



**Office of the Governor
JB Pritzker**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gov. Pritzker Announces Bars and Restaurants Will Close to Public by End of Monday

*Next Week, State Agencies to Temporarily Reduce Workforce
While Maintaining Core Functions and Essential Operations*

Chicago — As the state continues to take aggressive action to minimize the spread of COVID-19 in our communities, Governor JB Pritzker announced that all bars and restaurants in the state of Illinois will be closed to the public, beginning at close of business Monday, March 16th through Monday, March 30th.

“This is another hard step to take. I know how difficult this will be on small businesses around the state. But we must do everything we can to safeguard the health of the citizens of Illinois, and that requires this urgent action,” **said Governor JB Pritzker.** “The time for persuasion and public appeals is over — the time for action is here. This is not a joke. No one is immune to this, and you have an obligation to act in the best interests of all the people of this state.”

“This is a make or break moment. Clear and bold actions are needed immediately to stop the spread of COVID-19 and strengthen public health in Chicago and across the

state,” **said Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot.** “In the days and weeks ahead, we will continue to keep our residents and businesses apprised of developing information, ensuring they understand the measures we are taking and are following the latest guidance by public health officials. The City of Chicago is working to safeguard the health of our communities at every level of our operations. We are resilient, and we are all in this together.”

The state is working closely with restaurant owners and food delivery services to ensure kitchens can safely remain open to continue food delivery and put in place drive-thru and curbside pickup options for restaurants to continue to serve the public.

“Public safety is the No. 1 concern of the Illinois Restaurant Association,” **said Sam Toia, president of the Illinois Restaurant Association.** “First and foremost, we want to protect the health of our customers and team members. We remain vigilant in helping employers to navigate the immediate challenges that come with this rapidly changing situation. I want to thank Governor Pritzker and his team, and Mayor Lightfoot and her team, for leading us.”

ACTIONS TO PROTECT STATE WORKFORCE

Gov. Pritzker also announced that he has directed state agencies to implement plans for a temporary reduction of government functions and workforce while maintaining core functions and essential operations.

Select employees will continue to report to work; while the remaining workforce will either work remotely or be asked to remain home on call while receiving pay. All state employees will continue to be paid during this period.

Over the next several days, the Pritzker administration will finalize these plans and update state employees and the public. The Office of the Governor will remain fully operational throughout this period.

SOCIAL DISTANCING REMAINS CRUCIAL

Social distancing is the paramount strategy for minimizing the spread of COVID-19 in our communities, and the Governor is committed to using every tool at his disposal to protect public health.

Those experiencing symptoms should call a health care provider who will help arrange medical treatment without putting others at risk of exposure.

The Illinois Department of Public Health has a statewide COVID-19 hotline and website to answer any questions from the public or to report a suspected case: call 1-800-889-3931 or visit [IDPH.illinois.gov](https://www.idph.illinois.gov).