



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Unified Government Issues New Order Related to Bar and Tavern Restrictions

New Order Allows Bars, Taverns and Restaurants to Serve Until Midnight and Remain Open until 12:30 a.m.

The Unified Government Department of Public Health (UGPHD) Medical Officer, Dr. Allen Greiner, issued a new Local Health Order (LHO 1/12/21) today allowing bars, restaurants and taverns in Wyandotte County to serve patrons until midnight and to stay open until 12:30am. The order takes effect at 12:01am on Wednesday, January 13th.

The new order incorporates input from local small business owners provided during a recent meeting hosted by Mayor David Alvey that included the UG Medical Officers and small business owners, as well as representatives from the KCK Chamber of Commerce, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau. Mayor Alvey played a key role in facilitating that meeting and gathering input from participants.

The new Order relaxes guidance from a Local Health Order originally issued on November 20, 2020 that required bars, restaurants and taverns to close at 10:00 p.m. That order was issued in response to a resurgence of COVID-19 cases in Wyandotte County.

“We had a very productive meeting late last week and I appreciate the time and valuable input we received from business owners, Chamber representatives and public health officials who participated,” said Mayor Alvey. “Our goal is to find ways to help Wyandotte County businesses operate and succeed during these challenging times, while doing our utmost to contain the spread of COVID-19 in our community.”

“Wyandotte County business owners have gone to great lengths to comply with and follow health protocols since the beginning of the pandemic – and I’m pleased they’ll be able to expand their service hours in a safe and controlled manner. As such, we are relying on bar and restaurant owners and managers to work diligently to enforce measures that will mitigate the potential spread of COVID-19 in their establishments,” offered Alvey. “To the extent employees and patrons continue to mask up, maintain social distancing, disinfect, and limit gatherings, the relaxation of these orders can be accommodated – encouraging business activity and protecting public health. Each of us must strive to neither get, nor give the Coronavirus.”

After the UGPHD issued the original Order on November 20th regarding service hours, Jackson County and Kansas City, MO enacted similar measures based on public health officials’ recommendation. However, not all jurisdictions in the region adopted identical restrictions, creating inconsistencies across some state and county lines. This new Order for Wyandotte County is more consistent with bar and restaurant protocols currently in place in most neighboring counties.

The new order goes into effect at 12:01 a.m. on Wednesday, January 13. Additional guidance from the order includes:

- Restaurants, bars and taverns must still restrict customer capacity to no more than 50 percent of building capacity
- Businesses must close their doors by 12:30 a.m. and remain closed until at least 6 a.m. each day. Restaurants can operate between 12:30 a.m. and 6 a.m. for drive through or delivery services only.
- Patrons must remain seated to the greatest extent possible, and all patrons must be masked except when actively eating or drinking.
- Parties of guests (whether indoors or outdoors) are limited to no more than eight people.
- Guest parties must be socially distanced at least six feet apart.

The UGPHD has consistently monitored health data to guide the community's response, evaluating if and when additional restrictions are required or if existing orders could be relaxed. For example, this occurred recently when it announced a modified Local Health Order for schools, allowing added flexibility in an effort to keep more students in the classroom. Based upon the data now available, public health officials saw a way to work with school leaders to restore some normal activities that had previously been restricted. Those reviews and evaluations have and will continue.

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