EMERGENCY ALERTS

Coronavirus Update

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PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Awards Another $37 Million in Grants to 638 Businesses, Extends Capacity Limits and Lifts Early Closing Requirement for Businesses

25% Capacity Limits for Most Sectors Extended for Two Weeks, Early Closing Order & Stay At Home Advisory Rescinded

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

1/21/2021

Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

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BOSTON — Today, the Baker-Polito Administration announced $37.4 million in awards to 638 additional small businesses in a fourth round of grants through the COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program administered by the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation. Restaurants, bars and retail stores, which have been especially impacted during the pandemic, are among the key industries to lead this round.

The Administration announced an extension of the existing, across the board 25% capacity limits for most businesses and current limitations on gatherings through 5:00 AM on Monday, February 8. The Administration also announced that effective Monday, January 25 at 5:00 AM, it would rescind an existing Early Closing order requiring many businesses to close at 9:30 PM each evening, and that at the same time it would also withdraw its related Stay At Home advisory urging residents to remain at home between the hours of 10:00 PM to 5:00 AM.

All other orders and safety guidance remain in place throughout the Commonwealth as the state continues to fight COVID-19 and vaccines ramp up in all regions.

COVID-19 SMALL BUSINESS GRANT PROGRAM

To date, the Baker-Polito Administration has awarded more than $232 million in direct financial support to 4,757 small businesses. This funding has been made available through a $668 million business **relief fund** (/news/baker-polito-administration-announces-668-million-small-business-relief-package) set up in December, as well as $50.8 million for small and diverse businesses included in the **economic recovery package** (/news/baker-polito-administration-announces-partnerships-for-recovery-774-million-economic-recovery) announced in October.

Additional grants will be announced in the coming weeks for thousands of additional businesses.

This past Monday, the Sector-Specific Small Business Relief Grant Program, a new program also administered by MGCC that targets industries experiencing the most significant economic hardship and a loss of revenue, closed for new applications. MGCC will continue to review applications to both programs in the coming weeks, and applicants will be able to review the status of their application through the Submittable portal. Award notifications for the sector-specific program will be made in February.

STAY AT HOME ADVISORY:

The DPH Stay at Home Advisory for the hours of 10:00 PM – 5:00 AM will be rescinded effective Monday, January 25 at 5:00 AM.

MANDATORY EARLY CLOSING ORDER:

The Mandatory Early Closing Order, which since early November has required certain businesses to close by 9:30 PM each night, will be rescinded effective Monday, January 25 at 5:00 AM.

Effective with the January 25 rescinding of the Order, the following businesses listed below may operate past 9:30 PM:

- Restaurants
- Arcades & Other Indoor & Outdoor Recreation (*Phase 3, Step 1 only)*
- Indoor and Outdoor Events
- Movie Theaters
- Outdoor Theaters
- Drive-In Movie Theaters
- Youth and Adult Amateur Sports Activities
- Golf Facilities
- Recreational Boating and Boating Businesses (e.g. charter boats)
- Outdoor Recreational Experiences (includes haunted houses)
- Casinos and Horse Tracks/Simulcast Facilities
- Driving and Flight Schools
- Zoos, Botanical Gardens, Wildlife Reserves, Nature Centers
- Close Contact Personal Services (e.g. hair and nail salons)
- Museums/Cultural & Historical Facilities/Guided Tours
- Gyms/Fitness Centers and Health Clubs
- Indoor and Outdoor Pools

Effective with the rescinding of the Early Closing Order, liquor stores and other retail establishments that sell alcohol will be permitted to sell alcohol past 9:30 PM; and adult use cannabis retailers will also be permitted to sell cannabis after 9:30 PM.

Gatherings and events will also be permitted to continue past 9:30 PM. All gatherings and events will remain subject to current capacity limits of 10 people indoors and 25 people outdoors.

Phase 3, Step 2 businesses must remain fully closed.

SECTOR-SPECIFIC CAPACITY RESTRICTIONS & GATHERING LIMITS

Capacity Limits: Under the current restrictions that are being extended today, most customer-facing businesses operating in Massachusetts remain subject to a 25% capacity limit.

For a list of sectors subject to the extended capacity restrictions, click **here.** (/info-details/temporary-capacity-and-gathering-limits)

Gatherings Limit: The current gathering limits in place since December 26 are also being extended to Monday, February 8. Indoor gatherings and events will remain limited to 10 people. Outdoor gatherings and events will remain limited to 25 people outside. The gatherings limit applies to private homes, event venues and public spaces.

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