



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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Contact:

Phil Pitchford

Public Information Officer

951-826-5975

ppitchford@riversideca.gov

Riverside City Council Alters Emergency Order Regarding Local Restaurants, Bars, Breweries and Wineries to Slow Spread of COVID-19 Virus

Decision does not supplant order from Riverside County's Public Health Officer requiring no more than 10 people per subdivided room

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The Riverside City Council voted on Tuesday (3/17) to alter some of the local regulations for restaurants, bars, breweries and wineries that had been put in place Monday to reduce the spread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19), and Council members agreed to revisit the rules in two weeks.

“These changes represent our best efforts as a local government to protect public health and acknowledge the urgency being experienced by some of our business owners,” Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “We pledge to continue to work with our community to keep everyone safe and avoid as much economic damage as possible.”

The Council left unchanged the closure of bars, breweries and wineries that do not sell food, but agreed to allow takeout business for breweries and wineries. The Council decided that restaurants may remain open at 50% of their capacity, as long as they adhere to social distancing norms that keep people six feet apart. If a restaurant has a bar, the bar must close. Restaurant patrons eating food may order from the bar until 10 p.m.

Restaurants must still observe the order of County Public Health Officer Dr. Cameron Kaiser that limits gatherings to no more than 10 people in each subdivided room of a building and requires six feet of social distancing. Details can be found at:

https://rivcoph.org/Portals/0/Documents/CoronaVirus/SharpMFD_20200316.pdf

On Monday evening, the City had called for restaurants and cafes to be closed for in-restaurant seated dining and only be open for drive-through or other pick-up/delivery options. The sale of food on a take-out basis and for delivery was allowed 24 hours per day. Those rules were to be in place for 60 days.

That decision was up for ratification on Tuesday afternoon, which is when the City Council made the changes designed to help businesses. The rules approved Tuesday are in effect through March 31, at which time they will be reviewed at a City Council meeting.

“We are trying to dramatically reduce the spread of COVID-19 while minimizing the impact to businesses to the extent possible and protecting the most vulnerable” Mayor Pro Tem Erin Edwards said.

The changes are the latest effort by the City of Riverside to reduce the spread of COVID-19, which the World Health Organization has characterized as a worldwide pandemic. The City and County each have declared a local emergency in connection with COVID-19. President Trump has declared a national emergency.