



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 22, 2020

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**Gov. Bill Lee Signs Executive Order Mandating Alternative
Business Models for Restaurants and Gyms, Lifts Alcohol Regulations**
Orders extra protections for vulnerable populations

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Today, Tennessee Governor Bill Lee signed Executive Order 17 calling for businesses across the state to utilize alternative business models beginning at midnight CDT on Monday, March 23, 2020 until midnight CDT April 6, 2020. The order also outlines ways businesses and citizens should work to protect vulnerable populations.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has created both an economic and a health crisis and our response must continue to address both aspects,” said Gov. Lee. “Our goal is to keep the public, especially vulnerable populations, safe while doing everything possible to keep Tennesseans in a financially stable position.”

Executive Order 17 prohibits social gatherings of 10 or more people and also enacts the following provisions regarding restaurants, bars, and similar food and drink establishments:

- Establishments are to exclusively offer drive-thru, take-out or delivery options to support families, businesses and the food supply chain during this emergency.
- Establishments may sell alcohol by take-out or delivery (with the purchase of food) in closed containers to those who are age 21 and up.

Gyms and fitness/exercise centers or substantially similar facilities are to temporarily close and suspend in-person services until April 6, 2020. In the interim, these businesses are encouraged to pursue digital programming if possible.

The order also pursues additional measures to keep vulnerable populations such as the elderly and those with underlying conditions safe.

- Visitation to nursing homes, retirement homes, and long-term care or assisted-living facilities is now limited to visits involving essential care only.

- Businesses are encouraged to enact policies that take extra steps to assist vulnerable populations by considering measures such as shopping hours exclusive from the general public.

“I urge every Tennessean to take these actions seriously - our physical and economic health depend on this as we work to beat COVID-19,” said Lee.

More information regarding COVID-19, health resources and support for small business is available [HERE](#).