As **Illinois State University** eagerly moves forward with preparations for the spring 2021 semester, Event Management, Dining, and Hospitality (EMDH) is taking thoughtful and purposeful steps to protect the health, safety, and well-being of the entire campus community. Safety remains the department’s highest priority and will guide all efforts to provide exceptional dining experiences for meal plan holders this spring and beyond.

The planning process for dining operations is ongoing and based on guidance provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Governor of the State of Illinois, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). EMDH is also communicating with other colleges and universities throughout the country to share ideas and best practices for dining operations related to COVID-19. Leadership will continue to monitor the situation very closely and assess and adjust dining services appropriately throughout the 2020-2021 academic year. For the most up-to-date information throughout the spring semester, please visit Dining’s [FAQ webpage](#).
EMDH will enforce the following policies:

- Face coverings will be required at all times in all dining venues and common spaces throughout campus, unless an individual is eating a meal in a designated dining area.
- Physical distancing will be enforced with floor markers six feet apart, and plexiglass barriers and contactless systems, like self-swipe card readers, will minimize direct contact with staff.
- Self-service has been substantially reduced, and disposable containers for food and beverages will be used for both dine-in and carry-out.
- Enhanced cleaning practices will include the sanitation of all tables and chairs after each use, as well as more frequent sanitation of restrooms and other high contact areas.
- Each table in designated dining areas will include a card system to identify tables safe to use (green) and tables that need to be cleaned (red). Cards will be sanitized after each use. Patrons must wait for a table marked with a green status before sitting down to dine.
- All staff involved in food production and service will be required to:
  - Wear face coverings and gloves at all times
  - Attend extensive safety training sessions
  - Participate in daily temperature and symptom screenings
  - Continue to focus on frequent handwashing and changing of serving utensils during service times
Meal plan holders will have access to high-quality and healthy meals in facilities across campus that have been reconfigured to minimize gathering sizes. A variety of dining options will continue to allow students to select food based on a wide range of preferences and dietary needs.

**Operations**

- Watterson Dining Commons will open on Monday, January 4 at 4:30 p.m. and Marketplace at Linkins will open on Friday, January 8 at 11:00 a.m. Student meal plans will be activated on January 4 at 4:30 p.m. at no additional cost.
- Only meal plan holders will be allowed access to the dining centers. Faculty/staff, university visitors, and guests of meal plan holders will not be able to dine at the three locations but will be welcome to do so at the retail dining venues on campus. As a result, the Parents RSVP Program for dining centers has been suspended temporarily.
- Off-campus meal plans will continue to be available.
- The “Treat Your Student” service will still be available. Details are available on the Dining website.

**Seating**

- Seating in dining centers will be reduced and positioned in accordance with physical distancing requirements, following the restaurant guidelines set by the CDC, IDPH, and IBHE.
- Designated dining areas will be created with appropriate seating capacities in each area based on current guidelines.
- Tables in designated dining areas will be set up a minimum of six feet apart, ranging in group size from one to four people only.
- Additional exterior seating will be available outside of the residential dining centers.
Operations

- Retail dining venues at the Bone Student Center including Starbucks and Timbers Grille are currently scheduled to be open on January 4 in conjunction with the start of move-in at the campus residence halls. In addition, The Landing is scheduled to open on January 8, and McAlister’s Deli and Qdoba are scheduled to open on January 11. Starbucks at the Student Fitness Center is also scheduled to open on January 11.
- Guests will be able to use flex dollars, Redbird Dollars, or credit/debit cards to purchase meals. Cash will only be accepted at retail dining venues at the Bone Student Center.
- During the 2020-2021 academic year, the Bone Student Center will add another new retail dining venue, Star Ginger, which is scheduled to open in March of 2021.

Seating

- Seating in retail dining venues will be reduced and positioned in accordance with physical distancing requirements, following the restaurant guidelines set by the CDC, IDPH, and IBHE.
- Designated dining areas will be created with appropriate seating capacities in each area based on current guidelines.
- Tables in designated dining areas will be set up a minimum of six feet apart, ranging in group size from one to four people only.
- Additional exterior seating will be available outside of the Bone Student Center.
Students who are asked to quarantine or isolate in spaces designated by University Housing Services will be provided with high-quality meals based on a scheduled rotation of options developed by the EMDH culinary team. EMDH will also provide appropriate allergen-friendly meals as needed for those with dietary concerns or restrictions.

**Operations**

- Individuals in quarantine or isolation will receive fresh meals daily, as well as an initial package of snacks and treats.
- Meals will be packaged and delivered to a pre-determined location outside of the designated living space, eliminating direct contact between dining staff and students.
- Staff involved with the production and delivery of meals will wear face coverings and gloves at all times.
The Role of EMDH Student Employees

• As Illinois State University prepares for the spring semester during unprecedented times, EMDH is continuing to hire student positions.

• Each EMDH student employee plays a critical role in creating safe, memorable experiences for students, guests, and the entire Redbird community, working with dedicated, full-time staff members.

• The health, safety, and well-being of our employees and guests remains our top priority. Like full-time staff, all student employees involved in food production and service will be required to:
  o Wear face coverings and gloves at all times
  o Attend extensive safety training sessions
  o Participate in daily temperature and symptom screenings
  o Continue to focus on frequent handwashing and changing of serving utensils during service times

Join Our Team

• As the largest employer on campus, EMDH offers a wide range of positions with competitive wages, flexible schedules, and a variety of leadership opportunities.

• To learn more about EMDH’s mission and core values, please visit the EMDH website.

• To learn more about the hiring process, please visit the EMDH employment website.