

COVID-19 Best Practice Information: Contactless Delivery/Vending for COVID-19 Resources

Background

- Contactless delivery methods and specialized vending systems throughout the U.S. and internationally are dispensing necessary resources such as personal protective equipment (PPE) and food.
- The following is a list of key findings and considerations for jurisdictions and communities regarding ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic operations across the country. These are best practices for consideration and do not constitute or should be considered as guidance in any way.¹

Key Considerations

- Several countries have installed PPE vending machines in medical facilities and in public areas to distribute supplies and help reduce person-to-person spread of the disease.
- Contactless delivery options, including delivery via drone and autonomous vehicle, are allowing consumers to access medical supplies and test kits while in social isolation.

Lessons Learned Related to Contactless Delivery and Vending for COVID-19 Resources

Vending Machines

- **Potential Best Practice:** As hospital cafeterias close to limit COVID-19 spread, vending machines are providing a contactless food purchasing option by selling plastic jars of fresh foods like salads and wraps in hospitals in New York City and Chicago. Vending machine companies keep track of orders to predict how to stock the machines, and any excess food is donated to food pantries.²

¹ This document contains references and links to non-federal resources and organizations. This information is meant solely for informational purposes and is not intended to be an endorsement of any non-federal entity by FEMA, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, or the U.S. government.

² 2020 Eater, Once a Nutritional Nightmare, Hospital Vending Machines Evolve to Serve Health Care Workers, <https://www.eater.com/2020/4/22/21231129/healthy-hospital-vending-machines-in-demand-health-care-workers-coronavirus-covid-19>



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- **Potential Best Practice:** Las Vegas' McCarran International Airport installed vending machines stocked with PPE, such as gloves, masks and alcohol wipes. There are three vending machines in the airport.³
- **Potential Best Practice:** Poland's two largest cities have installed street vending machines selling face masks, gloves, and sanitizers.⁴
- **Potential Best Practice:** Vending Times, a national publication serving the vending industry, reports that a face mask vendor has installed a vending machine in New York City selling masks at \$4 each.⁵
- **Potential Best Practice:** As a result of requirements for passengers to cover their faces, the city of Bangkok has installed cloth mask vending machines in several train stations.⁶
- **Potential Best Practice:** Vending machines manufacturers are offering a range of PPE vending machines to companies. These machines can be converted to dispense a variety of equipment and/or consumables based on consumer demands.^{7 8}
- **Potential Best Practice:** Some vending machines allow for contactless payment through near-field communication (NFC), where consumers can tap their phones on a payment terminal to complete transactions.⁹

Contactless Delivery

- **Potential Best Practice:** Grocery delivery services are taking orders for home health and safety kits, which include face masks and hand sanitizers, that customers can buy and have delivered via contactless delivery.¹⁰

³ 2020 CNN Travel, Las Vegas Airport Provides PPE Vending Machines for Passengers,

<https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/mccarran-airport-las-vegas-ppe-vending-machines/index.html>

⁴ 2020 Reuters, Vending Machines Selling Face Masks Appear on Warsaw Streets, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-poland-vending/vending-machines-selling-face-masks-appear-on-warsaw-streets-idUSKCN21S1MJ>

⁵ 2020 Vending Times, Safety Mask Provider Installs Vending Machine in NYC, <https://www.vendingtimes.com/news/safety-mask-provider-installs-vending-machine-in-nyc/>.

⁶ 2020 Agencia EFE, Thailand Train Stations Install Mask Vending Machines Over COVID-19,

<https://www.efe.com/efe/english/portada/thailand-train-stations-install-mask-vending-machines-over-covid-19/50000260-4217627>.

⁷ 2020 Necta, COVID-19 Emergency: Use Necta Vending Machines to Dispense PPE Devices,

<https://necta.evocagroup.com/en/news-media/necta-news/news/covid-19-emergency-use-necta-vending-machines-dispense-ppe-devices>

⁸ 2020 Automatic Vending Specialists, PPE Safety Vending Machines for Coronavirus, COVID-19,

<https://www.autovending.com.au/ppe-safety-vending-machines-for-coronavirus-covid-19/>

⁹ 2020 Vending Market Watch, U-Select-It Introduces the Sani-Center PPE Merchandiser,

<https://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/equipment/vending-machines/news/21136269/uselectit-introduces-the-sanicenter-ppe-merchandiser>

¹⁰ 2020 Instacart, Shopper Resources, <https://covidresponse.instacart.com/shopper-resources/>.

- **Potential Best Practice:** An international drone delivery company is distributing COVID-19 resources, such as PPE and test kits, in Ghana and Rwanda.¹¹ In the United States, they are coordinating with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to expedite safety approvals for medication deliveries via drone.¹²
- **Potential Best Practice:** In California, autonomous robot vehicles are transporting essential supplies to two stadiums that have been repurposed as COVID-19 treatment facilities.¹³
- **Potential Best Practice:** Rideshare and delivery apps have partnered with retailers in several countries to deliver goods such as over-the-counter (OTC) medications to customers.¹⁴
- **Potential Best Practice:** Food delivery services are offering contactless drop-off to help limit the risk of transmission from delivery personnel to customers.¹⁵
- **Potential Best Practice:** The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) released guidance for restaurants providing curbside pickup and delivery services, including allowing dedicated parking spaces and displaying pickup instructions. For more information, see guidance [here](#).
 - The FDA shared information about best practices for retail food stores, restaurants, and food pick-up/delivery services during the COVID-19 Pandemic. More information can be found [here](#).
- **Potential Best Practice:** Long haul truckers are limiting the time spent outside the truck cab by using paperless, electronic invoicing for fueling, deliveries, and other tasks, when available. They are also contacting facilities in advance to make an appointment for unloading cargo using radio/phone to talk with dock managers or other drivers.¹⁶

Topics for the “Best Practices” series are generated from crowd sourced suggestions. Have an idea? Let us research it! Organizations and individuals can e-mail best practices or lessons learned to fema-cipsupport@fema.dhs.gov.

¹¹ 2020 Time Drones Are Delivering COVID-19 Tests in Ghana. Could the U.S. Be Next?, <https://time.com/5824914/drones-coronavirus-tests-ghana-zipline/>

¹² 2020 IEEE Spectrum, Zipline Wants to Bring Medical Drone Delivery to U.S. to Fight COVID-19, <https://spectrum.ieee.org/automaton/robotics/drones/zipline-medical-drone-delivery-covid19>

¹³ 2020 The Verge, Nuro is Using Delivery Robots to Help Health Care Workers Fighting COVID-19, <https://www.theverge.com/2020/4/22/21231466/nuro-delivery-robot-health-care-workers-food-supplies-california>

¹⁴ 2020 Mobile Payments Today, Uber Rolls Out On-Demand Delivery of Packages, Medicine in Response to COVID-19, <https://www.mobilepaymentstoday.com/news/uber-rolls-out-on-demand-delivery-of-packages-medicine-in-reponse-to-covid-19/>

¹⁵ 2020 CNET, How to Safely Order Food Delivery, Takeout and Groceries During Coronavirus Quarantine, <https://www.cnet.com/health/how-to-safely-order-food-delivery-takeout-and-groceries-during-coronavirus-quarantine/>

¹⁶ 2020 American Trucking Associations, COVID-19: Resources for Drivers, Reducing Exposure, <https://www.trucking.org/COVID19/drivers#CDC>.