

MERCER UNIVERSITY CATERING SERVICE ALTERATIONS

Mercer Catering service will continue to evolve to meet DPH, CDC and Aramark COVID-19 standards. Understanding that there will likely be continued alterations of the below guidelines, this is our vision of how we anticipate being able to best serve our Mercer University community for the upcoming 2020 Academic Year.

Our member of Mercer Catering's sales team will be available to review each event with the responsible booking party to ensure the clear understanding of the below requisites for ensuring the most responsible operating parameters for ensuring the safety of guests, staff, and every individual participating in an event.

General Guidelines and Service Alteration for Catered Events

- The Mercer University Culinary Team as put together a contactless menu including disposable boxed breakfast, lunch and snack options. The menu will be available in Catertrax online July 13, 2020.
- There will be no large gatherings exceeding 50 guests unless social distancing can be accommodated.
- The existing Mercer Catering online menu is still available for purchase with the addition of servers. Each catering event will require server-provided distribution of food product including refreshments and catering supplies. The designated server(s) may be provided by a Mercer Catering Attendant or by someone assigned to the distribution by the Event Planner.
- All Mercer Catering servers and food preparation staff are required to wear a face mask, gloves and continue to follow all required food safety and sanitation procedures.
- All Mercer Catering staff will require a temperature check prior to beginning shift. As well as adhering to the DPH's standard guideline of questions pertaining to COVID-19 exposure. Symptoms of COVID-19 may include a fever over 100.4°F.
- Social Distancing guidelines will be reviewed with each event planner prior to room set up and service to ensure compliance. Campus reservations will be included on room set up details.
- All Catering staff will be required to complete Food Service COVID-19 operational training prior to returning to event service.
- As of 6.16.2020 there is no maximum number of guests at tables. However, Aramark is partnering with Mercer University to ensure the safety of our guests and will implement safety measures as needed. Each event will be looked at independently. Maximum amounts of patrons at table and face covering guidelines from DPH are expected to be maintained at all catered events. These requirements are subject to change as the DPH continues its monitoring.
- Table placement will be reviewed to ensure a minimum of 6 feet apart, to promote social distancing guidelines.
- Do not allow guest to congregate in waiting areas or bar spaces.
- Rolled plastic ware and silverware will be used in place of table settings
- Individually wrapped items will be utilized including condiments, stir straws, creamer and sugar

Specific Catering Service Alterations

The following are additional specific details of service alterations pertaining to typical types of event service that we offer; Buffet Service, "Plated" event service and food "Deliver/Drop" service.

Buffet Service:

Prior to the Covid-19 interruption, buffet service (with food) would typically be set up in full, approximately 30 minutes prior to the beginning of service. Unless a server was requested, the food items were left for the event leadership to allow patrons to eat 'freely' from the buffet at their discretion.

Anticipated changes for buffets service are:

- All food items will be served and distributed by a dedicated member(s) of the Mercer Catering staff; unless the event manager has dedicated individual(s) that will perform this duty. Mercer catering will require 1 server for every 25 guests.
- Adequate social distancing space between individuals in the service line at food buffets will be required from the event's manager.
- The amount of time required for buffet service will be greater than in the past attributed to the social distancing, and the additional time required to 'serve' food. Additionally, the number of serving staff may increase, and may be reflected in the invoice.
- Event Planners or Event Staff may be asked to release tables in small groups to participate in the buffet service. This will allow enforcement of proper distancing would be followed, depending on the size of the event, to promote social distancing requirement of 6 feet.
- All utensils will be switched out every 60 minutes with a two-hour service limit for all buffets
- Condiments will no longer be served in bulk. They will be distributed by catering staff using PCs (portion control) packets including but not limited to salad dressings, ketchups, mayo and mustards.

Receptions:

- Refrain from gathering in lobbies, check-ins and reception lines
- Catering will eliminate butlered and passed hors d'oeuvres until further notice
- Individual sanitizer kits for customers will be available

Bar Service:

- Maintain social distancing at bar tables
- Two bartenders will need to be used for cash bars; one to serve and one to take money
- Elimination of all tip cups
- Elimination of all fruit garnish for beverages
- Catering will utilize canned cocktail and wine options
- Individually wrapped stir straws will be used and distributed by catering employee
- Customers will hold up IDs for bartenders to avoid interaction; the bartender will not touch IDs or credit cards
- **The customer will open their own beverages**
- Bartenders will clean, sanitize and replace heavy utilized utensils such as ice scoops, tongs, win keys and bottle openers

Beverage Stations:

- Bartenders will wear facial coverings and gloves

- All beverages will be served by attendant including coffee but opened by custom
- New cup will be issued as opposed to refills
- Events will use canned and bottled beverages when available
- Condiments will be pre-packaged including napkin, stir straw, creamer and sugar

Plated Events:

A typical “Plated or “Served” event typically consists of patrons being sat in the event space in which often, portions of the meal and accompaniments were already in place prior to the event service. Preset items would include salads, condiments, beverages, and deserts.

- No service items except linen would be pre-set on tables.
- All Silverware would be wrapped in linen and placed in front of guest as they arrive to the table.
- All food servers, culinary team members, and attendees are required to wear face coverings during the time in which service ware and food is being delivered to guests.
- Beverages will be served to each guest as they are seating
- Salads would be standardized and contain salad dressing upon deliver; dietary offerings would be available.
- Bread and butter items would be served to each individual with their salad.
- Desserts would be served at the end of the meal; only one dessert per event will be allowed.
- Note: Speed of service may decrease, due to items not being pre-set prior to guest arrival. Program timelines may need to be lengthened in order to accommodate served courses.

Presidential Box:

- Event planner to release guests in small group
- Discontinue bulk beverages; implement canned and bottled beverages to be served by catering staff
- Replace Cocktail with canned cocktail option
- See bar revisions above
- Catering staff will serve all food and beverage items including salad, desserts and candy station
- Individually wrapped candy will be utilized at candy station
- Popcorn will be pre-boxed prior to event
- Catering and culinary team to investigate individual packaging for salads and desserts
- Heat lamps will be discontinued
- Catering attendants will be responsible for switching out utensils ever 60 minutes and sanitizers counters every 15 minutes
- Three-gallon tubs for ice cream will no longer be used for stations; ice cream will be in vanilla and chocolate cups
- Personal sanitizer kits will be available

DPH RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR CATERERS:

If catering a private event, the best option is to deliver the food and any equipment to the customer at the designated time, and then return after the event has concluded to retrieve the equipment.

If catering a *private event* where it is required that the caterer stay on site for the event to provide set-up and service, the following additional measures should be implemented to the extent practicable:

- If the event is at the home of a person who meets the criteria for higher risk of severe illness as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to the extent practicable under the circumstances, the caterer should not enter the person's home and should conduct the catering service outside if possible.
- If the event will be held at the home of a person who is not at a higher risk for a severe illness, or at an event center, social distancing of at least 6 feet must be maintained between the caterer and attendees at the event.
- If the caterer is responsible for providing tables and chairs at the event, seating shall be arranged in accordance with the Executive Order, to ensure that no more than ten persons are seated per 300 square feet and that non-cohabitating attendees can maintain social distancing requirements.
- If the caterer is contracted to remain on site to serve the food items, food shall be plated or served by caterer or caterer's staff only, to minimize contact with utensils by attendees and maintain compliance with the Executive Order's guideline for buffet style dining.

Common Food Deliveries

Food Drops and Deliveries typically consisted of a variety of items that are packaged together for "to go" type of events. These menu items typically consist of coffee, cookies, muffins etc. A member of Mercer Catering will deliver and then leave the premises. On occasion a member of the Mercer Catering staff will return post-event to remove any remaining items. However, typically it is the event manager's responsibility to dispose of all remaining items.

This service type does remain in effect until further notice; however, it is the responsibility of the event manager to ensure that all of the CDC, and DPH guide lines are being followed to ensure the limitation of possible spread and exposure of COVID-19 virus.