

## For Immediate Release

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### **Washtenaw County Health Department Orders Bars, Restaurants to Reduce Crowding** Venues must operate at half of their maximum occupancy, including staff

YPSILANTI, Mich., March 15, 2020 - The Washtenaw County Health Officer has issued an emergency order to reduce the number of people crowding into local bars, restaurants or entertainment venues. Venues must cut their maximum occupancy by half starting Monday, March 16, 2020 at 12:00 p.m. and continuing through April 5, 2020. Under the Michigan Public Health Code, MCL 333.2453, the Health Officer has the authority to take action to protect the public's health and prevent the spread of disease.

"This action is not taken lightly," said Jimena Loveluck, MSW, Washtenaw County Health Officer. "To slow the impact of COVID-19 in our community and protect everyone's health, we must take our commitment to prevention seriously. Social distancing is essential now to prevent additional spread as much as possible."

As of this evening, March 15, Washtenaw County has 7 reported cases of COVID-19 and numerous tests pending.

The order is in effect from March 16 through April 5, or until updated. It applies to all county businesses with a food service license as well as entertainment venues and gyms. Healthcare facilities, long-term care and grocery stores are exempt. Additional, more stringent actions may also be considered as the situation changes.

Signage is provided and should be displayed.

Please continue to rely on official sources of information for local ([www.washtenaw.org/covid19](http://www.washtenaw.org/covid19)), state ([www.michigan.gov/coronavirus](http://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus)), and national (<http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19>) updates.

We continue to recommend prevention strategies to reduce the spread of germs and protect everyone's health.

### **Prevention**

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Information from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is available in [English](#), [Chinese](#), and [Spanish](#).

- Clean your hands often. Scrub with soap for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer if you cannot wash.

- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care. Call ahead before going to your **healthcare provider**. Learn [what to do if you are sick](#).
- Cover your cough or sneeze **with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash**. Immediately wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces.
- Practice social distancing. Social distancing means keeping six feet between people as much as possible.
- If you've had a lower-risk exposure to COVID-19, self-monitor by watching for symptoms and checking your temperature twice daily.
- Self-quarantine if you've had a higher risk exposure, such as traveling to an area with widespread ongoing transmission or having close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Learn more about social distancing, monitoring, quarantine, and isolation: [English](#), [Spanish](#)

**Older adults and people who have severe underlying chronic medical conditions** like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness. [View additional prevention steps from CDC](#) for people at higher risk. Consult with your health care provider for more steps you may be able to take to protect yourself.

REMEMBER: [Discrimination harms public health](#). People of Asian descent, including Chinese Americans, are not more likely to get coronavirus than anyone else.

### **Washtenaw County Health Department**

The Washtenaw County Health Department promotes health and works to prevent disease and injury in our community. Our mission is to assure, in partnership with the community, the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives through prevention and protection programs.

The Washtenaw County Health Department has achieved national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board and maintains state accreditation through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Visit us at [washtenaw.org/health](http://washtenaw.org/health) or call 734-544-6700.

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