



## NJFC HOLIDAY SAFE SHOPPING TIPS

As shoppers navigate state restrictions, our favorite holidays are fast approaching! We are providing the best practical guidelines to keep shoppers and grocery store workers safe during the holidays in lieu of COVID-19. Please use these helpful Safe Shopping Tips to shop with ease during this holiday season

**1. Limit going to the grocery store only when it is essential and focus on buying what you need.**

COVID-19 has upended our daily lives and the usual grocery store trips need to be planned. As you shop the holidays, plan ahead. There is no need to stockpile items. Buying enough for your holiday celebration is advisable. If everybody maintains normal shopping patterns, the food supply will replenish and remain stable.

**2. Shoppers must wear face masks.**

As shoppers know, it is a NJ mandate by Governor Phil Murphy that all customers wear face masks to enter a retail location. It is the law.

**3. Reduce store crowding by shopping alone.**

Especially during the holidays, some of us enjoy going to the grocery store with our spouse or families, but to keep everyone safe, shop alone if you can. By reducing capacity, it is easier to maintain less crowded aisles and safe social distancing between customers.

**4. Practice safe social distancing throughout the store even at checkout.**

Six feet is the safe distance to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Stores have established signage reminding customers of this requirement. An average grocery cart is three feet long, so always keep two grocery carts apart between you and others. Although checkout signifies the end of your trip, it is important that you maintain six feet or two shopping carts between you and someone else. To protect everyone's wellbeing, please wait until a customer finishes loading their groceries and exits the line.

**5. Avoid handling any items in the store, unless it's for purchase. Use your eyes to inspect, not your hands.**

Habits are hard to break but avoiding the handling of products at the store helps prevent the spread of the virus. Do your part and try not to pick up items unless you plan to buy them. This also applies to produce items. We recommend using a produce bag to make your selection. Let your eyes do the shopping.

**6. When using personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, wipes, or disposable face masks please discard responsibly.**

Since customers are mandated to wear face masks and are using PPE for added safety, it is important to dispose of gloves, masks and wipes properly. Please do not leave these soiled items in your cart or in the parking lot. Mishandling these items can create more safety concerns for employees and other customers. Trash cans are placed conveniently outside the store for your disposal. Moreover, refrain from disposing flushable wipes in the store restrooms.

**7. Wash your reusable grocery bags at home and thoroughly disinfect after each use.**

For the safety of both customers and employees, thoroughly disinfect reusable grocery bags for the safety and wellbeing of others. You may be asked to bag your own groceries depending on the store's temporary policies with reusable bags.

**8. Check your local store's special hours or shopping procedures.**

To ensure the safest shopping experience, grocers are adapting special hours and accommodations. Check their websites, social media pages, or call ahead to confirm.

**9. Be patient and allot more time to shop.**

The holidays are an extremely hectic time of year, and new mandates have created crowd control policies that potentially slow down a normal shopping experience. Be cognizant of this and be prepared with extra time in case it is needed to shop.

**10. Treat employees with respect and kindness, especially during the holidays!**

As NJ Governor Phil Murphy has [stated](#), grocery store workers are "mission critical" during this crisis. They are working on the frontline to ensure everyone always has access to food and supplies to have a happy holiday celebration with your family and friends. Be understanding of the extra work being provided to make sure a store is sanitized and ready to feed your families.

*These simple tips will help provide for a more pleasant holiday shopping experience!*

Contact NJFC for more information:



New Jersey Food Council  
429 Riverview Plaza  
Trenton, NJ 08611  
609-392-8899  
[njfc@njfoodcouncil.com](mailto:njfc@njfoodcouncil.com)