



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

56 West Main Street
Suite 1
Westminster, MD 21157
Phone 410-848-9000
Fax 410-857-7476

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Joe Dominick
Phone: 410-848-2522

Westminster Requests Early Restaurant/Bar Closings on St. Patrick's Day COVID-19 Concerns Cited

Westminster Mayor Joe Dominick and Council President Greg Pecoraro strongly urge all restaurants and bars in the City to voluntarily close early on St. Patrick's Day; they also encourage businesses to offer expanded carryout and delivery options as part of their ongoing daily operations. The request is in response to the novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19.

Mayor Dominick stated, "As everyone knows, social distancing is a critical component of our nation's efforts to combat COVID-19. St. Patrick's Day is one of the busiest days for restaurants and bars, and Council President Pecoraro and I believe it is important to minimize large crowds whenever possible. For that reason, we are asking all restaurants and bars in the City to voluntarily close early on St. Patrick's Day, as well as offer expanded carryout and delivery options to minimize crowds in their establishments on an ongoing basis. During this pandemic, we must all do our part to keep our employees, customers, and community safe."

Their request followed Maryland Governor Larry Hogan's forceful reminder to bar owners ahead of St. Patrick's Day that large gatherings were temporarily outlawed, and violators would be punished. The state banned gatherings of more than 250 people Thursday, March 12 in response to the first case of the virus spreading in the community instead of occurring in someone who traveled.

In his statement, Governor Hogan said, "Anyone who hosts or is part of the crowds in bars this weekend is jeopardizing the health of others and must avoid any contact with family members or friends over the age of 60 or those with underlying health conditions." The Governor's comments came first in a tweet and then in a full written statement.

This request follows Mayor Dominick's declaration of a public health emergency on Saturday, March 14, 2020. Among other actions, the associated proclamation declared a Municipal Civil Emergency in the City of Westminster because of the impending threat of widespread infection by the virus known as COVID-19. The City temporarily closed the Westminster Family Fitness Center on March 14, 2020 in conjunction with Dominick's public health emergency declaration. The City is continuing to monitor the ongoing COVID-19 situation and will adjust other aspects of City operations as warranted.

Steps you can take to protect yourself and your family, and to prepare for the possible spread of COVID-19 include:

- Wash your hands often;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Clean frequently touched objects and surfaces often;
- Stay home when you are sick;

- Prepare a kit of supplies such as water, food, and medicine, like you would for a winter storm or hurricane, in case you need to stay home while ill or in quarantine. Only buy what you need for a few weeks, so that everyone has what they need to stay healthy; and,
- Stay informed with reliable information from local, state, and federal public health sources.

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about COVID-19 can be found at:

[Maryland Department of Health COVID-19 FAQ.](#)

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