

**OFFICE OF THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY EXECUTIVE
ANGELA D. ALSOBROOKS**

For Immediate Release:

November 12, 2020

For More Information:

Gina Ford
Communications Director
Office of the County Executive
Prince George's County
w. 301.952.4670
c. 202.744.3308
erford@co.pg.md.us

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY IMPLEMENTS UPDATED PHASE 2
GUIDELINES IN RESPONSE TO INCREASE OF COVID-19 CASES**

LARGO, MD – Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks announced today that the County will implement updated phase 2 guidelines for businesses and large gatherings in response to recent increases in key COVID-19 metrics. This decision was made under the advice of County health officials after analyzing COVID-19 data and trends over the past few weeks.

“Similar to other jurisdictions across our State, we have seen concerning increases in the number of new COVID-19 cases in our community, which requires us to take actions that will limit the spread of this virus and save lives,” said Alsobrooks. “I know that we are all growing weary, but we must continue to take all necessary safety precautions like wearing a mask, exercising restraint and avoiding crowds to protect ourselves and others from this virus.”

Starting Sunday, November 15 at 5:00 PM, all indoor public businesses or establishments that are already open under the County's phase 2 of reopening, with the exception of essential businesses and retail stores, must reduce capacity limits to a maximum of 25% capacity. Restaurants will be limited to 25% capacity indoors and 50% capacity outdoors. Essential businesses (grocery stores, specialty food stores, big box stores) and retail stores may operate at 50% capacity but with all safety protocols adhered to.

In addition, large gatherings indoors are limited to one person/family unit per 200 square feet or a maximum of 10 persons, whichever is lower. Outdoor gatherings are limited to one person/family unit per 200 square feet or a maximum of 25 persons, whichever is lower, unless otherwise specified in the Health Order. Finally, face coverings are now required outdoors in any public location in Prince George's County. Face coverings are still required for all indoor public locations and on public transportation.

These new guidelines were developed based on data from contact tracing and in response to continued increases in key COVID-19 metrics. The County's positivity rate is now above the 5%

threshold, sitting at 6.4% for last week. The County's infection rate is sitting at 1.15 as of November 3, which places the County in the "high risk" category.

In addition, last week the County saw the highest number of new cases in one week since the end of May, with 1,309 new COVID-19 cases for the week of November 1. The County's average daily case rate for last week was 20.6 new cases per day per 100,000 residents, which places the County in the "high risk" category. The average daily case rate for the County has almost doubled since the first week of October.

Data that County health officials have obtained from contact tracing show that some of the highest risk activities for the spread of COVID-19 transmission include family gatherings, indoor dining, gyms and bowling alleys. The updated guidelines are a targeted response to this data to help limit the spread of COVID-19 in Prince George's County.

The County Executive also announced details of the \$6 million Restaurant Resiliency Fund. This program will provide grants up to \$25,000 to County-based restaurants and food service establishments. These grants can be used for COVID-related expenses such as purchasing PPE, winterization for outdoor seating, interior improvements for social distancing, and more. Applications will be accepted between November 13, 2020 and December 18, 2020, and will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis. Restaurants can apply at pgcedc.com/restaurantfund.

In addition, the County Executive announced that Employ Prince George's is launching the COVID-19 Rapid Re-Employment Grant program. Businesses that hire Prince George's County residents before December 15 will qualify for grants up to \$15,000 per new employee hired. Grants will supplement 50% to 90% of an employee's salary during an agreed upon period. Businesses are eligible for up to \$50,000 in grants for this program. Businesses can apply for this program [here](#).

Finally, Employ Prince George's is expanding the COVID-19 Hourly Employee Relief Fund. Since July, Employ Prince George's has raised over \$700,000 and distributed over \$380,000 to residents who have lost their jobs in the form of \$200 visa gift cards. Employ Prince George's is now allowing previous applicants to reapply if they remain unemployed and is increasing the visa gift card amount to \$300. Residents can apply at employPGedge.com.

For the latest COVID-19 updates from Prince George's County, including previously released guidance from the County Health Department for the upcoming holiday season, visit health.mypgc.us/coronavirus.

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