

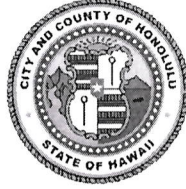
**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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May 8, 2020

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on COVID-19
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Dela Cruz:

Thank you for your letter dated May 6, 2020. I understand and appreciate your concerns regarding the reopening of the restaurants located in the City and County of Honolulu. I will provide a brief summary of our initial plans below, for your reference. However, I would like you to keep in mind that our work on this delicate issue is still evolving and changing as we conduct more research, speak with various stakeholders, and consult with public safety officials.

The base of our tentative plan is the result of research and suggested best market practices provided by the National Restaurant Association and local businesses. In order to create a balance between helping suffering businesses and maintaining a safe space for residents, this plan has an emphasis on four main concepts:

- Food Safety;
- Cleaning and Sanitizing;
- Employee Health Monitoring; and
- Social Distancing

Restaurants are generally thought to be experts on food safety, and in fact, the Food and Drug Administration ("FDA") requires it. In this unprecedented time, this is more important than ever. As such, our plan involves ensuring that each establishment that is to reopen be current on all FDA certifications and other requirements for food distribution. In addition, the policy will reflect extra precautions to protect employees and the public. This will include the removal of shared items like table salt, shoyu, and

ketchup and the replacement of uncovered straws, napkins, and utensils with sealed, single-use options.

Cleaning and sanitizing requirements will also be increased. Restaurants will be required to thoroughly clean and sanitize the entire facility and give, more frequent, extra attention to high-contact areas. This would require the cleaning of tables, chairs, and menus between each seating, more frequently cleaned restrooms, and having hand sanitizer available to guests.

The health of employees must also be taken into consideration. Employees who are showing symptoms of any illness will not be allowed to work. Employees will also be required to wear a mask at all times and maintain social distancing both in public areas and private areas such as a break room.

One of the most important parts of reopening will involve meeting social distancing standards. As each venue is unique, we have not decided on strict numbers and requirements at this time, but this will include updating floor plans for common areas, ensuring that there is at least six feet of space between people as well as limiting the number of people allowed in each establishment at any given time.

Furthermore, the exact details of this plan involve many moving parts. These include working to ensure that non-COVID related safety concerns are not created by its implementation. For example, the addition of walls and other forms of dividers could create issues with the fire code. If the walls create an extra barrier during a fire, it could cause longer routes to exits and the blocking of existing preventative measures like sprinkler systems. These are some of the concerns that have proven difficult to solve and have made the timeline for reopening uncertain.

That being said, we do not have a specific date set for reopening yet. As I mentioned, this is a constantly evolving effort. Once a plan is decided on, rest assured, our main priority will be to inform the restaurants. This will be very important in order to give restaurants the time needed to implement the new policies prior to the date they can reopen to the public.

With the thousands of restaurants on Oahu, any plan will be difficult to enforce with constant inspections. Fortunately, one of our most valuable resources are our residents. As such, a big part of enforcement will rely on members of the public reporting violations. My hope is that with the kokua of residents and responsible business owners, we can focus our resources in the areas that need the most attention. I believe that we are lucky to have residents and business owners that understand the difficulties COVID-19 has created, and when we work together, we will thrive.

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Again, I appreciate your questions and I will do my best to keep you apprised of new information as it develops. Please feel free to contact me with any suggestions or approaches, I assure you they will be taken into consideration as we work to move forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kirk Caldwell", with a long, wavy horizontal line extending to the right.

Kirk Caldwell
Mayor