



March 20, 2020

Dear Restaurant Owner,

Today, the world death count related to COVID-19 topped 10,000 people. Globally, confirmed cases are approaching a quarter million. This includes 22 cases and one death in Kansas. In media reports, you've seen entire countries and major U.S. cities paralyzed by this pandemic. Our Kansas public schools have been closed for the remainder of the school year, and Governor Kelly has issued stern guidelines for managing public gatherings and interaction.

The data changes, unfortunately, hour by hour. To say this is a time of uncertainty, is a huge understatement. And we've all heard, and maybe even feel, skepticism and the belief that shutting down public facilities and services is an over-reaction.

It is not. The reality is the spread of the virus across the United States is not slowing down. It is only a matter of time before we experience its impact in Independence. Let us repeat, it's not a matter of "if," it is a definite "when." We cannot afford to downplay this crisis.

At the City of Independence, we are dedicating much of our time and energy to ensuring OUR ENTIRE COMMUNITY is working together to:

- 1) First and foremost, MINIMIZE the impact to our citizens; and
- 2) Respond effectively to a local outbreak

WE MUST HAVE YOUR HELP, particularly with prevention. We cannot over emphasize the importance of **social distancing**. The best way – the only way - to effectively manage and eventually STOP THE SPREAD of illness is to physically distance ourselves from one another. This includes closing restaurant dining rooms.

For the safety of our community, we strongly encourage you to discontinue inside-restaurant dining services and focus your efforts entirely on alternative methods for food service, including curbside pick-up, drive-thru (if applicable) and delivery. Several local restaurants have already transitioned to offer only these services.

We certainly understand the devastating impact this situation will ultimately have on your small business. In cooperation with the Independence Chamber of Commerce, Montgomery County Action Council and Independence Main Street, we are working to identify and develop local resources to support you in communicating and transacting with customers. We also are here to support you in accessing any available state or federal relief once we come out on the other side of this. But for now, our focus has to be prevention and local response, and we can only be successful with a unified community effort. We appreciate your cooperation in considering how you can help.

Thank you. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns.

*Kelly Passauer*

Kelly Passauer,  
Interim City Manager  
City of Independence

  
David Cowan (Mar 20, 2020)

David Cowan, Director  
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City of Independence