

CITY *of* BOSTON

Dear Boston small business owners and local business community members,

The Governor has announced new restrictions related to COVID-19, also known as coronavirus, which may impact your business operations. Since the virus first surfaced in Boston on February 1, 2020, the Mayor's Office has been compiling updates and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance for businesses and organizations. We want you to be informed and have access to all that we know about the virus, how to curb the spread, and its impact on the city.

In addition to the resources and efforts noted below, we would like to connect (via conference call) with business owners to hear your perspective and experiences. The agenda will involve a briefing on the coronavirus from the City, what resources are available to you, followed by time for you to voice your questions, concerns, and suggestions.

The conference call will be held Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

Dial-in: +1 (614) 664-9433

PIN: 799 590 823#

If you have time, please take a moment to fill out this survey:

<http://meet.google.com/agq-mtha-psp>

After the call is completed, notes and FAQs will be updated to boston.gov/econdev. If you have any questions, please contact Natalia Urtubey in the Mayor's Office of Economic Development natalia.urtubey@boston.gov or (617) 635-0355.

You can find the most up-to-date information from the City of Boston by using these resources:

- City of Boston Health Line: 617-534-5050
- [boston.gov/coronavirus](https://www.boston.gov/coronavirus)
- Social Media accounts for Mayor Walsh ([@MartyWalsh](https://twitter.com/MartyWalsh)), the City of Boston ([@CityOfBoston](https://twitter.com/CityOfBoston)), and the Boston Public Health Commission ([@HealthyBoston](https://twitter.com/HealthyBoston)).

Other Important information for the Business community.

On Monday, March 16, Mayor Walsh announced the formation and launch of the [Boston Resiliency Fund](#),

which will coordinate the City's fundraising and philanthropic efforts to provide essential services to Boston residents whose health and well-being are most immediately impacted by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, and assist first responders and critical care providers. The Fund is being launched together with the support of a growing number of private and philanthropic partners, including the Vertex Foundation, Partners HealthCare, Jack Connors, Liberty Mutual, Gross Family Foundation, Bain Capital, John Hancock, John & Cyndy Fish, Mass Mutual and Shah Family Foundation.

LICENSED PREMISES:

The following restrictions from the City of Boston's Licensing Board go into effect on Tuesday, March 17th, 2020.

- No restaurant (with or without an alcoholic beverages license), bar, club, private club, social club, or entertainment venue may at any time allow more than twenty five (25) individuals in the licensed premise including staff.
- No establishment may serve food or alcoholic beverages for on premise consumption. This effectively means a complete prohibition on the service of alcohol with the exception of retail package stores.
- Establishments may only serve patrons food via take-out and delivery.
- Any restriction or regulation prohibiting take-out is temporarily lifted.
- Establishments must remove or rope off all seating in the licensed premise.
- Establishments must abide by the CDC's social distancing policies.
- Establishments offering take-out and delivery may stay open to the closing hour currently listed on their license.
- Massachusetts General Law does not allow for a Section 12 Licensee to sell alcoholic beverages to go. Any change would require emergency legislation at the state level. The Board has consulted with the ABCC and there is no plan to adopt such legislation.

Please note, the Licensing Board Hearing for Wednesday March 18th, 2020 has been canceled and indefinitely canceled going forward.

CONSTRUCTION SITES:

Effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020, We are suspending all regular activities at construction sites in Boston. Employers should maintain the necessary crews to keep their sites safe and secure, keep any materials from blowing away, and prevent trespassing. This work needs to be completed in the next week, by Monday, March 23, 2020. After sites have been secured, skeleton crews will be permitted for the remainder of this suspension to ensure safety. The only work that will be permitted moving forward will be emergency work, which will need to be approved by the City of Boston's Inspectional Services Department.

That essential work includes:

- Emergency utility, road or building work, such as gas leaks, water leaks and sinkholes;
- New utility connections to occupied buildings;
- Mandated building or utility work;
- Work at public health facilities, healthcare facilities, shelters, including temporary shelters and other facilities that support vulnerable populations;
- Work which ensures the reliability of the transportation network;
- Other work necessary to render occupied residential buildings fully habitable.

In addition to the list of essential construction projects, the City will, on a case-by-case basis, review requests for exceptions to the temporary construction moratorium. These may be granted by the Commissioner of Inspectional Services for building-related work or the Commissioner of Public Works for street-related work. These will be granted if they support increased public health and safety.

This policy is effective as of March 17 and will be reviewed at regular intervals. New projects cannot be started at this time, unless they meet the criteria above. Any currently permitted and active construction project must be in a secure situation by Monday, March 23. This policy only applies to projects permitted by the City of Boston.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY:

As of 6:00 p.m. Monday, March 16th, all branches of the Boston Public Library (BPL) system are closed until further notice including the central library in Copley Square. BPL will expand automatic renewals, and allow people to keep their books and other materials for an additional 15 weeks, instead of the standard three weeks.

All late fines will be waived until May 1, 2020 and library patrons will have until October to renew their library card if it is set to expire. In the coming days and weeks, BPL will increase online services, including ebooks, downloadable movies, audio books, and other information resources.

As a part of the City's school closure plan, Chromebooks are being distributed to every BPS student who needs them. Students will be encouraged to make use of the BPL's vast collection of resources during this time.

BOSTON CENTERS FOR YOUTH & FAMILIES:

All BCYF pools, gyms and fitness centers are closed. By this Wednesday, March 18, 2020, all BCYF programming will be suspended. Only select BCYF centers will be open for youth meal distribution during school closures. For a list of meal distribution locations, go to boston.gov/coronavirus.

BOSTON PARKS AND RECREATION:

The health and safety of park users is our top priority. City of Boston parks remain open at this time. Maintenance and operational functions continue uninterrupted. The following operation changes have been made as part of the City of Boston's response to Coronavirus.

- Although parks remain open for "passive recreation" (such as walking or jogging) at this time, park users are advised to follow the guidelines recommended by the Boston Public Health Commission:
 - Practice social distancing (remain at least six feet away from other people).
 - Wash hands, utilize hand sanitizer, and cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your inner elbow.
 - Limit time in public areas and avoid congregating in groups.
 - Stay home if you feel sick.
- Park permits have been suspended through April 27, 2020.
- Cultural and recreational programming has been suspended.
- Community engagement forums for our planning, design, and construction activities will be postponed until a later date.
- Events that are subject to the open meeting law (Parks Commission Meetings, Tree Removal Hearings) will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. There are no public meetings scheduled for March.

Please call [617-635-4505](tel:617-635-4505) or email parks@boston.gov if you have questions about a particular event.

[Visit Our Website](#)

