HOW CAN BUSINESSES ADAPT FOR PRODUCT PICKUP?

Online ordering was already growing in popularity prior to COVID-19. Although the current health crisis has accelerated this trend, the growth of online commerce and other types of remote ordering will remain relevant beyond the end of the pandemic. Remote ordering requires logistical and technological changes to business operations so customers can pick up and receive preordered items. Improving this experience is the key to serving customers who are looking for safe and convenient ways to shop.

Elements of effective contactless pickup and delivery systems commonly include:

- Parking spaces reserved for vehicles picking up preordered items
- Storefront pickup windows
- Lockers or cubbies on an outside wall or inside the entrance to the building
- Reduced or eliminated parking fees (such as parking meters) for vehicles stopped to pick up preordered products
- Clear and appropriate signage for pickup spaces, especially if shared between multiple stores

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Remote ordering was growing in popularity before COVID-19, and this trend will continue even after the pandemic is over.
- The key to effective remote ordering is an ordered system of product pickup and delivery that is clear and evident to customers.
- This ordered system involves designated parking spaces, clear signage, and in-store contactless delivery facilities.

A coordinated wayfinding signage package with colorful markings and unique numbers helps customers locate the pickup spaces easily.

Clear signage that is easy and readable helps customers know what pickup and delivery facilities are available and where to find them.

The suggestions in this Planning Paper apply universally to businesses, non-profits, and any other organizations that have reasonably sized goods and services that need to be physically distributed.
Regardless of whether the intent is for the customer to go into the store to pick up merchandise or for the store employee to deliver the product to the customer's car, effective contactless pickup and delivery requires an ordered system that is evident to customers and provides them with clear directions. Best practices include:

**Parking Spaces**

- Consider how the spaces will be used by both customers and employees, and clearly designate between parking spaces for remotely ordered pickup customers, delivery drivers, and regular shoppers.
- Coordinate with municipalities/shopping center landlords to create such parking spaces, and consider sharing among multiple businesses.
- In urban or town environments, consider covering parking meters or waiving enforcement.
- In parking lots or suburban shopping centers, avoid converting ADA spaces and fire lanes to short-term parking.

**Signage**

- Use plenty of wayfinding signage for customers to find the pickup spaces or in-store contactless facilities, such as lockers.
- Include directions for customers on how to inform the business of their arrival, such as parking space number, physical or online contact information (such as phone numbers, websites, app info, and QR codes), and general instructions.
- Ensure signage is clear, readable, and weatherproof.
- Clearly convey any appropriate time limits, if applicable.
- In a downtown area, consider the appropriateness of temporary signs versus official signage that complies with the national Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).