

Restaurant Quick Guide: Preparing for Prolonged and Widespread ICE Operations

1.0 purpose of this quick guide

Provide restaurants with information to help prepare for a prolonged and widespread ICE operation. It includes:

1. What makes this situation unique
2. What you can do ahead of a crisis

2.0 what makes this situation unique

This emergency differs from other events.

The realities of **impacted employees** (regardless of immigration status) include:

- Afraid to leave their homes or take public transportation due to random stops based on appearance.
- Significant financial pressure with loss of income, leading to potential evictions or utility shut off.
- Significant emotional strain for all employees.
- Looking to their employers for help as they are often among their most trusted people in the community.

The realities for **impacted restaurants** include:

- Shortening hours or menus or temporarily closing due to staffing shortages.
- Extended financial hardship (e.g., 10-50% reduction in revenue) during and after initial surge as customers pull back on eating out and overall local economy contracts.
- Heightened need to keep employees safe at work.
- Finding effective ways to use social media channels to garner support while minimizing customer or federal government backlash.

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3.0 what you can do ahead of a crisis – employee support

Topic	What To Do Ahead of a Crisis
Anticipate Employee Needs	Have proactive conversations with immigrant employees about how a prolonged operation would impact them and their families. Understand what support they may need including food, rent/utility support, transportation to work, transportation to school.
	Identify trusted non-immigrant employees who can be “buddies” for impacted employees to help with food and transportation.
	Determine plans for how the restaurant will support impacted employees. Will you continue to pay employees who cannot come to work? Will you provide food and rent support?
	Determine plans for how the restaurant will support buddies. Will you compensate buddies for their time supporting impacted families and reimburse them for out-of-pocket expenses?
Employee Food Support	Build a food collection plan. Will you rely on a food shelf for shelf-stable foods? If so, which food shelf. How will you get fresh food? Will you or an employee volunteer shop for multiple families, or will you have buddies shop for their assigned family?
Employee Transportation Support	Determine how you will get impacted employees who want to work to and from work safely. Will a buddy pick them up? Will you provide pick up through a restaurant vehicle?
	Determine if you will help with school transportation.
Employee Financial Support	Anticipate a temporary shift to cash paychecks.
	Look into existing programs for rent assistance through your city
	Decide if you want to provide direct financial support to impacted employees (see below for customer outreach).
Employee Emotional Support	Prepare approaches for helping employees manage stress on the job, including safe ways to share frustrations/fears and expectations for customer interactions.
	Prepare to explain to employees your approach and rationale for outward messaging.
	Decide if your restaurant will serve federal agents and prepare to set expectations with employees.

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4.0 what you can do ahead of a crisis – restaurant support

Topic	What To Do Ahead of a Crisis
Anticipate Operational Adjustments and Financial Implications	Determine opening (days, hours), staffing (e.g., additional hours to non-impacted employees) or menu adjustments to operate with reduced staff.
	Forecast revenue implications of operating adjustments.
	Forecast revenue implications of long-term guest traffic declines as the community pulls back from normal social activities.
	Determine revenue stream shifts (e.g., frozen to-go meals for families not leaving their homes, more take out).
	Identify existing sources for financial support (e.g., small business relief loans, refinancing, rent relief).
Customer Outreach/ Messaging	Create a social media plan for posting updates. Decide if your messaging will be apolitical (simply updating operating hours) or political (making a statement about the operation) and align this across owners.
	Identify trusted customers who could provide support (e.g., \$ collection, food drive, door monitoring).
Safety Procedures	Refresh your knowledge of constitutional rights including legal search and seizure.
	Create or refresh procedures for keeping employees safe at work, including constitutional rights, access procedures, what to do if federal agents are on property.
	Determine what each location may need to create a safe environment, being mindful of changing tactics. For example, roving tactics require discrete transportation while location-based tactics require site monitoring.
	Determine if volunteer door or street monitors will provide additional safety, recognizing that their presence can also flag agents and impact the customer experience.
	Prepare artifacts (e.g., door signs, no right to access/request for warrant script).
	Train managers on refreshed procedures.
Communication	Create signal groups for restaurant leadership, impacted employees and volunteers.
Mutual Aid	Determine if your restaurant will play a support role in the community beyond your restaurant (e.g., donation site, financial aid collection to share with food shelves, sharing aid with other restaurants).

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5.0 more information

[How Twin Cities restaurants are changing to survive ICE surge](#)

[Chefs, restaurants struggle to celebrate James Beard honors](#)

[How restaurants are helping Mpls. during ICE surge](#)

[When ICE Targets Your Restaurant - Mpls.St.Paul Magazine](#)

[With the Twin Cities Under Siege, Restaurants Become Hubs of Solidarity - Racket](#)