

**2020 Annual Report Of The  
Food Service Establishment Advisory Board**

January 22, 2021

Pursuant to Local Law 91 of 2013, which created the Food Service Establishment Advisory Board (the "Board"), the members of the Board hereby submit their sixth Annual Report to The Mayor of the City of New York, the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and the Speaker of the New York City Council.

The Board would like to thank the staff of DOHMH for their work in coordinating the meetings and their professionalism throughout.

This year was, of course, the year of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Obviously, it impacted every aspect of our lives, including what this Board could reasonably accomplish. Prominent in our discussions was how devastated the restaurant and bar industry is in New York City. No one knows how many neighborhood restaurants will close permanently or what reopening will even look like. When will tourists return? When will New Yorkers feel comfortable enough again to eat out in the numbers they did previously? When will the workers get their jobs back?

This Advisory Board was hampered in its ability to provide guidance to the hospitality industry because it was New York State that issued this guidance. NYC's role was limited to providing tools and other resources to support compliance with state requirements.

Nevertheless, DOHMH provided information on legislation (kids' meals and healthy eating signage), gave the Board the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft checklist for opening restaurants and had multiple discussions with the Board about COVID's impact on the agency and the industry.

DOHMH continued to provide important, up-to-date data to the Board members concerning inspection changes and restaurant compliance. We are pleased that warnings, instead of fines, were effectively utilized.

We were able to open discussions on many subjects, including ghost kitchens, restaurants offering groceries, meal delivery, vending machines with potentially hazardous foods and outdoor dining.

Although there is a problem of continued low attendance from Board Members, meetings should continue and are important and informative. New members should be appointed to fill vacancies.

Respectfully submitted,

*Members of the Food Service Establishment Advisory Board*