Statement from South Milwaukee Mayor Erik Brooks on the Health Department Order Related to Reducing the Spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

This evening, the City of South Milwaukee is joining with other local communities in issuing an order aimed at reducing the spread of COVID-19, including strictly prohibiting dining-in at restaurants and bars, effective at 2:01 a.m. on Tuesday, March 17.

Please see the Health Department order for more information.

While we recognize this order is a hardship for small businesses and others, we are doing this out of an abundance of caution and continue to make public health our top priority. Guidance from federal, state and local health professionals and the experience from other communities, states and countries is clear: We need to take these kinds of measures to slow the spread of the illness and protect our community. That has to be our focus.
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 16, 2020

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ELEVEN MILWAUKEE COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES RESTRICT FOOD AND BEVERAGE SALES IN LATEST EFFORT TO PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH
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.
COVID-19 Order Restricting Food and Beverage Sales in the Cities and Villages of Milwaukee, Bayside, Brown Deer, Fox Point, Glendale, River Hills, Shorewood, Whitefish Bay, Cudahy, South Milwaukee, and St. Francis

Version 1 Issued and Effective as of 2:01 a.m. on Tuesday, March 17, 2020

I. **COVID-19 Order Restricting Food and Beverage Sales in the Cities and Villages of Milwaukee, Bayside, Brown Deer, Fox Point, Glendale, River Hills, Shorewood, Whitefish Bay, Cudahy, South Milwaukee, and St. Francis**

Under the authority of Wis. Stat. § 252.03, the Public Health Officers from the Health Departments of Milwaukee City, North Shore (Bayside, Brown Deer, Fox Point, Glendale, River Hills, Shorewood and Whitefish Bay), Cudahy, South Milwaukee, and St. Francis, in coordination with their municipal Mayors, Village Presidents, and the Milwaukee County Executive, order the following:

A. Effective as of 2:01 a.m. on Tuesday, March 17, 2020, and continuing until further notice, food and beverage service is restricted as defined in section B.1 in the cities and villages of Milwaukee, Bayside, Brown Deer, Fox Point, Glendale, River Hills, Shorewood, Whitefish Bay, Cudahy, South Milwaukee, and St. Francis, unless otherwise exempted in section B.2. This order is based on the restrictions in the “Order Prohibiting Mass Gatherings of 50 or More People”¹ issued by Governor Evers on March 16, 2020, to meet the needs of the Milwaukee metropolitan area, which is beginning to experience community transmission of COVID-19.

B. **Food and Beverage Service Restrictions and Exemptions**

1. Restrictions: The locations listed below are ordered closed until further notice, unless otherwise exempted in section B.2.
   i. Liquor, beer and wine sales in Milwaukee County and its municipalities are restricted to carry-out sales and delivery only, to the extent permitted by law. No onsite consumption is permitted.
   ii. Food and beverage sales are restricted to carry-out and delivery only. No onsite consumption is permitted.

2. Exemptions to issued closures in B.1 and guidance for operating facilities:
   i. Food service in health care facilities.
   ii. Food service and catering at weddings or funerals.²
   iii. Lines for carry-out must have an environment where patrons and staff maintain social distancing (six feet away from other people) whenever possible.

¹[https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/WI-GOV/2020/03/16/file_attachments/1402207/DHS%20Order%20Mass%20Gatherings%20of%2050%20or%20More.pdf](https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/WI-GOV/2020/03/16/file_attachments/1402207/DHS%20Order%20Mass%20Gatherings%20of%2050%20or%20More.pdf)
²Weddings and funerals are subject to Governor Evers’ Order Prohibiting Mass Gatherings of 50 or More People; weddings and funerals may not have more than 50 people in a space, including food service workers.
iv. All are urged to continue to wash hands, utilize hand sanitizer and practice proper respiratory etiquette (coughing into elbow, etc.).

C. The immediate implementation of this Order is necessary as patrons of bars and restaurants continue to gather in large numbers, in close proximity to each other, in closed spaces, thereby endangering the health of the staff and the patrons.

D. The overriding goal of this Order is to minimize in-person interaction which is the primary means of transmission. The gathering of patrons in restaurants and bars increases and encourages talking, touching, and other social interaction in an environment with a multitude of hard surfaces.

E. This Order is issued based on evidence of increasing transmission of COVID-19, scientific evidence regarding the most effective approaches to slow the transmission of communicable diseases generally and COVID-19 specifically, and best practices as currently known and available to protect vulnerable members of the public from avoidable risks of serious illness or death resulting from exposure to COVID-19. Although most people who contract COVID-19 do not become seriously ill, people with mild symptoms and asymptomatic people with COVID-19 may place other vulnerable members of the public at significant risk.

F. This Order will reduce the likelihood that many people will be exposed to COVID-19 at a single event, and will thereby slow the spread of COVID-19 within Milwaukee County and its nineteen (19) municipalities. By reducing the spread of COVID-19, this Order will help preserve critical and limited healthcare capacity.

G. This Order is issued in light of the existence of several cases of COVID-19 within Milwaukee County, as part of a significant and increasing number of assumed cases of community transmission nationwide.³

H. This Order is issued to prevent circumstances often present in mass gatherings that may exacerbate the spread of COVID-19, such as: the increased likelihood that mass gatherings will attract people from broad geographic areas who could be infected; the prolonged time period in which large numbers of people are in close proximity and could be exposed to COVID-19; and the difficulty in tracing exposure when large numbers of people attend a single event.

IT IS SO ORDERED BY THE PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE MUNICIPALITIES OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY.

Milwaukee City Commissioner of Health, Dr. Jeanette Kowalik

North Shore Public Health Officer, Ann Christiansen

South Milwaukee/St. Francis Public Health Officer, Jacqueline Ove

Cudahy Public Health Officer, Katie Lepak