



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Restaurant Self-Certification Process Now Open**

**HARRISBURG** — Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Secretary Dennis Davin today announced that restaurants can now access the online self-certification form on [PA.gov/COVID](https://PA.gov/COVID). The self-certification is available in English and Spanish, and will be available in other languages soon. The recently announced [self-certification process](#) enables restaurants, private social clubs and food service businesses that serve dine-in, sit down food in a regular, non-event capacity to increase indoor occupancy to 50 percent while adhering to mitigation efforts that will keep employees and customers safe.

“Pennsylvania’s businesses have worked diligently over the past few months to reopen safely, ensuring that customers and staff are protected against COVID-19 through the use of masks and social distancing efforts,” said Sec. Davin. “This new process will further help our restaurants on their path to recovery while instilling confidence in any patrons who walk through their door.”

The self-certification process is open to all restaurants, private social clubs and food service businesses that serve dine-in, sit down food in a regular, non-event capacity.

Restaurants that self-certify will appear in an Open & Certified Pennsylvania searchable online database of certified restaurants across the commonwealth and will receive Open & Certified Pennsylvania branded materials, such as window clings and other signage designating their certification, which they can display for customers and employees. When consumers see the Open & Certified Pennsylvania logo, they will know the establishment is engaged, responsible, and holds customer health and safety as a top priority.

The self-certification process entails the following:

- A list of requirements contained in the current restaurant industry guidance and enforcement efforts;
- A statement that the owner has reviewed and agrees to follow these requirements; and
- The business’ maximum indoor occupancy number based on the fire code.

While restaurants can choose to not self-certify, self-certification is required for restaurants to increase their indoor capacity to 50 percent. Social distancing, masking, and other mitigation measures must be employed to protect workers and patrons. Enforcement of the 50 percent indoor capacity will begin on October 5, so restaurants that choose to increase indoor capacity to 50 percent before October 5 must complete the online self-certification process by that date. However, the self-certification process will remain available after October 5 for restaurants that choose to self-certify in the future.

Additionally, restaurants, private social clubs and food service businesses serving alcohol for on-site consumption must end alcohol sales at 11:00 PM starting today and all alcoholic beverages must be removed from patrons by midnight. This applies to both restaurants that do not self-certify to increase to 50 percent and those that choose to stay at 25 percent. There is no change to the requirements for the temporary sale of cocktails-to-go and take out alcohol sales from bars, restaurants or hotels with a liquor license.

Business owners should keep a copy of the self-certification confirmation they will receive by e-mail. The self-certification will be used as part of ongoing enforcement efforts conducted by Department of Agriculture and Pennsylvania State Police Bureau of Liquor Control Enforcement, and will be shared with the departments of State, Labor & Industry and Health, and other enforcement agencies.

Self-certifying will not lead to additional inspections. The occurrence of regularly scheduled or complaint-based inspections from enforcement agencies will not be affected by certification status. In fact, certifying proves that a business is committed to protecting employees and providing patrons a safe dining experience. Any health and safety violations from self-certified businesses will be handled first with warnings and education rather than fines or other penalties.

The Wolf Administration has released [Frequently Asked Questions](#) as a reference for restaurant owners and the public, along with [updated restaurant guidance](#).

Business owners with additional questions about the self-certification program can contact [covidselfcert@pa.gov](mailto:covidselfcert@pa.gov).