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## IMPORTANT PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATION

March 13, 2020

To: ALL LICENSED FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS IN BAY COUNTY

FROM: Joel Kwiatkowski RS,  
Environmental Health Manager, Bay County Health Department

SUBJECT: COVID19 "Coronavirus" and Food Service Establishments

Now that the Coronavirus is at our doorstep we all need to slow its spread. The spread of this virus is imminent and poses a **very serious** problem for us all, especially the elderly. As a restaurant owner/manager you need to be aware of risks involved when people gather at your establishment and what you can do to help slow and stop the spread of the virus.

Until further notice, any large groups over 250 people in a single shared space are prohibited in Michigan and subject to a misdemeanor if violated. The Bay County Health Department is **strongly** recommending gatherings be limited to less than 100 and, if possible, all unnecessary gatherings should be canceled.

People over 60 with underlying health conditions such as Heart Disease, Diabetes and Lung Disease are at the highest risk of getting very sick from this illness and are considered a highly susceptible population. The death rate for people that meet this definition is very high. Many of these individuals dine out often and are now at risk of being exposed to this illness. In addition to the basic safety precautions, such as proper and frequent handwashing and sanitizing all frequently touched surfaces, there are other measures that can be taken to reduce risk in this highly susceptible population.

Prepare your establishment and stop the spread of the virus utilizing the following;

- Start the practice of social distancing. This involves keeping a 6 foot distance from others as much as possible.
- Use curbside pickup and take-out options. People may call ahead to order food and pick it up without leaving their vehicle.
- Start delivering food and instruct the delivery people on proper social distancing when deliveries are made.
- If employees become ill with any one the following symptoms, cough, fever over 100 and difficulty breathing, they must STAY HOME. Employees shall not return to work until at least 48 hours have passed without any symptoms.
- Don't forget to sanitize items such as menus, cash registers, front end reception and waiting areas, and items which are touched often. Use the same sanitizer solutions such as 100ppm or chlorine bleach or 200ppm of quaternary ammonia sanitizer. Remember to leave the surfaces wet with sanitizer and let it air dry. For surfaces that will not be immediately used by customers, a higher concentration of chlorine can be used up to 1000ppm which is 1/3 cup of standard 5.25% chlorine bleach to 1 gallon of water.

The Health Department is not recommending closure of restaurants and other food service establishments at this time. People will need to know they have safe places to eat and safe methods to obtain a meal with minimal risk of being exposed to the Coronavirus.

In addition to restaurant safety, if you have loved ones that are considered to be at high risk, please encourage them to **stay home and stay safe**. Friends and family can always take food and supplies and leave it at their door step to prevent any contact and potential of spreading the virus. It's important to know that many young health people can have the virus, be communicable, and not show any symptoms. The virus can take up to 14 days for symptoms to show up and sometimes no symptoms at all.

If we all work together to slow and stop this pandemic we can return to our normal every-day lives sooner than later.

If you have questions I am available 7 days a week while we all work through this unfortunate event.

Email any questions you may have to [kwiatkowskij@baycounty.net](mailto:kwiatkowskij@baycounty.net). If you would like a phone call to discuss anything please send an email with your phone number and I will call you at my earliest convenience.