

Client Alert: Governor Baker Announces Restaurant Re-Opening Plan for Massachusetts

By Adam Barnosky on May 30, 2020



At a press conference on May 29, 2020, Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito announced a plan for re-opening restaurants throughout Massachusetts. Re-opening will commence during Phase 2, with a specific date expected to be announced the first week in June.

Below is a synopsis of the re-opening plan:

- The state issued guidance and standards for the restaurant industry in advance of Phase 2, focused on four categories:
 1. Social Distancing
 2. Hygiene Protocols
 3. Staffing and Operations
 4. Cleaning and Disinfecting
- Outdoor dining will begin at the start of Phase 2.
- Indoor dining will begin later in Phase 2, subject to public health data.
- Tables must be 6 feet apart.
- Maximum party size will be 6 people.
- Outdoor seating will be encouraged, even after indoor seating is authorized.
- All customers must be seated; eat-in service to standing customers (e.g., around bar areas) is prohibited
- All customer-facing workers (e.g., servers, bus staff) must minimize time spent within 6 feet of customers

The Lt. Governor is working with state representatives to streamline local zoning and permitting and MassDOT on “complete streets” program options for dining on sidewalks and public streets.

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In addition to the re-opening plan, a pending bill (S.2944) would authorize the ABCC to defer to local governments on outdoor seating expansions and alterations of premises applications.

Specific regulations for restaurant re-opening can be found here:
http://download.openthedoor.biz/public/Restaurants_Circular_Eng_FINAL.pdf

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