



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

MICHAEL D. MALLINOFF
*Director, Department of Permits,
Approvals and Inspections*

May 25, 2020

Dear Restaurateur;

I hope this letter finds you and your family safe and healthy. These are truly difficult times and we are well aware of the challenges you are facing in maintaining your business in the face of closures due to Covid-19. Baltimore County's many unique restaurants and bars are part of what makes our County great, and we sincerely hope as many businesses as possible are able to keep their doors open into the future.

We have heard from many restaurants that they would like to begin serving customers outdoors as soon as possible. As you are aware, under Governor Hogan's statewide executive order, restaurants and bars are still only permitted to be open for carry-out and delivery purposes. As a reminder, while county governments are permitted to be more restrictive than State standards, we cannot go beyond what is permissible at the State level.

However, in anticipation of this restriction being lifted soon, Baltimore County government is preparing to make outdoor dining as easy as possible in the near future. County departments are in the process of creating a simple application process for restaurants to request expansions of their premises to allow outdoor dining in areas not previously authorized, including both the use of private and public property.

The following information will help you be prepared to quickly submit an application to the County as soon as it is available. Many of the steps outlined below can be taken now in anticipation of future authorization of outdoor seating for restaurants.

First and foremost, social distancing and sanitary practices must be maintained when outdoor dining is permitted. Enclosed you will find helpful guidelines from the Restaurant Association of Maryland on steps restaurants can take to incorporate these public health practices into their business. The Baltimore County Health Department will also be available for further guidance or assistance in answering any questions you may have about how to reopen safely when the time comes.

In order to be as prepared as possible for when outdoor seating is authorized, we advise restaurants to begin taking the following steps.

Step One: Prepare a Sketch of Outdoor Table Service Area that includes:

- Number and location of tables spaced to accommodate 6 feet social distancing between each seated party
- Location of outdoor table service area within reasonable distance of the restaurant
- Description of how dining area will be cordoned off from general public (ropes, planters, cones, etc...)
- If indoor restroom facilities are to be used, points of access to restroom facilities

- If outdoor restroom facilities are to be used, number, location, and points of access to all portable facilities and hand washing stations
- If dining area is to include use of public sidewalks, a continuous 3' foot wide pedestrian pathway
- If dining area is to include use of parking lots,
 - Location of all ADA accessible parking
 - Depict traffic flow into, out of, and within the site
 - Depict means of ingress and egress for emergency vehicles

Step Two: Letter of Permission from Owners of Adjacent Properties Used for Outdoor Dining Service (if applicable)

Step Three: Apply for a Tent Permit (if desired)

Tents will not be required for outdoor table service, however a tent permit will still be required to use a tent. Applications for tent permits may be found [here](#) at:

<http://resources.baltimorecountymd.gov/Documents/Permits/BuildingPermit/buildingpermitapp.pdf>.

Please be advised that failure to abide by any State or local executive orders regarding public gatherings and other Covid-19 related restrictions will be grounds for the County to void prior approval for outdoor seating. All County laws that currently apply to your business remain in effect as well.

Again, the County does not currently know when outdoor seating will be allowed. Following these steps, however, will ensure that the County can quickly approve your application for outdoor seating once authorized.

Thank you again for remaining committed to Baltimore County through this period of crisis. We are here to work in partnership with you to safely begin reopening our beloved restaurants.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL D. MALLINOFF

Director, Department of Permits,
Approvals and Inspections

Encls: National Restaurant Association: COVID 19 Reopening Guidance

Baltimore County Restaurant and Bars: Guidance & Best Practices During the COVID-19 Crisis