

# Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

## Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Use of Barriers as an Engineering Control for Social/Physical Distancing

### Recent Updates:

10/19/20: Details provided regarding the height and width of barriers.

This guide is intended to provide considerations for use of physical barriers as an engineering control to supplement physical spatial distancing during the COVID-19 Recovery Stages.

- 1. Purpose of Barriers as a Control** - The purpose of physical spatial distancing is to prevent disease transmission. Use of impermeable barriers can act as an engineering control that provide supplemental protection to both customers and employees if used. The purpose of these partitions is to ensure that one user's breathing zone is not contaminated by exhalations from another.
- 2. Physical Characteristics of Barriers** – Barriers must be made of impermeable, cleanable, and durable materials that can be frequently cleaned, and of a suitable height and width to intercept droplets (i.e. plexiglass). Barriers must be installed per **fire and building** codes so as not to interfere with the ventilation or fire protection systems.
- 3. Height and Width of Barrier** - The height of a barrier must take into account the tallest user and the width should be as wide as the surface will allow. In general, the height of the barrier should provide 6 feet of protection as measured from the floor. If openings are needed to allow limited interactions (e.g. a document slot, or space for a point of sale terminal), the slots should be as small as possible and should be placed off-center, rather than directly in front of the persons face.
- 4. Cleaning and Disinfection** – Clean and disinfect barriers frequently throughout the day and as often as needed, using products approved for use against COVID-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved list and follow product instructions: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/listn-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>.
- 5. Outside Dining** – If on the sidewalk – an impermeable and cleanable barrier that is at least 6 feet high should be provided to protect diners from pedestrians walking by if 6 feet physical spatial distancing is not possible. Local zoning officials should be consulted if tables will be placed on sidewalks or in parking lot areas. Seating outdoors must have at least 6 feet of spatial separation between each dining table (the 6 feet distance should be measured from customer position).
- 6. Barriers Used to Extend the Height of Booths** – State guidance says “If tables, chairs, booths, etc., cannot be moved, use visual cues to show that they are not available for use or install Plexiglass or other types of impermeable physical barriers to minimize exposure between customers”. Impermeable barriers that provide at least a six-foot high barrier (or higher where taller seats are used) from the floor of a booth/table can be used when they are sealed to the floor and cannot be moved in order to minimize exposure between customers.
- 7. Barriers to Separate Employee Workstations** – Physical barriers can be used for employees that normally have close interaction with customers at cashier stands, host stands, or at other food and beverage counters.

For more information please contact Industry Engagement at (626) 430-5320. For more information on COVID-

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19 visit: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov> or call the Los Angeles County Information line 2-1-1 which is available 24 hours a day.

