LARRY HOGAN
GOVERNOR

# STATE OF MARYLAND
## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

July 14, 2020

Dear County Leaders:

While states across the country and in our region are experiencing spikes and outbreaks, Maryland's key COVID-19 health metrics continue to decline. However, we are closely monitoring some concerning trends, including increasing infection rates among young people. The positivity rate among Marylanders under the age of 35 is now 84% higher than Marylanders 35 and older.

An increasing number of COVID-19 cases have been connected to non-compliance with public health requirements, particularly in bars and restaurants. Businesses that fail to comply with the state's orders put their customers and employees at grave risk, and jeopardize our safe, effective, and gradual recovery.

At least 12 states have already moved to re-close bars and restaurants—we do not want to be forced to take the same action here in Maryland. Under Executive Order 20-06-10-01, which was issued on June 10, and the accompanying directives from the Maryland Department of Health:

- Bars and restaurants are open for seated service only with physical distancing and capacity restrictions. Customers must be seated at least six feet apart from other guests. Standing and congregating in bar areas is strictly prohibited.
- All staff must wear a face covering while working and interacting with customers.
- For facilities with booths, every other booth must be closed.
- No more than six people may sit at a table.

The vast majority of bars and restaurants in our state are in compliance, but some are flagrantly violating the law and endangering public health. You have the responsibility to enforce these laws. Violators should be warned, fined, have actions taken regarding their licenses, or closed if necessary. Local health departments, local liquor boards and inspectors, and local law enforcement agencies must work together to ensure public health is protected.

Our continued economic health and recovery depend on the active and aggressive local enforcement of these critical public health measures. We cannot allow a small segment of willful violators to squander the collective efforts of the overwhelming majority of Maryland citizens and businesses.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Larry Hogan
Governor

cc: Local Health Officers
Local Liquor Boards
Local Law Enforcement Agencies
Maryland Association of Counties

STATE HOUSE, ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
(410) 974-3901 1-800-811-8336
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