

The background is a dark teal color. It features several stylized, light blue virus particles with spiky protrusions. In the bottom right corner, there is a large, light blue, torn-paper-style circular graphic that partially obscures the text below.

# THE OCEANIC STANDARD

COVID-19 Plastic-Free  
Reopening Guidelines

**RESTAURANT +  
HOTEL FOODSERVICE**

[www.oceanic.global/oceanic-standard](http://www.oceanic.global/oceanic-standard)

# THE OCEANIC STANDARD

**The Oceanic Standard (TOS)** is a set of free, research-backed industry guides for adopting sustainable practices that meet both business and environmental needs, developed in partnership with Oceanic Global's board of scientific advisors.

TOS provides businesses with tools to eliminate single-use plastics from their operations and to implement responsible waste management practices. It connects businesses directly to TOS-approved sustainable vendors for cost-effective alternatives to products that threaten our planet, and offers buying deals wherever possible.



RESEARCH-  
BACKED



FREE  
RESOURCES



SUSTAINABLE  
VENDORS



BUYING  
DEALS



SOLUTION  
ORIENTED



RESPONSIBLE  
CONSUMPTION



MARKETING  
COLLATERAL

## TOS SAMPLE PARTNERS



Sandals

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BULLEIT  
BOURBON



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HEART  
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## TOS COVID-19 REOPENING GUIDELINES: RESTAURANT + HOTEL FOODSERVICE

With COVID-19, our world is evolving rapidly, but the need to live in harmony with our environment has not changed. As we face a global pandemic, we are seeing the rollback and reversal of environmental progress. Articles outlining an increase in demand for plastic ([Businesswire, May 2020](#)), lobbying from the plastic industry have become concerning ([Plastics Industry Association, March 2020](#)), and a projected **40% increase in waste production** from 2019 ([Prata et al., 2020](#)) have become concerning. Maintaining the health and safety of your associates and guests needs to remain the primary priority, but throughout this guide you will find sustainable solutions that address the needs presented by COVID-19.

### PRIORITIZING HEALTH AND SAFETY DOESN'T NEED TO COME AT A COST TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Created in consultation with a coalition of public health experts and industry leaders, this guide clearly outlines best practices to achieve both hygiene and sustainability for the restaurant and hotel foodservice industry globally, with a focus on eliminating unnecessary single-use plastics and improving waste management. This guide includes a compilation of existing research and resources from public health authorities, governments, research institutes and leading organizations.



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#### Tips on using this guide:

- All additional resources are hyperlinked and indicated with an "👉" icon
- All vendors are hyperlinked and indicated with an "🛒" icon.
- Scientific studies and regulations are footnoted throughout this document.

## CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS

This guide was compiled with the support of over 50 contributors, some include:



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<https://oceanic.global/theoceanicstandard/>

## 1. THE TRUTH

**Information about COVID-19 is highly variable and still being discovered.**

Here, we share a literature review of the most recent knowledge from leading global authorities, research institutes, and experts. Having the latest available information about COVID-19 will help inform operational practices that promote both human and environmental health.

Even in the face of a global recession and pandemic, consumer demand for businesses to demonstrate sustainable practices and planetary stewardship has only increased. People want to support businesses that embody their beliefs and are willing to pay more.

- **57% adults globally want businesses to focus on sustainability and the environment** more in 2021 ([Sourcing Journal](#)).
- Companies abiding by social or environmental standards showed **higher operational performance** ([Morgan Stanley](#)).
- Millennials and Gen Z are **willing to pay more for sustainable products** and services ([Nielson](#)).
- 60% of youth under age 30 say the **priority for the post-pandemic recovery** should be restructuring society to deal with challenges including **inequality and climate change** ([Sustainable Brands](#)).

See more in our fact sheet [HERE](#).

## HOW DOES COVID-19 SPREAD? ARE REUSABLES SAFE?

- A [statement](#) signed by over 130 virologists, epidemiologists, and health experts from 18 different countries endorses that reusables are safe.  
“Based on the best available science and guidance from public health professionals, **it is clear that reusable systems can be used safely by employing basic hygiene.**”
- The [CDC](#) states that transmission of COVID-19 from surface contact **has never been documented.**
- [WHO Guidance for Food Businesses](#) & [WHO Guidance for the Accommodation Sector](#) makes no recommendation to use disposable items other than cleaning products.

👉 Additional information on the safety of reusables [HERE](#) (Source: Sierra Club), [HERE](#) (Source: Upstream), [HERE](#) (Source: Surfrider), [HERE](#) (Source: Post-Landfill Action Network), [HERE](#) (Source: Greenpeace), [HERE](#) (Source: BFFP), [HERE](#) (Source: Mother Jones), and [HERE](#) (Source: Grist).



## WHAT WILL PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19?

- Coronaviruses can be effectively inactivated on a surface within 1 minute, with the use of standard disinfectant procedures. ([Chin et al., 2020](#))

Food-contact approved disinfectants containing 62-71% ethanol, 0.5% hydrogen peroxide or 0.1% sodium hypochlorite have been shown to work ([Kampf et al., 2020](#)).

- UV radiation treatments deactivate coronaviruses ([Penn State, June 2020](#)).

## HOW LONG DOES COVID-19 LIVE ON VARIOUS SURFACES?

### **According to recent studies:**

**Tissue Paper:** 3 hours ([Chin et al., 2020](#))

**Copper:** 4-5 hours ([Doremalen et al., 2020](#)), ([Warnes et al., 2015](#))

**Cardboard:** 24 hours ([Doremalen et al., 2020](#))

**Wood:** 2-4 days ([Carraturo et al., 2020](#)), ([Chin et al., 2020](#))

**Glass:** 2-5 days ([Carraturo et al., 2020](#)), ([Chin et al., 2020](#))

**Paper:** 5 days ([Carraturo et al., 2020](#))

**Ceramic:** 5 days ([Carraturo et al., 2020](#))

**Metal:** 2-7 days ([Doremalen et al., 2020](#)), ([Carraturo et al., 2020](#)), ([Chin et al., 2020](#))

**Plastic:** 3-7 days ([Doremalen et al., 2020](#)), ([Carraturo et al., 2020](#)), ([Chin et al., 2020](#))

*We share these numbers to debunk the myth that single-use plastics are a safer material, and to demonstrate that the virus lasts longer on average on plastic than many other materials.*

## GLOBAL REGULATIONS IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Oceanic Global's compiled select sample of global regulations is available [HERE](#).

### Summary:

- Globally, there is a focus on hygiene practices, including increased sanitation of high-touch areas, and a recommendation to avoid buffets or self-service.
- There is rarely strict guidance on using disposable dishware instead of reusables, and the [WHO Accommodation Sector](#) guidance makes no reference to disposable foodservice items.

The [CDC](#) is the only major institution we came across that suggested using single-use foodservice items at any point. While the CDC recommends disposable foodservice items, **it does not require disposables** stating, "If disposable items are not feasible or **desirable**, ensure that used or dirty non-disposable food service items are handled with gloves and washed, rinsed, and sanitized to meet food safety requirements."

### Government Regulation Examples:

- ★ The [Singapore Government](#) strongly encourages consumers to bring their own clean and reusable containers when buying food. "As more customers are expected to order takeaways during this period, we strongly encourage everyone to bring their own clean and reusable containers when buying food. This will not only help to reduce the amount of waste generated, but will also ease the demand on disposable food containers. Establishments should allow customers to do so when ordering takeaways."
- ★ In Australia, the [Victorian Government](#) shares, "There is currently no evidence to suggest there is any benefit in switching to disposables. It is important that the measures we take to minimize transmission are effective. The most effective measures you can take are practicing good hand hygiene and cleaning, with particular focus on shared, frequently touched surfaces."
  - ★ Their Summer Guidelines (updated on Dec. 6th, 2020) state that "Venues may continue to use their cutlery, crockery and beverage containers with appropriate hygiene, cleaning and sanitation processes in place. **Disposable serving ware is not required.**"
  - ★ This guidance also accepts **customer-brought reusable beverage cups** and allows for **reusable takeaway schemes** (with proper sanitation)!

## 2. OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Below are a set of recommended operational practices for restaurants and hotels that will provide sustainable solutions for the new industry standard as businesses reopen from the COVID-19 pandemic.

### STAFF SAFETY

#### Employee Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The use of PPE has proven to be the main way we can protect our associates and guests from COVID-19. With the increased use of PPE also comes a new driver in single-use pollutants to our oceans. For example, **scientists warn that at the current rate of mask usage, we may have more masks in our ocean than jellyfish** ([The Guardian, June 2020](#)). In response to COVID-19, there is monthly global consumption of **129 billion face masks and 65 billion gloves** ([Prata et al., 2020](#)). The below recommendations highlight practices to safely reduce and reuse PPE where possible.

#### Face Coverings:

- Much food safety guidance advises that **reusable face masks can be used** instead of disposable ones. The CDC recommends cloth masks for the hospitality industry stating, "In the current COVID-19 pandemic, use of PPE such as surgical masks or N95 respirators is being prioritized for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current [CDC guidance](#), unless they were required for your job before the pandemic." A fabric covering the face that is washable, multi-layered, well secured, and covers the nose and mouth works well.

- High-quality and protective cloth mask options:

- 🛒 [The Ethical Mask Company](#) - handmade with 100% non-synthetic materials, 3-layer mask approved by the FDA and CE, machine washable.

- 🛒 [Rothy's](#) - non-medical, machine washable.

- 🛒 [Keen](#) - double-layered, BCI-certified cotton, non-medical, machine washable.

- 🛒 [Halo Life](#) - replaceable filters that capture 99% of airborne particulates as small as 1 microns.

- 🛒 [Outdoor Research](#) - adjustable with replaceable filters.

Additional recommendations from [Green is the New Black](#).

- 🛒 [CastleGrade](#) offers a high-quality reusable silicone mask built with a doctor advisory board. The design has been found to be more effective than N-95 rated masks.

- Order with the purchasing code '**OG10**' for a 10% discount.

- 🛒 [Reef Shield Flip](#) offers a plastic-free and reusable face shield option.

- 🛒 [SEEUS95](#) is a deaf-friendly reusable face covering option.

### Gloves:

- As recent studies show that the virus can be killed by proper hand washing and sanitizing protocols, **many businesses are instructing employees to not wear disposable gloves, but to improve hygiene practices.**
  - Here are hand washing guidelines from the [WHO](#) and [CDC](#).
  - Gloves should only be worn to prevent cross-contamination.
- Gloves can actually provide a **false sense of security** and lead to greater contamination than regular handwashing practices ([WHO](#)) ([Initial](#)) ([Wexner Medical](#)) ([SIU Medicine](#)).
- The [WHO Accommodation Sector](#) guidance states: “Disposable gloves should not be used in the food work environment as a substitute for handwashing.”
- The [NYC DOH](#) guidance states: “Routine glove use is not recommended. The [CDC](#) explains that in general, gloves are appropriate when cleaning or caring for someone who is sick. In most other situations, wearing gloves is not necessary and may still lead to the spread of germs. The **best way to protect yourself is to regularly wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.**”
- Compostable gloves are an option, but keep in mind that these need to be separately collected and treated by a specialized composting facility to fully breakdown, and they pose the same concerns as conventional plastic if they end up in landfill or the environment.
  - 🛒 [Vegware](#) (10% discount with code ‘**OCEANIC**’)
  - 🛒 [Greenman Packaging](#) (‘**OCEANIC**’ discount code)
- PPE can be recycled through [TerraCycle](#).
- In employee training, include an emphasis on proper disposal of PPE. In addition to being single-use plastic, PPE is likely to be contaminated, and needs to be safely disposed of in the trash.
  - After removal, employees should place the used PPE in a garbage bag, and seal it tightly for pickup dependent on local waste management infrastructure ([EHS Law, April 2020](#)).
  - The [EPA](#) stresses the importance of not littering disinfectant wipes, masks, gloves or other PPE.

👉 See more on the impact of plastic pollution caused by discarded PPE [HERE](#) (Source: ScienceDirect), [HERE](#) (Source: City to Sea), and [HERE](#) (Source: Scientific American) and recommendations for reusable masks [HERE](#) (Source: City to Sea).



### PROCUREMENT FOR FOODSERVICE

The **best option in terms of both hygiene and sustainability, is to choose reusable materials.** The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Restaurant Rapid Recovery series includes a mention that, **"If you use all disposable items, you will have definite increase in cost, so lowering your food cost is important"** ([Video](#) at 7:00).

If that is not an option for takeaway or other circumstances, **choose disposable items compatible with local waste management infrastructure.** Overall, explore earth-digestible materials like paper, wood, palm leaf, cardboard, agricultural waste, and fiber rather than single-use plastic and confirm that your procured items can be easily handled by available waste management. Below are sample recommended solution-based vendors for use in different applications.

For additional and region-specific information, review [The Oceanic Standard](#) (TOS) guides, which include our global network of 300+ sustainable vendors. To inquire about the program, reach out to: [theoceanicstandard@oceanic.global](mailto:theoceanicstandard@oceanic.global).

#### For Takeaway

The restaurant industry has seen a boom in takeaway and delivery due to dine-in restrictions. Hotels are switching to grab-and-go or boxed meals, eliminating larger banquets and buffets.

City-to-Sea's latest report ["Food-to-go, Good-to-go?"](#) investigates the top 20 takeaway operators in the UK revealing the scope of the issue of plastic pollution from takeaway foodservice items: 83% of contemporary fast-food outlets and 86% of traditional fast-food outlets had no policies for reducing SUP front of house.

The following recommendations outline reusable solutions and TOS-approved disposable items.

## Takeaway: Reusables

Reusables are the best and cleanest option! Implement best practices to sanitize reusable containers alongside contactless drop off systems.

- Encourage customers to bring their own clean containers (as encouraged by the [Singapore government](#)).
- Sell reusable containers and offer a discount for those in the program or have customers pay a deposit that will be given back when they return the container.

### Case Study:

★ [Just Salad](#): has had a reusable bowl program in place since 2006, which helps save 75,000+ lbs of plastic every year! Customers can purchase a \$1 reusable bowl and enjoy one free topping (like avocado) with every use.

★ [Starbucks](#): is accepting reusable cups from customers again in EMEA!

- Rely on professional reuse systems with commercial-grade dishwashing services and stringent hygiene protocols.

### Reusable Cups (Beverage Containers)

🛒 [BetterCup](#) (Australia) spearheaded a working group through the [Sustainable Events Alliance](#) to develop [global reusable hygiene standards](#).

🛒 [City to Sea](#) (UK) shares best practices for #ContactlessCoffee.

🛒 [CUNA](#) (Germany) offers a reusable, plant-based, and recyclable container.

🛒 [CupClub](#) (UK)

🛒 [CupZero](#) (US) is looking into offering a reusable solution for takeaway beverages in NYC.

🛒 [Globelet](#) (Global) is testing the cleaning capability of standard dishwashers, and building their own custom washing system at a higher standard.

🛒 [Green Caffein](#) (Australia) example & COVID-19 resource for safe outdoor return system. See their guidelines [HERE](#).

🛒 [Package Free \(US\)](#) offers stainless steel [straws](#) and [tumblers](#). ('OCEANIC10' discount code for 10% discount)

🛒 [r.Cup](#) (US) is offering a 3-day hold for inventory to ensure safety measures are achieved.

🛒 [SAVRCup](#) (US)







🛒 [Usefull](#) (US)


🛒 [Vessel](#) (US)


The [Australian Victorian Government](#) has protocols for 'contactless pour' techniques, meaning that the only person to touch the reusable cup is the person who brought it into the café:

- Customers place their clean reusable cup onto the counter or tray without the lid.
- The beverage is made in an in-house vessel and poured into the customer's cup without touching it.
- The customer places the lid on their reusable cup.

## Reusable Takeaway Containers

-  [DeliverZero](#) (US, NYC)
-  [Dispatch Goods](#) (US, SF)
-  [Muuse](#) (Global)
-  [Retub](#) (Australia)
-  [Returnr](#) (Australia)
-  [reVessel](#) (US, LA)

 Additional reusable takeaway guidelines available [HERE](#) (Source: ReThink Disposables), [HERE](#) (Source: Common Seas), [HERE](#) (Source: Boomerang Alliance), [HERE](#) (Source: CEH) and [HERE](#) (Source: Takeaway Throwaways).

 Contactless and sustainable takeaway guidance available [HERE](#) (Source: Foodprint Group). Reach out to other businesses and encourage them to transition to reuse! [Business Outreach Template](#) (Source: Waste Free Earth)

## Reusable Bags

- Allow customers to bring and pack their own bags when they pick up their order.  
**Save on the cost of single-use plastic bags!**
- Many plastic bag bans that had been paused or delayed due to COVID-19 have now gone back into effect including the New York state ban in mid-October!

## Takeaway: Disposable

















In the case that disposable items are necessary, be sure to choose materials that can be handled by available waste management infrastructure.

- Implement a company-wide protocol so the default for takeaway orders is to give no unnecessary utensils. **Only offer single-use utensils upon request.**
- If single-use bags are necessary, choose post-consumer recycled paper options. **The virus survives on plastic three times longer than paper!** ([Doremalen et al., 2020](#)), ([Carraturo et al., 2020](#)), ([Chin et al., 2020](#))
- Consider local waste management infrastructure when choosing disposable products. Consult Oceanic Global's [Greenwashing Guide](#) to avoid "biodegradable", "bioplastic", and "compostable plastic" options that are misleading and can be as harmful as conventional plastics in landfills or in the environment. As mentioned above, choose disposable items made from earth-digestible materials like paper, wood, palm leaf, cardboard, agricultural waste, or fiber.
- Avoid products that contain PFAS (the forever chemical).  
See the Center for Environmental Health approved no-low PFAS vendor list [HERE](#).

 Additional guidance for best choice disposable options available [HERE](#) (Source: Boomerang Alliance).

### Sample vendors include:

Please keep in mind that some vendors offer a range of products, be sure to avoid greenwashing plastic alternatives as well as PFAS. Items that have BPI certification now are required to be PFAS-free.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  <a href="#">Avani</a> (Indonesia)                            |  <a href="#">Pack n Wood</a> (Spain)                           |
|  <a href="#">Bali Boo</a> (Global), 'OCEANIC' 5% discount     |  <a href="#">Palucart</a> (Italy)                              |
|  <a href="#">Better Earth</a> (US)                            |  <a href="#">PlantSwitch</a> (US), 'OCEANIC' wholesale         |
|  <a href="#">Biofutura</a> (UK)                               |  <a href="#">Restaurantware</a> (US)                           |
|  <a href="#">BioPak</a> (Australia)                           |  <a href="#">Restore Foodware</a> (US), 'OCEANIC' 10% discount |
|  <a href="#">Ecoware</a> (India)                              |  <a href="#">Simplex Trading</a> (Barbados)                    |
|  <a href="#">Evo &amp; Co.</a> (Indonesia & Malaysia)         |  <a href="#">Simply Soluble</a> (Global), 'OCEANIC' wholesale  |
|  <a href="#">Fold-Pak</a> (US)                                |  <a href="#">Wasara</a> (Japan)                                |
|  <a href="#">Greenman Packaging</a> (UK), 'OCEANIC' wholesale |  <a href="#">World Centric</a> (Global)                        |

## For Dine-in

There is no need for disposable items for dine-in service. Reusable items that can be sanitized are safer than single-use items that have less contact traceability. See more in the [Fact Sheet](#).

### Go reusable!

- Use your existing reusable serveware if applicable.
- Train staff to wrap utensils in a napkin roll upon immediately after they are sanitized to ensure they are not exposed to any potential contamination.
- For the safety of beverage refill programs, do not allow customers to refill their own containers. Below are options for BOH water filtration systems that work well with proper hygiene protocols in place.


 [Natura](#)

 [Nordaq](#)

 [Vero](#)

 [Water Smart Foundation](#)


 See infographics on how to safely set up BOH reusable systems available [HERE](#) (Source: Foodprint Group & Center for Zero Waste).

 Additional dine-in reusable guidance [HERE](#) (Source: ReThink Disposables), [HERE](#) (Source: Common Seas), [HERE](#) (Source: Boomerang Alliance), and [HERE](#) (Source: Takeaway Throwaways).

- Copper may be a good option for surfaces or coatings around items such as reusable cups and cutlery as studies show that COVID-19 only survives on copper for 4-5 hours ([Doremalen et al., 2020](#)), ([Warnes et al., 2015](#)).
  - Note: Copper beverage containers with a liner can prevent against copper poisoning that could result from using copper containers for highly acidic beverages. More info from [WebMD](#) and [Webstaurant](#).
- For businesses without dishwashing access, refer to the previous suggestions for sustainable disposable foodservice items.

## For Room Service

Use reusable dishware and utensils and abide by hygiene standards outlined above regarding sanitization and employee PPE. Refer to previous sections for further guidance and see more on the safety of reusables in the Fact Sheet.

- Use reusable food coverings for dishes.
  - Use reusable plastic or metal shells to cover dishes when delivering room service.
-  [True Nature](#) offers reusable silicone stretch covers for food storage containers. (Another option [HERE](#).)



## CLEANING PROTOCOLS

### Dishwashing Guidance

Instead of switching to single-use or disposable options, choose reusables, which are actually a cleaner and safer choice. Below is guidance on authorized cleaning protocols to kill the COVID-19 virus. If no dishwashing capabilities are available, make sure hand washing guidelines are in place to ensure sanitization.

- **WHO:** World Health Organization data shows that temperatures of **140°F - 150°F / 60°C - 66°C** will kill most viruses. **Accommodation Guidelines** recommend that linens should be machine washed in hot water (60-90°C) with laundry detergent.
- **FDA:** Warewasher should be clean, functioning, equipped with detergent and sanitizer. A single temperature machine should be at **165°F / 74°C**, others should reach a high rinse temperature of **180°F / 82°C**.
- Coronaviruses are susceptible to traditional heat treatments, such as cooking at **158°F / 70°C** ([Carraturo et al., 2020](#)).

### Government Regulation Examples:

- ★ **Switzerland:** Dishes and utensils (even unused) are washed in the dishwasher if possible (and not by hand). The washing programs are carried out at a temperature above 140°F / 60°C. ([Updated COVID-19 guidance](#) no mention of foodservice items.)
- ★ **Germany:** Dishes and utensils used by guests must be washed with a suitable cleaning agent at a temperature of at least 140°F / 60°C. If it is not possible to clean glasses in a dishwasher at 140°F / 60°C or higher, hot water with a temperature of at least 113°F / 45°C and detergent should be used in manual washing processes. ([Updated guidance](#).)

### Disinfectants

With an increased focus on disinfectants, make sure that you are using nontoxic products that will not cause additional human or environmental health concerns. Below are recommended products that have been proven to kill the COVID-19 virus. If possible, use a reusable spray bottle. ([Package Free](#) has an option.)

- Cleaning guidelines from the CDC available [HERE](#).
- U.S. National Restaurant Association guidelines [HERE](#): "Train all employees on the importance of frequent hand washing, the use of hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol content, and give them clear instruction to avoid touching hands to face."
- The CEH recommends to wipe surfaces clean first and then disinfect and to avoid toxic disinfectants. See CEH guidance for safer disinfectants [HERE](#).
- EPA-approved disinfectants for use against SARS-Cov-2 available [HERE](#).  
\*Please note that not all items on the EPA-approved list meet our sustainability criteria. The [EPA Safer Choice](#) list can be used instead.
- Environmental Working Group safe products to guard against coronavirus available [HERE](#).
- Beyond Pesticides guidelines for nontoxic disinfectants [HERE](#).
- The FDA warns against toxic chemicals in hand sanitizers [HERE](#), and continues to [add to that list](#).
- Simple rubbing alcohol (isopropyl) is a great cheaper & widely available option!

UV radiation has been shown to deactivate coronaviruses ([Penn State, June 2020](#)), but it is important to consider that UV is harmful to humans when exposed to it. Below are a few UV radiation disinfectant solutions.

 [Luxdisinfect](#)

 [Incharged](#)

 [Cleanse Downlight](#)

## Sample disinfectant vendors include:

 [Benefact Botanical Disinfectant](#)

 [CleanCide](#)

 [ECOLAB Synergex](#) - More Resources [HERE](#)

 [Envirocleanse](#)

 [Force of Nature](#)

 [Lysol® Cleaner with Hydrogen Peroxide](#)

 [Purell Disinfectants & Sanitizers](#)

 [Seventh Generation Disinfectants](#)

 [Stream2Sea Essentials](#)

 [United Disinfectant](#)

## GUEST EXPERIENCE TOUCHPOINTS & COMMUNICATION

Include on-site and online messaging that encourages guests ordering taking away to opt out of single-use utensils and condiments if they are eating at home, as they most likely have their own reusable and bulk options.


### Condiments

Many regulations warn against communal condiments, but there are cheaper, more sustainable, and creative solutions than disposable single-use condiments. Keep in mind that regulations recommending single-use condiments typically also note that bulk condiments are permitted if cleaned between guests.

- Choose bulk dispensers for beverages, condiments, and hand sanitizer.

 [Sestra Systems](#) has a touchless dispenser solution.

- Have employees operate stations to serve condiments and beverages.
- Only offer condiments for takeaway upon request  
(include a checkbox on meal ordering apps if possible or make the default no condiments).
- Portion out condiments before delivering room service meals.
- Many businesses have transitioned to individually packaged condiment containers, but if they are unused, then the business is required to sanitize many small containers instead of one large bulk container as has been usual practice.

 This [PPC blog interview](#) of a restaurant owner shares more about this challenge and the restaurant's ultimate decision to transition back to larger bulk condiment containers for cost & ease.

### Menus

Many regulations advise caution around shared menus, but there are cheaper, more sustainable, and more creative solutions than disposable menus.

- Choose contactless or digital menus rather than disposable menus.
- Use a digital remote ordering platform or QR code available from a mobile application or web-based service.

 [Toast](#) offers contactless ordering and payment

 [Presto](#) offers a remote ordering system.

 [Backbar](#) offers a digital menu and QR code system.

 [OneDine](#) offers contactless menus, remote ordering and payment.

- Place menus under the glass on tables.
- Be classic and use a chalk board.

## Payment

- Choose [contactless payment options](#) including some mentioned above.
  - This will also avoid receipts, which have BPA coatings and are not recyclable!

## Traceability/Sourcing

Now more than ever, guests are concerned with food sourcing, and more importantly, where food is coming from. Choose locally-sourced options and ingredients to mitigate the exposure risk from a long supply chain and frequent changing of hands. Eating local is the most important consideration for sustainable food procurement. Communicate your sustainable and local sourcing to celebrate with your guests!

- Support local farms and fisheries with sustainable practices during this time and choose plant-based menu items where possible.
- 🐟 [Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch](#) will help you find local sustainable seafood options globally. (They also have an [App](#)!)
- 🐟 [Dock-to-Dish](#) (Northeast US), and [Real Good Fish](#) (Western US) and provide fully traceable sustainable seafood options.
- 🍏 [Air Culinare](#) provides seasonal produce recommendations for the Northern Hemisphere.
- 🍏 This [Seasonal Food Guide](#) outlines seasonal produce across the US. Choosing seasonal menu items is a great way to encourage sourcing local produce.

## Case Studies:

- ★ In an effort to provide a more sustainable and plant-based offering at their properties, Ve Cafe at the newly opened [W Ibiza](#) is a solely vegetarian restaurant that serves only organic and ethically farmed produce.
- ★ The [Grand Hyatt in Singapore](#) has not only made a pledge for cost-efficient sustainable practices, but is also leading the way in supporting sustainable supply chains to increase transparency for its sourcing of commodities such as seafood.

## COMMUNICATION


In addition to including on-site messaging about health and safety protocols to guests, highlighting the source of your ingredients is an opportunity to share how you are meeting the challenge of COVID-19 in a sustainable way.

The hospitality industry is already hyper-diligent and intentional about cross-contamination and cleanliness for food safety, allergens, and beyond. Communicate this to the world and highlight how your business is well-positioned to address COVID-19 while staying true to your values.

### 3. WASTE MANAGEMENT

Learn more about the status of the waste management industry from the [Waste Advantage](#) and [Waste Management](#). Proper disposal of used PPE is critical as outlined above, both for safety and environmental health, and the need to responsibly manage waste exists now more than ever.

- The [WHO](#) is offering a course on proper waste management to highlight the importance of properly disposing COVID-19 waste.

 [Recycle Across America/Recycle Across the World](#) offers standardized labeling for recycling, composting and waste bins. Consistent messaging is highly important right now. [The U.S. Foods](#) reopening guidelines include a point to “Ensure clarity of recycle, composting, and trash signage to avoid confusion, decrease dwell time and promote sanitation.”

#### How is waste management changing in a COVID-19 landscape?

- “In the United Kingdom, so-called [fly-tipping](#) – illegal waste disposal – has risen by 300% during the pandemic. In some countries, companies that are advancing innovative methods of recycling and reusing waste plastics are [reporting](#) reduced amounts of plastic coming through waste streams, suggesting that a growing volume of plastic is ending up in landfills or leaking into the environment.” ([WEF](#))
- “COVID-19 has hit plastic recycling, just as big oil firms are investing hundreds of billions of dollars to make new plastic. These investments massively exceed the industry’s spending to tackle plastic waste.” ([Reuters](#))

### MANAGING FOOD WASTE

**A third of all food produced is wasted** and is responsible for 6% of global carbon emissions, according to an [FAO](#) study. Reducing food waste is one of the best ways to decrease your business’ carbon footprint. See some guidance on how to reduce food waste below.

- **Limit menu items.**
  - Establish a smaller, fixed, or rotating menu. Limiting menu items helps to mitigate food waste.



## • Donate surplus food.

- Most food donation organizations are still active and donations are even more necessary now that we are seeing higher levels of unemployment due to the pandemic.
- Find local food donation organizations. Some recommendations below:

🛒 The [Global Foodbanking Network](#) has global information on foodbanking and information on COVID-19 response.

🛒 [City Harvest](#) (UK)

🛒 [FESBAL](#) (Spain)

🛒 [City Harvest](#) (US, NYC)

🛒 [Food Bank](#) (Australia)

🛒 [Donate NYC](#) (US, NYC)

🛒 [Food From the Heart](#) (Singapore)

🛒 [Feeding America](#) (US)

🛒 [Food Pantries.org](#) (Global)

🛒 More NYC solutions [HERE](#) (Source: Foodprint Group)

## COMPOSTING

Composting is nature's way of recycling. In this process, organic waste—such as food and yard waste—breaks down and is converted into valuable fertilizer. Composting is another great way to reduce food waste, and lower business' carbon footprint.

- Explore local composting options.
  - [FAO](#) outlines different composting methods for small or large-scale operations.
  - Guidance for setting up your own compost [HERE](#) (Source: Webstaurant).
  - [FindAComposter](#) (US & Canada) provides a database of composting facilities (including community, commercial, and anaerobic).
  - [Green Mountain Technologies](#) (Global) has a map of their commercial composting facilities around the world.
- Composting during COVID-19.
  - [US Composting Council](#) released a series of webinars to provide guidance on safe procedures for composting.
  - Due to the lack of composting in some regions during COVID-19 response, food donation programs become even more important to reduce food waste from ending up in landfills.
- In NYC, the residential composting program has been rolled back.
  - 🛒 Support efforts to bring it back [HERE](#) (Source: Cafeteria Culture), [HERE](#) (Source: Reclaimed Organics), [HERE](#) (Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer).
  - 🛒 [GrowNYC](#) offers alternative composting options.

## RECYCLING

Recycling is the process of recovering waste materials to create other useful items, which is still critically important to achieving a [circular economy](#). Learn more about recycling [HERE](#).

🛒 [RecycleGO](#) can help your business set up recycling programs and offers solutions for transparency and reporting.

🛒 [Rubicon](#) offers recycling programs as well as data tracking and reporting.

🛒 [EcoCycle](#) offers waste management services as well as a wealth of educational resources including [this video series about recycling](#).

### How is recycling changing in a COVID-19 landscape?

- “The pandemic has intensified a price war between recycled and new plastic, made by the oil industry. It’s a war recyclers worldwide are losing, price data and interviews with more than two dozen businesses across five continents show. Since COVID-19, even drinks bottles made of recycled plastic – the most commonly recycled plastic item – have become less viable. The recycled plastic to make them is 83% to 93% more expensive than new bottle-grade plastic, according to market analysts at the Independent Commodity Intelligence Services (ICIS).” ([Reuters](#))
- As oil prices have plummeted, the manufacturing of virgin plastics from fossil fuels is less expensive than recycling. ([Science Magazine](#))
- Despite the challenges, recycling is still continuing in many places throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and the [EPA](#) stresses the importance of recycling to support frontline waste management workers..
- Prices for recyclables are shifting, which is hurting some markets, but paper and corrugated cardboard are actually increasing in price ([Resource Recycling](#)).

**US Spotlight:** The U.S. has around 9,000 recycling facilities across the country largely run by municipalities, some of which are suspending their recycling services under pressure from COVID-19. Peoria, Illinois, has already [cut recycling programs](#), and Omaha, New Orleans and Lexington, Virginia are considering reducing or eliminating curbside recycling programs as a cost-saving measure ([Scientific American](#)).

### Job opportunities in the zero waste industry:

- There is opportunity to take this moment as pivotal transition towards reusable and recoverable alternatives to single-use plastics. Developing countries are key suppliers of many plastic substitutes, so increased global demand could create new, greener trade and investment opportunities for them. For example, 92% of the world’s jute comes from developing countries, with the main suppliers being Bangladesh (74%) and India (9%), likewise 94% of global natural rubber exports in 2019 came from Thailand (31.5%), Indonesia (30%) and Côte d’Ivoire (8.5%) ([UNCTAD](#)).
- That said, developing countries have a big stake in the global plastics economy: their share of global plastics production jumped from 43.5% in 2009 to 58% in 2018, and two out of three plastic manufacturing jobs are in the global south ([UNCTAD](#)). As such this is a key moment to shift momentum from a fossil-fuel based economy to a regenerative model.

## THE OCEANIC STANDARD

**The Oceanic Standard (TOS)** is a set of free, research-backed industry guides for adopting sustainable practices that meet both business and environmental needs, developed in partnership with Oceanic Global's board of scientific advisors. TOS provides businesses with tools to eliminate single-use plastics from their operations and to implement responsible waste management practices. It connects businesses directly to TOS-approved sustainable vendors for cost-effective alternatives to products that threaten our planet, and offers buying deals where possible.

Oceanic Global awards four tiers of TOS badges to recognize a businesses' sustainability achievements:



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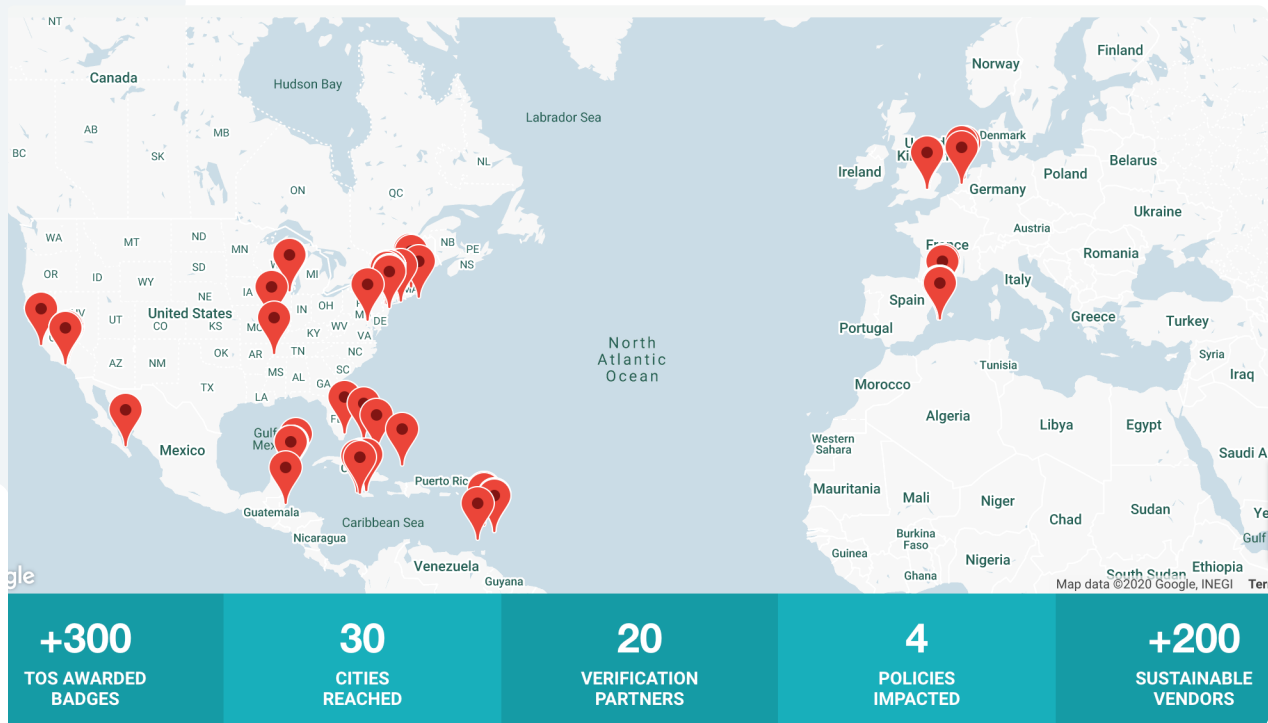
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*\*This edition of TOS: Covid-19 Reopening Guidelines focuses on restaurant and hotel foodservice, but there are others in the series to follow targeted towards live events and professional sports among other industries.*

**Learn more about The Oceanic Standard (TOS) and get involved.**

<https://oceanic.global/oceanic-standard>  
[theoceanicstandard@oceanic.global](mailto:theoceanicstandard@oceanic.global)

## 4. APPENDIX

### Oceanic Global COVID-19 Fact Sheet

### Oceanic Global COVID-19 Regulations Database

#### Policy Reform Efforts

To support this work at the industry level, we need to see strong policy facilitating and encouraging the sustainable solutions we are championing.

🤝 Surfrider has created wonderful policy guidance for policies addressing single-use plastics in foodware [HERE](#) with case studies and example of best practices for a range of legislation.

- Further guidance on plastic policy post-COVID [HERE](#).

#### Additional Sustainability Guidance in Other Sectors

🤝 Sustainability guidance for professional sports [HERE](#) (Source: Recipric).

🤝 Sustainability guidance for campuses [HERE](#) (Source: Post-Landfill Action Network).  
Sustainability guidance for live events [HERE](#) (Source: A Greener Festival), and [HERE](#) (Source: Green Guardians).

🤝 Sustainability guidance for the tourism sector [HERE](#) (Source: Dr. Anna Spencely).

#### Additional Non-Sustainability Guidance

🤝 Free tool to help restaurants + bars reopen [HERE](#) (Source: Oyster Sunday).

🤝 Comprehensive resources for restaurants reopening [HERE](#) (Source: Foodprint Group).

• Food safety certification bodies have also created COVID-19 resources as food safety has always been a priority for the hospitality industry.

- [ISO](#)
- [FSSC](#)
- [FSAZ](#)

• [The CoCo Fund](#), [Dine-1-1](#), and [86-101](#) are all providing resources and support for hospitality businesses in this critical time from financial support and meals to resources and ideas for problem solving.

#### Accreditations

- Sustainability verification systems and third-party accreditation programs are wonderful tools to find vetted and approved solutions as well as to celebrate and communicate your health, safety, and sustainability achievements! In addition to [TOS](#), see the below.
- IWBI's [WELL Health & Safety](#) Rating is an evidence-based, third-party verified rating focused on facilities operations and management across multiple building types and spaces.
- [Fitwel](#) has a [Building Health for All in the face of COVID-19](#) resource.
- USGBC's [Arc Re-Entry](#) provides tools to benchmark infection-control policies and procedures, collect occupant experiences, and track indoor air quality.
- [GBAC Star Accreditation Program](#) is performance-based and designed to help facilities establish a comprehensive system of cleaning, disinfection, and infectious disease prevention for their staff and their building.



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