



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

**ROY COOPER** • Governor  
**MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH** • Secretary  
**MARK T. BENTON** • Assistant Secretary for Public Health  
Division of Public Health

**MEMORANDUM**

March 18, 2020

**TO:** Local Health Directors and Registered Environmental Health Specialists  
**FROM:** Larry D. Michael, REHS, MPH  
State Environmental Health Director  
**SUBJECT:** Limiting Operations of Restaurants and Bars

In response to the COVID-19 global pandemic and the increasing number of cases in North Carolina, Governor Roy Cooper issued Executive Order No. 118 which limits the sale of food and beverages and NC DHHS Secretary Mandy Cohen issued an Order of Abatement of Imminent Hazard closing bars and seating areas of restaurants. The Executive Order may be accessed at the following link: <https://files.nc.gov/governor/documents/files/EO118.pdf>. The Order of Abatement is attached.

Restaurants are restricted to carry-out, drive-through, and delivery. For purposes of both Orders, a restaurant means all permitted food establishments under NCGS 130A-248, and other establishments that both prepare and serve food, as well as private or member-only clubs where food and beverages are permitted to be consumed on the premises. Bars are directed to close. For purposes of the Orders, bars are establishments that are not restaurants and that have a permit to sell alcoholic beverages for onsite consumption, under NCGS 18B-1001. These restrictions are in effect until March 31, 2020, or until either Order is rescinded or replaced.

**It is important to note that local health departments are not charged with enforcing the Orders.** The provisions of Executive Order No. 118 and the Order of Abatement will be enforced by local law enforcement officers.

As food establishments adjust processes and procedures to help curb potential exposure to COVID-19, in lieu of routine inspections, we recommend visiting affected establishments to assist them and ensure that new processes do not present an increased risk of foodborne illness. As provided by Section 18 of Executive Order No. 116, aid-to-county funding will be adjusted for response to COVID-19. Executive Order No. 116 may be accessed at: <https://files.nc.gov/governor/documents/files/EO116-SOE-COVID-19.pdf>

For questions or additional information, please contact Veronica Bryant, Emergency Response and Outbreak Coordinator, at [veronica.bryant@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:veronica.bryant@dhhs.nc.gov) or by phone at 919-218-6943, or you may contact me at [larry.michael@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:larry.michael@dhhs.nc.gov) or 919-707-5855.

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