



To our greatly appreciated customers,

Being based in the deep south and having our headquarters in the Hospitality State of Mississippi, the procedures we have had to put in place during the last 10 days are difficult for our employees. We are being asked to distance ourselves for a while from friendly gatherings with vendors, customers and even with our own associates and to suspend handshakes and friendly hugs. These personal interactions are what define us as a company. Taking a pause from our natural tendencies to be welcoming to all we encounter, though unfortunate, allows us to continue to provide our services to those in need. We don't like these procedures we have put in place, but this temporary sacrifice is small, and the more we can do to slow the virus spread, the better it will be for all of us.

Merchants provides nutrition services to many assisted living centers, nursing homes, hospitals and even our military bases. Our restaurant customers also provide meals to many first responders. We take these responsibilities to continue feeding our region very seriously. Therefore, we have implemented the following operational changes that we want to share with you:

- We have restricted access to all our properties to employees and inbound carriers.
- We have implemented health-related questioning of inbound drivers of products being delivered to our warehouses.
- We increased our orders to suppliers for takeout supplies and of course sanitizers and various other items.
- We have placed certain products on allocation to prevent hoarding and to make sure products are not stockpiled with a few while others are out.
- We are continually reinforcing CDC Illness Prevention Guidelines to all associates. We have directed all associates not to report to work if they have symptoms that are consistent with CDC guidance and to contact a medical professional. We are instructing all associates to comply with CDC guidelines if the associate is returning to the United States from countries identified by the CDC as having widespread sustained transmission.
- We have implemented enhanced cleaning procedures in our own work environment and are providing additional sanitation products to all locations.

We don't know what the next few weeks hold for us, but we are certain it is not going to be business as normal. Be assured that our top priorities are the health and safety of our associates, our customers and the general public as well as maintaining a high level of service to you, our valued customer. The changes we have made are designed to protect lives and that is certainly worth the small sacrifices we all must endure. Please be patient with our employees as they continue to do the best, they can do to provide what you need to run your business.

We also encourage you to visit the CDC's website to learn more about the resources available to you to help manage your business during this pandemic.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

We greatly appreciate and value your partnership.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Andy B. Mercier'.

Andy Mercier  
President/CEO