



# NEWS RELEASE

## STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

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## Indoor Dining Reopens February 1; Caution and Focus on Enhanced Ventilation Recommended

*Concessions and personal services also allowed under new MDHHS epidemic order*

**LANSING, MICH.** Following last week's announcement about the plan to reopen indoor dining, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) [released its next epidemic order today](#), which continues the department's fact-based approach to reopening activities, and goes into effect on Monday, Feb. 1. The order will allow for indoor dining at restaurants with certain requirements; concessions at casinos, movie theaters and stadiums; personal services requiring mask removal; and non-residential gatherings of up to 10 people from two households. The new order will last three weeks, until Sunday, Feb. 21.

"The pause has worked. The efforts we have made together to protect our families, frontline workers and hospitals have dramatically reduced cases and we have saved lives. Now, we are confident that starting February 1, restaurants can resume indoor dining with safety measures in place," said Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. "Michigan continues to be a national leader in fighting this virus, and we must continue working to keep it that way. One of the most important things Michiganders can do is to make a plan to get the safe and effective vaccine when it's available to you. And as always, mask up and maintain six feet of social distancing. We will end this pandemic together."

"We are pleased to see the improvements in case rates, hospitalizations and percent positivity that have allowed us to reopen more activities," said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, chief medical executive and chief deputy for health at MDHHS. "However, we must remain vigilant, especially since we now have a new more easily transmitted variant of this virus present in our state. This is not the time to let our guard down and Michiganders should minimize their risk by avoiding gatherings, wearing masks properly, social distancing and making a plan to get their vaccine when it is their turn."

MDHHS had been closely monitoring [three metrics](#) for stabilization or declines over the past several weeks. Michigan continue to see improvements in these metrics which has allowed for additional relaxing of protocols and reopening of activities. In recent days:

- Hospital capacity dedicated to COVID-19 patients has been in seven-week decline, with current capacity at 9.9% for beds with COVID-19 patients. Peaked at 19.6% on Tuesday, Dec. 4.
- Overall case rates: Currently at 225 cases per million. Peaked at 740 cases per million on Saturday, Nov. 14, plateaued after a decline to 239 on Friday, Dec. 25 and has been in decline for 11 days.

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- Positivity rate: currently at 6.8% and declining.

Restaurants and bars will be allowed to reopen at 25% capacity with up to 100 people. Tables must be six feet apart with no more than six people per table. Outdoor tents with four sides are permitted under these same rules. Bars and restaurants must close by 10 p.m. Additionally, contact information must be collected from diners for contact tracing purposes.

“Today’s announcement is possible because of our progress over the last two months,” said Robert Gordon, MDHHS director. “Even so, the science is clear that unmasked, indoor activities like dining and drinking are still a source of high risk around COVID-19. The safest course remains to support your favorite restaurant with carryout, delivery or outdoor dining. If individuals choose to eat out, there are two things they can do to make it much safer: go out only with members of their own household and choose a restaurant participating in the MI COVID-19 Safer Dining certification program.”

The voluntary MI COVID-19 Safer Dining program allows food service establishments to become certified by having their ventilation system inspected and submitting their inspection report to the state indicating they are optimizing airflow. Once certified, businesses will be featured on the [Michigan.gov/covidsaferdining](https://Michigan.gov/covidsaferdining) website and receive a copy of their certification to post at their establishment to alert diners of their participation. Funding is proposed for food service establishments to participate as part of the \$10 million included in the recent supplemental budget request for restaurant supports administered by the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Two webinars will be hosted on Monday, Jan. 25 to provide additional information about the Safer Dining certification program – one at noon for HVAC contractors interested in conducting inspections and one at 3 p.m. for food service establishments interested in becoming certified. More information will be available at [Michigan.gov/covidsaferdining](https://Michigan.gov/covidsaferdining).

Indoor residential and non-residential gatherings are limited to 10 people and two households. MDHHS continues to urge families to avoid indoor gatherings or to pick a single other household to interact with consistent with [guidance already released by the department](#). Families are encouraged to stay home as much as possible to maintain momentum and to protect loved ones. Families are also encouraged to [Mask Up, Mask Right](#), using guidance for what masks to wear and how to wear them.

**COVID-19**  
**FEB. 1: GATHERING GUIDELINES**

**Open**

- Two-household gathering (high precautions)\*
- Public transit
- Funerals (25 people)
- Indoor group fitness classes
- Small outdoor gatherings (25 people)
- Hair salons, barber shops, other personal services
- Health care
- Retail
- Gyms, pools, roller and ice rinks
- Theaters, movie theaters, stadiums, arenas
- Preschool through 12th grade (local district choice)
- Restaurants and bars\*
- Bowling centers
- Childcare
- Professional sports\*\*
- Bingo halls, casinos, arcades
- Manufacturing, construction, other work that is impossible to do remotely, including technical education
- Parks and outdoor recreation
- Non-contact sports

**Not open**

- Workplaces, when work can be done from home
- Night clubs
- Contact sports, except professional sports
- Water parks

\* See DHHS guidance for safety practices.  
\*\* Includes a limited number of NCAA sports.

For more information about the order, visit [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://Michigan.gov/Coronavirus).  
Questions or concerns can be emailed to [COVID19@michigan.gov](mailto:COVID19@michigan.gov).

**MDHHS**  
Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

The epidemic order continues to temporarily pause indoor contact sports and other venues and activities where participants have close physical contacts and are not consistently masked, like water parks. However, as of Jan. 22, stadiums can allow up to 500 people at venues that seat over 10,000 people and stadiums that seat less than 10,000 are allowed to be at 20% capacity, up to 250 people. This will allow for additional attendance at high school football finals being hosted this weekend.

As before, employees who work in jobs that cannot be performed from home can continue to go to work, while employees who can work from home should continue to do so.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/Coronavirus) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/Coronavirus). To learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine, visit [Michigan.gov/COVIDVaccine](https://www.michigan.gov/COVIDVaccine).

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[Feb. 1 Gatherings Order Infographic](#)  
[Indoor Dining Guidelines Infographic](#)  
[Dining during COVID-19](#)  
[Social Activities Guidance](#)  
[Safe Social Pods Guidance](#)  
[Key Metrics Infographic](#)