



A Critical Message from IGA CEO John Ross...

Required COVID-19 Safety Protocols for ALL IGA Retailers

The CEO's job at IGA is to help our retailers succeed and prosper. Normally that means providing tools, resources, and support; it means capturing best practices and sharing them across the chain; it means assisting and guiding to help IGA retailers compete on a level playing field with the chains. Because *Independent* is our first name, it normally does not mean "directing."

We are in different times now, uncharted waters where the news changes daily and where what is real and what is exaggerated is hard to determine. Simply put, Coronavirus has changed our world, perhaps for a longer time than any of us might have imagined.

This week, the White House's lead infectious disease expert predicted our country could see as many as 200,000 deaths from COVID-19. We have several major chains experiencing walkouts and strikes as their workers beg for more safety protocols in their stores. And we saw several Trader Joe's grocery stores temporarily close for cleaning when employees tested positive.

Please pause and imagine the same happening in one of our stores. Your local IGA becomes the epicenter of the spread of a deadly disease. IGA stores support our communities; we don't harm them.

None of us would want our stores to contribute to the illnesses or deaths in the very communities we serve. And remember, what happens in one IGA store affects them all.

In China, IGA stores implemented safety protocols that not only protected their shoppers, but protected their associates' well being too. As their crisis ebbs, we are proud to say no IGA China employee contracted the virus and not one IGA China store was implicated as a center for disease transmission. We should aspire to the same goals everywhere.

Most of you are already implementing some or all of these behaviors, and we are grateful for that. That said, we are only as strong as our weakest link, and in this unprecedented situation that threatens the health and safety of our employees and shoppers alike, **the time for suggestion is over.**

To that end and with the support of your National Retailer Advisory Board (NRAB), I am implementing a series of minimum safety standards for ALL IGA stores. **For the safety of your family, your associates, your community, and the IGA brand, I must ask that EVERY IGA STORE follow these required protocols,** derived from coordination with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, NGA, and FMI, as well as insights from IGA China and the NRAB.

Please keep in mind these are the core minimum requirements for the brand, and do not preclude any state or local mandates that you may already be doing, or may need to enact in the future.

Thank you for following this protocol, and doing what is right for your communities, your associates, and the IGA overall brand. These tough times will pass and if we stay focused now, we will come out a stronger, more resilient brand than ever before.

John Ross

President & CEO

IGA

Minimum Required Safety Standards for all IGA Stores During the Coronavirus Pandemic

1. Educate 100% of your staff on appropriate safety protocols and required hygiene practices. Ensure associates are up to speed on proper hand washing, food safety, and transmission prevention with training courses and IGA-provided signage.

Institute courses:

- [Proper Hand Washing](#)
- [Personal Hygiene and Employee Health](#)

Employee signage for download or purchase

- [Hand Washing Signage](#)
- [Employee Virus Prevention](#)

Additional Resources

- [CDC: Protect Yourself & Others](#)
- [FDA: Food Safety & Coronavirus](#)

2. Increase cleaning of high traffic areas that shoppers touch frequently.

Grocery carts, register belts, and credit card keypads should be disinfected with the proper cleaning chemicals between each shopper, or at a minimum, every two hours. Please refer to the CDC cleaning guidelines below.

- [CDC Cleaning Guidelines](#)
- [Institute Course: Cleaning and Sanitizing](#)
- [Order sanitation products for your store](#)

3. Communicate safety standards to shoppers. Post IGA-provided signage in the front of your store to show what IGA stores are doing to keep shoppers safe, from practicing social distancing to asking shoppers to “shop solo.”

Shopper signage for download or purchase

- [Promise to Shoppers signage](#)

- [Social distancing signage](#)
- [Solo shopping signage](#)

4. Learn what to do if an associate is feeling ill or tests positive for COVID-19.

Our goal is to keep all our associates safe, however, should an IGA associate, vendor, or shopper fall ill, follow these protocols immediately.

- [Food Industry Recommended Protocols When Employee/Customer Tests Positive for COVID-19](#)
- **Should you have media queries related to an infected employee or customer, please contact IGA's Ashley Page at apage@igainc.com for assistance.**

5. Provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

Insights from IGA China and new recommendations from the CDC lead us to believe PPE (like gloves and masks) is an important part of virus protection. Bare minimum, please continue to use gloves during food preparation. If available, please also supply all associates with 3-ply surgical masks, and install a safety shield at the register.

Note about PPE availability

As you no doubt know, the availability of personal protective equipment is dangerously low in the medical community. We at IGA are working to find a reliable supply of safety gloves, masks, and other resources you can order for your store, and also plan to secure appropriate masks as they become available to be donated to the medical community in your name.

- [Link to PPE resources](#)
- [Proper use of face masks](#)
- [Link to donation signage](#)

Should you have questions about COVID-19 procedures and resources, please visit www.igalert.com for the most up-to-date information, or email IGA's Nancy Vicelli at nvicelli@igainc.com.

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