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**Bars and similar establishments that serve food can remain open in Ventura County**  
***Public Health issues guidance for all dine-in: 10 pm closures and 1.5-hour dining limits***

Ventura, CA – The County of Ventura Public Health Department announced today that brewpubs, breweries, bars, pubs, wineries and distilleries that serve food can remain open in compliance with the State’s guidance released this weekend. The bars that would have been subject to the State recommended closures were never reopened in Ventura County due to concerns about social distancing implementation. Establishments and customers must continue to be vigilant in following all safety protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

“Community spread of infection is of increasing concern across the State and in Ventura County. It is imperative that community members only gather with members of their household remain socially distanced and wear masks in public spaces,” said Public Health Director Rigo Vargas.

The department has issued new guidelines effective 7/1/20 to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. When dining at restaurants, brewpubs, breweries, bars, pubs, wineries and distilleries:

- Dine-in must close by 10 pm.
- Dining time must be limited to one hour and a half.
- Live music is not permitted.
- Customers may only sit with members of their household.

“Please use extreme caution as COVID-19 is still prevalent in our County. You are much more likely to run into someone who has no symptoms but is positive if you gather with others. It’s important that we collectively work together to stop the spread so that lives can be saved, and businesses can remain open,” said Public Health Officer Doctor Robert Levin.

As part of the State’s efforts to address COVID-19, Governor Newsom ordered seven counties throughout California to close bars and recommended that eight counties, including Ventura County, also close. The Governor cited the social nature of bars, the potential for alcohol consumption to reduce inhibition and impair judgment and the challenges of contact tracing among bar-goers, among the reasons for the action. The State issued [guidance](#) allows for bars and similar establishments to remain open if they offer sit-down, dine-in meals. The County of Ventura has only allowed reopening of these sectors with food service therefore the County is in line with the recommended State guidance.

Existing guidelines must continue to be followed:

- Dine-in restaurants, brewpubs, breweries, bars, wineries, distilleries and pubs that provide sit-down meals must follow the [state guidance](#) and should continue to encourage takeout and delivery service whenever possible.
- Brewpubs, breweries, bars, wineries, distilleries and pubs that do not provide sit-down meals themselves, but can contract with another vendor to do so, can serve dine-in meals provided both businesses follow state guidance and alcohol is only sold in the same transaction as a meal.

- Venues that are currently authorized to provide off sale beer, wine, and spirits to be consumed off premises and do not offer sit-down, dine-in meals should follow the [guidance for retail operations](#).
- Producers of beer, wine, and spirits should follow the [guidance for manufacturing operations](#).
- This guidance is not intended for concert, performance, or entertainment venues. Those types of establishments should remain closed until they are allowed to resume modified or full operation through a specific reopening order or guidance. Establishments that serve full meals must discontinue this type of entertainment until these types of activities are allowed to resume modified or full operation.

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