

Protecting Employees & Guests:
Best Practice Guidelines for Napa County Wineries



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Intent

The following winery-specific practices create a framework of protocols that are intended to supplement current California safety mandates and enhance existing state and federal safety guidance to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within our communities.

These measures are designed to be robust and feasible to implement for wineries of all sizes. When implemented, these measures will further enhance the safety of winery employees and guests, while allowing for economic activity in Napa County to resume responsibly when deemed appropriate by state and local public health officials.

Widespread adoption and continuous implementation will support the economic recovery of our region, build trust and bolster community and consumer confidence that Napa Valley wineries are continuing to cultivate excellence by committing to sustaining enhanced protocols that protect public health.

Disclaimer

The following protocols are to be used as guidance only.

These measures were developed by the Napa Valley Vintners (NVV) based on a review of existing state and federal safety guidance from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (CalOSHA) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), along with input and review from a Winery Safety-Protocol Task Force comprised of vintner leaders from wineries of varying sizes, and the NVV Board of Directors.

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References

Protocols and recommendations are tailored to common wine tasting practices and build upon existing guidance provided by:

- California Department of Public Health (CDPH)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (CalOSHA)
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

General Business Measures

General Considerations

- To the extent feasible, adopt a phased-in approach when allowing employees to return to work, considering employees that have disclosed an increased health risk or who may have continuing care taking responsibilities.
- Communicate clearly and frequently with employees about the internal health and safety measures that are required to return and remain at work.
- Identify staff that will lead the implementation and maintenance of enhanced safety measures within the organization, taking care to include representatives from different departments.
- Provide relevant training and resources to staff to ensure successful implementation of health and safety measures.
- Regularly evaluate the establishment for compliance with the plan and document and correct deficiencies identified.
- Procure and maintain supplies of adequate protective equipment and cleaning supplies necessary to safely welcome any employees or guests onsite in advance.

Employee Health and Personal Hygiene

- Employees should maintain robust personal hygiene protocols as outlined by the [Centers for Disease Control](#), and should wash their hands upon arrival at work and routinely throughout the day, after coughing or sneezing, or after coming into contact with a surface that could be contaminated.
- Employees should regularly self-monitor for symptoms and take their own temperature each day before traveling to work.
 - Any employees with a temperature reading of 100 degrees or higher, or that exhibits any other COVID-19 related symptoms (cough, sore throat, vomiting or diarrhea) should refrain from going to work.
 - Employees should be without fever for 24 hours (after finishing fever reducing medicines) before returning to work.
- Employees should wear face coverings when interacting with others from the recommended physical distance and during meetings.
- Employees should notify their supervisor if they begin to feel sick.

Establish and Maintain Physical Distance

- Business operations should maintain physical distancing requirements while in operation.
- Winery businesses should evaluate their workspaces to determine the number of staff that can be present within a given property to maintain 6 feet of separation and establish the “maximum physical distancing occupancy” for that space.
- Winery businesses should modify work areas and/or reduce the number of staff present at any one time so as to not exceed the maximum physical distancing occupancy and to provide for 6 feet of personal separation between employees at their workstations.

Cleaning and Sanitization

- Contact surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, bathroom fixtures, faucet handles, and other surfaces should be disinfected on regular intervals.
- Use of common spaces, including meeting rooms, employee break rooms, kitchens, or other spaces open to employees should be limited to maintain physical distancing; each area should be sanitized after use.
- Employees should wipe down their personal work surfaces, such as desks, keyboards and telephones, with disinfectant at the start and end of their workday.

Visitation Measures

Employee Health and Personal Hygiene

- Employees should maintain robust personal hygiene protocols as outlined by the [Centers for Disease Control](#), and should wash their hands upon arrival at work and routinely throughout the day, after coughing or sneezing, or after coming into contact with a surface that could be contaminated.
- Employees should regularly self-monitor for symptoms and take their own temperature each day before traveling to work.
 - Any employees with a temperature reading of 100 degrees or higher, or that exhibits any other COVID-19 related symptoms (cough, sore throat, vomiting or diarrhea) should refrain from going to work.
 - Employees should be without fever for 24 hours (after finishing fever reducing medicines) before returning to work.
- Employees should wear personal face coverings while conducting tastings and when their job responsibilities include working within 6 feet of others.
- Dedicated staff should be assigned to answering telephones and working sales terminals to minimize the number of employees that touch those surfaces.
- Employees will adhere to any mandated physical distancing requirements.

Establish and Maintain Physical Distance

- All tastings at Napa County wineries should be conducted by appointment only.
- Wineries should communicate the required health & safety protocols for visiting the winery for a tasting appointment as part of reservation procedures and convey that in making reservations guests are agreeing to abide by these protocols.
- Wineries should evaluate their tasting areas to determine the number of staff and guests that can be present inside to maintain 6 feet of separation, establishing their “maximum physical distancing occupancy.”
- Wineries should reduce the number of visitors they host per day to allow for proper physical distance between groups and to allow for enough time between appointments to effectively sanitize a tasting area.
- Winery tasting room layouts should be re-configured to establish designated tasting spaces and prevent the congregation of visitors in any one area.
- Wineries should provide visual cues to provide guidance to guests and staff about proper physical distance.
- Larger wineries should designate a dedicated door for guests to enter and exit the building.
- Winery tours and routes should be evaluated for general feasibility and reconfigured to limit the number of surfaces a guest might touch, while ensuring that tour groups do not overlap.
- Wineries that are permitted to host tastings should utilize and prioritize outdoor seating to host tasting appointments to the extent feasible.

Guest Safety

- Guest health and safety requirements should be clearly displayed at the visitor entrance.
- Hand sanitizer should be provided for required guest use upon entry.
- Hand sanitizer should be provided at multiple locations through the property.
- Promotional materials provided to guests should not be reused.
- Tasting menus should be disposable, digitally available, or made viewable from video screens or “no-touch” ipads.
- When pouring wine, wine bottle “necks” should not touch the guest’s glass.
- Refrain from using wine “drop stops” to pour wine.
- Wineries should post CDC guidance on proper handwashing practices in restrooms.
- Communal water fountains should be marked as “out of service” and bottled water made available upon guest request.
- Waste receptacles should be made available for the disposal of one-time use materials.
- Wineries should utilize “contactless” payment methods to the extent practicable.
- Entrance doors to tasting areas should be propped open or when possible, held open for the guest when they enter the space.

- Close proximity to guests should be minimized to the extent feasible when pouring wines, receiving payment, or handing-off merchandise.
 - Follow proper sanitary guidelines after any close physical contact.
- Wine purchases should be carried to the guest’s vehicle for placement in the trunk by winery staff.

Food Pairings

- Wineries that are permitted to provide food pairings will follow COVID-19 specific guidelines on safe food preparation, handling and service provided by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Industry Guidance from the State of California. .
- Any pairing menus provided should be disposable, digitally available or made viewable from screens or “no-touch” ipads.
- Plates and flatware used during a food pairing experience should be cleared immediately upon guest departure and should be washed in commercial, high temperature dish washers.

Cleaning and Sanitization

- Tasting areas should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after each tasting appointment.
 - This will include disinfecting tables, chairs, and allowing adequate time for proper disinfection, following product instructions. Many EPA-approved disinfectants require minimal contact time (seconds to one minute) against human coronavirus.
- When choosing cleaning chemicals, employers should use products approved for use against COVID-19 on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2) list, found at <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2> and follow product instructions. Use disinfectants labeled to be effective against emerging viral pathogens, diluted household bleach solutions (5 tablespoons per gallon of water), or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol that are appropriate for the surface. Provide employees training on manufacturer’s directions and Cal/OSHA requirements for safe use. Workers using cleaners or disinfectants should wear gloves as required by the product instructions.
- Communal wine “dump buckets” should be avoided; individual, disposable paper cups which can serve as wine “dump buckets” should be provided to each guest.
- Glassware used for each tasting appointment should be cleared immediately upon guest departure and should be washed in commercial, high temperature dish washers.
- Cleaned stemware must be properly stored away from customers and personnel until ready for use. Use disposable items if proper cleaning of reusable items is infeasible.
- Doorknobs, light switches, bathroom fixtures, keyboards, faucet handles, pin-pads, pens and other contact surfaces should be sanitized on frequent intervals.