



City of McAllen | COVID-19 Brief

Parks Have Reopened- Safety Measures In Place

McAllen parks have reopened for the sole purpose of physical fitness. Residents may also use the hike and bike trails so long as they practice the recommended 6-feet of social distancing. The McAllen Parks and Recreation Department has put friendly reminders along the trails further advising residents of social distancing. As a reminder, playgrounds and workout equipment are off limits until further notice.

How Safe Is It To Eat Takeout?

Source: NPR - Fran Kritz

Read full article: <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/04/08/822903487/how-safe-is-it-to-eat-take-out>

- Eating food prepared in restaurant appears to be a safe choice. Current guidance from the Food and Drug Administration states that, “There is no evidence to suggest that food produced in the United States can transmit COVID-19.”
- There is no evidence that food is a carrier of the coronavirus, there is currently no reason to avoid any foods, including salads. “At the same time, there is a ton of evidence that eating a varied diet that includes fruits and vegetables supports good health, including a healthy immune system, Mills says.
- The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 is primarily spread via droplets expelled through coughing or sneezing, says Dr. William Schaffner-professor of medicine in the department of infectious diseases at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in Nashville, Tenn.
- Safe food-handling rules, required of any establishment that serves food, would also be protective against spreading the coronavirus.
- Commercial kitchens are required to follow FDA and USDA food safety rules, including the maintenance of clean and sanitized facilities and food contact surfaces, says Olga Padilla-Zakour, director of the Cornell Food Venture Center at Cornell University. These include washing hands for 20 seconds with soap before handling food.
- No food establishment can operate unless there is at least one person on the premises who is trained in food safety.
- So rather than worry about the food itself, Padilla-Zakour recommends that you keep surface sanitization and social distancing in mind when you order takeout.



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- Help protect workers and yourself as much as you can by picking up your food at curbside, if a restaurant has that option, or waiting for the delivery person to drop off your food and then leave before you open the door
- Make sure to practice social distancing when you collect your food.
- Experts recommend following these steps:
 - Take a few minutes to create a safe food environment when the food arrives by cleaning any surfaces it will touch.
 - Pay (and tip) in advance to minimize person-to-person interaction with the driver or restaurant takeout clerk.
 - Let the driver leave the food at the doorstep. Wait until the driver is at least 6-feet away before picking up the food.
 - Remove the food from the takeout bags or containers, and dispose of or recycle them appropriately.
 - After disposing of packaging, wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water.
 - Wipe counters and other surfaces where you unpacked the food.

Hidalgo County Emergency Order 20-003 Summary (April 7)

- Stay at Home unless engaging in Essential Activities
- Essential Activities include:
 - Seeking medical attention
 - Buying groceries, food or household supplies
 - Working for an essential business
 - Delivering food/supplies to someone in another household if they are unable to get their own food/supplies
- Minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, unless working at an essential business, students may pick up meals at designated school sites, or when students are traveling to WiFi Hotspots
- Recommended: Limit vehicle occupants to two (2) persons if possible
- Wear a face covering or mask over mouth and nose when in public spaces, including stores, parking lots and while pumping gas
- Social Distancing (6-feet apart and washing hands) is mandatory
- Drive-thru employees must wear a face covering



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- Businesses seeking to be deemed essential should contact the Texas Division of Emergency Management at:
essentialservices@tdem.texas.gov
- If one person in home tests positive or is told to self-isolate, all members of the household must stay home.
- No visitation to nursing homes
- Work from home if possible
- Strongly encouraged to isolate at home for 14 days after traveling out of county
- McAllen's Hike and Bike Trails are open to walk, run or cycle
- Other outdoor activities include fishing or hunting as long as 6 feet of physical distancing is maintained
- Effective until April 30, 2020
- To view the entire Hidalgo County Emergency Order 20-003:
<https://www.hidalgocounty.us/2630/Coronavirus-Updates>