

Governor also orders restaurants, bars, theaters, museums to close

Monday, March 16: Following the Minnesota Department of Public Health's announcement today that the number of COVID-19 cases in Minnesota climbed past 50 with multiple cases of community transmission, Gov. Tim Walz signed Executive Order 20-04 to order the temporary closure of Minnesota restaurants and bars to dine-in customers. He also ordered the temporary closure of other places of public accommodation and amusement, including theaters, museums, fitness centers, and community clubs.

In an effort to support the many Minnesotans affected by these closures, the governor signed Executive Order 20-05 to strengthen Minnesota's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund and ensure that workers who are not able to work as a result of COVID-19 have benefits available. This order will waive the employer surcharge and allow the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development to pay unemployment benefits immediately, providing fast relief to employees who need it. "As the cases of COVID-19 in Minnesota continue to climb, we must take decisive action to curb the spread of this pandemic and protect the health and safety of Minnesotans," said Walz. "This is a challenging time for business owners, employees, children, and families alike. We must come together as One Minnesota to care for our neighbors and slow the spread of COVID-19."

"We understand the hardships these closings place on Minnesota's workforce, and that's why we're focused on supporting workers and businesses who may have to temporarily close their doors," said DEED commissioner Steve Grove. "We've strengthened the state's unemployment insurance program to expedite an increase in applicants looking for support, and we'll stand by employers who may need new resources in this evolving economic climate."

"Slowing the spread of COVID-19 is very important, and we continue to update our guidance as more information comes in," said health commissioner Jan Malcolm. "With Minnesota now having confirmed 54 cases of COVID-19 and three cases associated with community spread, we need to take these temporary actions to flatten the outbreak curve, so we can avoid stretching our health care system too much."

Businesses affected by this rule closing must close by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 17, until Friday, March 27, at 5 p.m. Delivery and curbside takeout services are permitted and should continue to observe the community mitigation strategies recommended by the Minnesota Department of Health.

The full list of businesses affected by this closing are:

i. Restaurants, food courts, cafes, coffeehouses, and other places of public accommodation offering food or beverage for on-premises consumption. This

excludes institutional and in-house food cafeterias for businesses, hospitals, and long-term care facilities;

ii. Bars, taverns, brew pubs, breweries, micro-breweries, distilleries, wineries, tasting rooms, clubs, and other public places that offer alcoholic beverages for on-premises consumption;

iii. Hookah bars, cigar bars, and vaping lounges offering their products for on-premises consumption;

iv. Theaters, museums, and other performance venues;

v. Gymnasiums, fitness centers, recreation centers, indoor sports facilities, exercise facilities, exercise studios, and spas;

vi. Amusement parks, arcades, bingo halls, bowling alleys, indoor climbing facilities, skating rinks, trampoline parks, and other similar recreational or entertainment facilities;

vii. Facilities of country clubs, golf clubs, boating or yacht clubs, sports or athletic clubs, and dining clubs.