

Alaska Cabaret, Hotel,
Restaurant and Retailers Association



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Re: URGENT: Statewide Mandates and COVID-19 Updates

Dear Alaska hospitality business owners, managers, and employees:

It is with an unbelievably heavy heart that I write this letter.

You have undoubtedly heard by now that during his press conference tonight, Gov. Dunleavy announced a forthcoming administrative order that will prohibit on-premises dining or drinking in establishments statewide. Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Anne Zink, stated at the conference that, **“Effective March 18 at 5:00pm, all bars, breweries, restaurants, food, beverage kiosks, trucks, and other establishments serving food within the State of Alaska should be closed to dine-in services... Carry-out, drive-thru, and delivery services are still permitted but should be conducted in an environment where patrons and staff maintain social distancing, and practice good hand hygiene whenever possible.”**

We do not have a notice of timeframe for this and have heard that it could last 8 weeks, according to the most recent CDC recommendations (which also call for a halt of public gatherings of 50+ people). This is a mandatory order. Grocery stores, convenience stores, pharmacies, and similar establishments will remain open, as well as restaurants inside secure airport zones.

The Alaska CHARR team has been working around the clock to mitigate impacts of COVID-19 to the hospitality industry, including earlier urgent requests to Gov. Dunleavy’s office and the Alaska Legislature to keep establishments open, and to take all steps necessary to help procure disaster relief for affected businesses and their employees. Our top priority continues to be to help the hospitality industry through this “hibernation” in any way possible. Current efforts are focused on working with local, state, and federal leaders and lawmakers to ensure that our industry members and employees receive swift, effective assistance. I will also be meeting with a legal team to learn more about what we can do to help you, and what you can do to protect businesses and employees during this crisis.

What You Can Do Now

- Bookmark the page on our website that is dedicated to COVID-19 (www.alaskacharr.com/coronavirus-and-hospitality.html). You will find resources, helpful links, and updates. We will be emailing updates less frequently than what is posted to the website and social media, so be sure to check the website frequently.
- Follow Alaska CHARR on Facebook – we are posting frequent updates to the page, including calls to action, posts to be shared, and ways in which the public can help support our industry. Use the tag [#saveAKhospitality](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/saveakhospitality) when posting on social media about your business, hardships, etc.

- Email us your questions, concerns, fears, and ideas at info@alaskacharr.com. We will answer as many as we can, and we will bring others to the legal team to help us answer.
- Document as much as possible – keep track of any and every loss that you incur, and document all ways in which the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted you. You might need this documentation in the future for things like financial relief.
- Contact your politicians at every level, but especially your state legislators and congressional delegates. Tell them how you have been affected up until the administrative order, and how you expect the closures to impact you.
- For restaurants, modify your business (if necessary) to provide curbside delivery or regular delivery. Use front-of-house staff to deliver food in order to keep them employed. Bars should promote sales of gift cards and drink chips/tokens (we are exploring more options). Breweries, wineries/cideries, and distilleries should promote growlers, bottles, and cans. Post your menus and hours on social media. Sell gift cards!
- Practice social distancing, wash your hands, don't touch your face, and stay away from gatherings of 10 or more people.
- Keep an eye out for upcoming webinars and phone calls for the entire industry to participate in. We are planning to schedule some Q&A and informational sessions in the coming week or two.
- Be there for your team and our industry partners. We will all need each other during this trying time.

Again, please pay close attention to our website and/or social media as we move into the days and weeks ahead. We will need you to communicate immediately with your representatives. We are moving into very difficult and uncharted waters. Our industry, our people, and your livelihoods are all weighing very heavily on me today. None of this has ever been anticipated, nor have we ever experienced anything to this magnitude. I will continue to communicate as more information becomes available.

We are Alaskans, we are resilient, and we will get through this together.

At your service,



Sarah D. Oates
President & CEO
Alaska CHARR