

Milwaukee County Exec: 11 municipalities restrict food and beverage sales in latest effort to protect public health

Posted on Tuesday, Mar 17, 2020

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Emergency Order goes into effect Tuesday, March 17

Eleven Milwaukee County Municipal Leaders, supported by Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele, issued an Emergency Order to close bars and restaurants in their jurisdictions to in-house patrons, effective on Tuesday, March 17, 2020 and until further notice. Restaurants with take-out and delivery options will still be able to operate those services, even as dining rooms are temporarily closed.

Milwaukee, South Milwaukee, St. Francis, Bayside, Brown Deer, Cudahy, Fox Point, Glendale, River Hills, Shorewood and Whitefish Bay issued the following statement:

“Clear and bold actions are needed immediately to stop the spread of COVID-19 and strengthen public health in Milwaukee County, and that means closing our bars and restaurants for now. This will be extremely difficult on the family-owned bars, local restaurants and small businesses that make Milwaukee County the best place to call home. We are in unprecedented times, and that calls for unprecedented actions. We want to thank the bars, restaurants, businesses and all our residents for understanding this is a necessary measure to safeguard the health of our community. We are all in this together.”

The Emergency Order restricts food, liquor, beer and wine sales to carry-out and delivery only for bars and restaurants in certain areas of Milwaukee County. Onsite consumption of food and beverage will not be permitted.

The order was issued ahead of St. Patrick's Day, which commonly attracts large groups of people to bars and restaurants across Milwaukee County and the State of Wisconsin. Participating in St. Patrick's Day activities would make social distancing nearly impossible. Social distancing is the paramount strategy for minimizing the spread of COVID-19 in our communities, and Milwaukee County public health officials, Mayors and Village Presidents are committed to using every tool in order to protect public health.

Milwaukee County will continue to take aggressive action to minimize the spread of COVID-19. The latest measure to close bars and restaurants builds on Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers' order prohibiting gatherings of more than 50 people. This order was implemented as Wisconsin begins to experience community transmission of COVID-19.