions](#)
- [ServSafe Delivery: COVID-19 Precautions](#)
- [ServSafe Food Handler](#)
- [Best practices for restaurants, food retail, pick-up and delivery – managing employee health and operations - FDA](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 FAQs](#)

## **Disclaimer**

The North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association (NCRLA) is a 501(c)(6) trade association representing the North Carolina hospitality industry, including restaurants and hotels and NCRLA has developed the North Carolina Restaurant Promise guidelines above, seeking voluntary participation by North Carolina restaurants and hotels. NCRLA makes no warranties with respect to the ultimate effectiveness of the Promise program and assumes no responsibility for assuring compliance by any restaurant or hotel with such guidelines.

**Visit [ncrla.org/ncrestaurantpromise](https://ncrla.org/ncrestaurantpromise) to learn more about the North Carolina Restaurant Promise.**

# North Carolina

## RESTAURANT INDUSTRY AT A GLANCE

Restaurants are a driving force in North Carolina's economy. They provide jobs and build careers for thousands of people, and play a vital role in local communities throughout the state.



**19,504**  
Eating and drinking place  
locations in North Carolina in 2018



**\$21.4 billion**  
Estimated sales in North Carolina's  
restaurants in 2018



**481,900**  
Restaurant and foodservice jobs  
in North Carolina in 2019 = 11% of  
employment in the state

**AND BY 2029, THAT  
NUMBER IS PROJECTED  
TO GROW BY 13.3%**

= 64,100 additional jobs,  
for a total of 546,000

### HOW DOES THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY IMPACT THE NORTH CAROLINA ECONOMY?

Every dollar spent in the tableservice segment contributes \$1.89 to the state economy.

Every dollar spent in the limited-service segment contributes \$1.68 to the state economy.



FOR MORE INFORMATION: [Restaurant.org](http://Restaurant.org) • [NCRLA.org](http://NCRLA.org)