



News Release

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County Executive Extends Dining Hours for Restaurants

Alcohol Sales Must End by 10 p.m.

FREDERICK, Md. – After conferring with public health officials and others, and in an effort to protect public health while balancing the economic impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, Frederick County Executive Jan Gardner today issued [Executive Order 02-2021](#) to allow restaurants and other food service establishments in the County to extend their hours for food service to midnight. The current 10 p.m. closure time results in restaurants ending meal service at 8:30 or 9 p.m. The Executive Order permits alcoholic beverages to be sold until 10 p.m. and prohibits bringing alcohol onto the premises to be consumed after 10 p.m.

The order also requires live entertainment to end by 10 p.m., though most businesses are following existing health directives not to have live entertainment. The order takes effect at 5 p.m. on Friday, February 5, and remains in effect for two weeks until February 22. The order will be revisited in one week as health metrics continue to be monitored.

“Over the past two months, Frederick County has had some of the worse health metrics in the state,” Executive Gardner noted. “This new order allows restaurants to serve dinners later into the evening, while emphasizing the ongoing need to maintain public health precautions and prevent social gatherings and patrons congregating at bars. We know that social gatherings at any location are considered high risk for spread of the virus.”

Frederick County’s positivity rate, currently 6.4%, has remained above the state average since Dec. 5, 2020. The county’s rate of cases per 100,000 population also has exceeded the state average for months, at one point reaching a high of 78. Today’s seven-day moving average case rate in Frederick County is 27.69. The statewide average is 24.31. More deaths associated with COVID-19 were reported in January than in any other month since the beginning of the pandemic. While health metrics appear to be improving, it is not yet a trend and concern remains about the risk for spread of the virus in the community. There have been 15,845 confirmed cases of the coronavirus in Frederick County to date, and 243 deaths from the virus

“While many businesses and individuals in our community are faithfully and responsibly following the health directives that have been in place for many months, too many people have decided to do otherwise contributing to our worse than average health metrics,” Executive Gardner said. “If businesses and individuals want our economy to recover, we must win the fight against the virus by everyone doing their part. It is a matter of personal responsibility. Unfortunately, the actions of a few can harm the efforts of the majority.”

Everyone is urged to do their part by wearing masks, washing their hands, and watching their physical distance. Vaccination clinics continue to serve health care workers, first responders, and people 75 years of age and older. Anyone who is interested in receiving a vaccine should pre-register by completing a Vaccine Information Form found at <http://FrederickCountyMD.gov/CovidVaccine>.

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