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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
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**CONTACT:** [pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov), (212) 788-2958

**OPEN RESTAURANTS: AS NEW YORK CITY PREPARES FOR PHASE 2 OF REOPENING, MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES OUTDOOR DINING GUIDANCE FOR RESTAURANTS**

*Qualifying restaurants can use sidewalk, roadways and other outdoor space to allow for social distance among customers; Mayoral Executive Order creates a new and streamlined application process to allow restaurants to expand capacity outdoors*

**NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced guidance for the City’s Open Restaurants program, which allows qualifying restaurants and bars to expand outdoor seating on sidewalks, curb lanes, backyards, patios, plazas, and Open Streets as New York City begins Phase 2 of reopening. The City has established an expedited approval processes by allowing restaurants and bars to self-certify their eligibility for curb lane and sidewalk seating using a new, streamlined application process at [NYC.Gov](https://www.nyc.gov), which will be available starting Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>. The mayor codified the guidance by signing Executive Order 126.

“Restaurants are the backbone of New York City’s neighborhood culture, and they’ve done their part in slowing the spread of COVID-19. It’s our City’s turn to help them reopen safely and responsibly,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “These commonsense guidelines will help local businesses get back on their feet – and let New Yorkers safely enjoy the meal they’ve earned.”

“New York has faced extraordinary times in 2020, and Open Restaurants is an extraordinary next step for us.” said **Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. “This summer, as we enter this next phase, we want New Yorkers to go out and enjoy their beloved restaurants -- but we want them to do so safely and responsibly. We will monitor this program closely to make sure we do not see any unintended consequences. As with our Open Streets program, we are hopeful that regular New Yorkers will also help make this new program work.”

“NYC is home to over 27,000 restaurants that are in need of support as we all work together to reopen. The Open Restaurant Program is an innovative response to the most pressing issues this community faces and provides opportunities for restaurant owners to generate much-needed revenue,” said **NYC Department of Small Business Services Commissioner Jonnel Doris**. “NYC means business and this program ensures that the vibrant restaurant community is well supported and equipped to come back even stronger than before.”

“New Yorkers and diners – we are all in this together and we need to do our best to keep each other healthy,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Oxiris Barbot**. “Please remember the core four to preventing COVID-19 whether you’re staff or a patron -- maintain distance, practice good hand hygiene, wear face coverings while not eating or drinking and stay home if sick.”

Open Restaurants gives dining establishments five new options. Beginning in Phase 2, restaurants can implement seating in curbside lanes and sidewalks. Phase 2 allows reopening and use of as of right outdoor space in backyard and patios. Restaurants can also work with their local Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to establish seating in plazas. Beginning in July, restaurants can offer seating on [Open Streets](#) on nights and weekends.

Sidewalk seating will be in effect until the end of October. Curbside lane seating will last through Labor Day. DOT will work with community groups and partner agencies to identify additional seating within full street closures in July. Restaurants can work with their local BID and DOT to request additional seating in plazas by emailing [Plazas@dot.nyc.gov](mailto:Plazas@dot.nyc.gov).

The Department of Small Business Services (SBS) will work to ensure that the most up-to-date guidance and materials needed by small business owners for a safe phased-in reopening are readily available. The information will be housed on a centralized resource page with guidance and best practices for the restaurant industry across all five boroughs. SBS will also launch a reopening supplies [marketplace](#) for easy access to wholesalers selling PPE, gloves, sneeze guards and other equipment. Business owners can call a hotline at 1-888-SBS-4NYC to ask questions about this process.

Rules for compliance include:

- Outdoor seating on sidewalks may not exceed the business’ frontage width.
- Seating cannot extend past the eight feet depth of the curbside lane, and it cannot block:
  - Bus stops
  - No Standing/No Stopping Anytime zones
  - Doorways
  - FDNY access (e.g. within 15 feet of a fire hydrant)
- There must be an eight-foot clear path free of obstructions between the seating and the curbside.
- Social distancing, hygiene and other health guidance must be followed.
- Restaurants must provide their own tables, chairs and traffic barriers.
- Restaurants must adhere to all local, state and federal requirements relating to accessibility for people with disabilities, including path of travel, minimum table heights, and clearance requirements.

Customers are not permitted to gather outside of establishments. Businesses that repeatedly fail to comply will have their Open Restaurant authorization revoked by DOT, and will be referred to the SLA.

Executive Order 126 directs the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) to establish and administer the program. The Order temporarily suspends select provisions of the

City's Administrative Code, Rules of the City of New York and the New York City Zoning Resolution, including: the prohibition of the consumption of alcohol on streets, specific sidewalk café regulations, and relevant building code provisions. All suspensions are only applicable to the program.

"Restaurants throughout our borough have taken a huge hit from COVID-19, which has been compounded by the difficulty of accessing financial lifelines like the Paycheck Protection Program. I am glad the Mayor is now heeding our call to allow restaurants to place seating outdoors in adjoining sidewalks and curbside parking areas. Giving restaurants a wide array of options for outdoor seating is a necessity to ensure these businesses stay afloat while we manage a safe re-opening process. But given the exigency of this situation and the continuing uncertainty around the duration of this pandemic, I believe we must go even further, extending the curbside pilot until October and loaning out DOT and NYPD barriers, rather than having businesses that are already in dire financial straits cover the costs of those barriers. This is a very positive step, and I look forward to working with business owners, advocacy organizations, and City Hall to build on this progress," said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams**.

"This is what I, and so many restaurateurs, have been pushing for, and I'm glad it's finally happening," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. "As with everything in this crisis, the devil is in the details and I look forward to working with business owners and the administration in implementing the guidelines."

"As New York City prepares to enter Phase 2 of opening, with qualifying restaurants and bars to expand outdoor seating on sidewalks, backyards, and other open-space areas, we need to make sure that we do it safely," said **State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.** "Our local small businesses and restaurants are the core of our communities, and we need to properly resume employment for local workers."

"Let's welcome reopening restaurants by patronizing them. But let's also be sure to observe strict social distancing at all times. We all want to enjoy meals out, but must be vigilant to maintain our health and safety as a top priority. Please follow the city's rules whenever you leave your home," said **Assistant Speaker Assembly Member Felix W. Ortiz**.

"Our restaurants are a critical source of jobs and revenue and an important component of our neighborhoods' social and cultural fabric," said **Assembly Member Steven Cymbrowitz**. "Helping this industry to reopen safely and responsibly is an important step both for our economic recovery and as a path to resuming the daily rhythm of our communities."

"Restaurants are a vital part of our economy, both in my home district in Jackson Heights and Corona and citywide. I am hopeful that these new guidelines being issued by the Mayor's Office will allow more restaurants to take advantage of sidewalks, open spaces, and other outdoor areas to open and rehire more staff. Most importantly, we must conduct these re-openings responsibly and safely so that we may avoid a second COVID-19 spike," said **Assembly Member Michael DenDekker**.

"Whether you eat out or order in, restaurants are the backbone of our neighborhood economies. New Yorkers should continue to be safe, take proper precautions, and support local businesses. And if you do go out, be sure to tip your servers!", said **Assembly Member Mathilde Frontus**.

"Opening our sidewalks and streets to outdoor dining is a critical milestone in the ongoing war on COVID-19. I am thrilled that our restaurants and diners will be bringing staff back to work to begin the process of rebuilding businesses. Most importantly, we can all celebrate -- safely-- these first steps toward normalcy and enjoy the glorious outdoors with a drink or meal," said **Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright**.

"Local businesses represent the diversity and creativity of our neighborhoods. They are part of our community, contribute to its spirit and have in these recent times, demonstrated their dedication by providing food and services to those that would have otherwise gone without. The Open Restaurant Program is how we give back in supporting and easing the burden of reopening, so that our local businesses and friends may continue to serve our city," said **Assembly Member David I. Weprin**.

"Our bars and restaurants have been hurting from the devastating impact of COVID-19. These businesses are the lifeblood of our neighborhoods. As the city reopens, it is essential that we provide safe guidelines and a framework for these establishments to serve New Yorkers and work toward recovery," said **Council Member Keith Powers**.

"This will give city restaurants a fighting chance to survive under the new reality of this global pandemic while giving New Yorkers a safe and responsible option to dine, reconnect with others and support the neighborhood eateries that they love," said **Council Member Mark Gjonaj, Chair of the Committee on Small Business**.

"As thousands of our New York City restaurants prepare to reopen their doors and serve their communities after several difficult months due to COVID-19, the City must do its part to ensure that owners and staff are given every opportunity to rebuild and recover safely," said **Council Member Paul Vallone, Chair of the Committee on Economic Development**. "The Open Restaurants initiative will give restaurant owners the power to expand and offer food service in the open air, keeping diners safe and offering New Yorkers a way to enjoy a meal while supporting their local small business, whose success will be a critical part of a strong economic recovery."

"The devastation to New York City's restaurant industry from the pandemic has been shocking," said **Council Member Adrienne Adams**. "Reopening restaurants and bars is not as simple as unlocking the door and I applaud the Open Restaurant Program which will help restaurants to start that process while adhering to safety guidelines. This is a great way for our businesses that are struggling financially to keep the lights on and provide employment opportunities for struggling New Yorkers."

"I am thrilled that the Mayor has heeded the call from restaurant owners across the city to provide safe options for outdoor dining. The COVID-19 crisis left our city's restaurants withering on the vine -- relief is desperately needed to make sure they can survive the coming months. Open Restaurants will allow for restaurants to open weeks ahead of schedule, providing much-needed revenue for restaurants, and giving New Yorkers the opportunity to get back to supporting the local businesses they love in a safe and sanitary manner," said **Council Member Justin Brannan**.

“Open Restaurants takes advantage of our outdoor spaces to give restaurants an opportunity to reopen safely. A focus on a straightforward, streamlined application system will permit restaurants to reopen without the red tape. Bed-Stuy and Crown Heights restaurants, and restaurants throughout the city, will benefit greatly from this much-needed executive order,” said **Council Member Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.**

"By minimizing red tape, this program will help NYC restaurants operate safely and efficiently during phase 2 of reopening," said **Council Member Daniel Dromm**. "NYC's dining scene was hit especially hard by COVID-19. We need Open Restaurants to help revitalize these small businesses that make our city such a unique and vibrant place in which to live. I look forward to working alongside the administration to ensure the safe and expeditious implementation of this important program."

"Cautious step by cautious step, New York City restaurants will come back and thrive again," said **Council Member Ben Kallos**. "The City allowing for restaurant seating on sidewalks, patios, plazas, and open streets is a smart move that will help our small businesses recover faster and push our local economy in the right direction. While ultimately the responsibility is on individuals to socially distance, get tested, wear masks, and wash our hands often, this plan will give mom and pop shops a fighting chance to come back. Thank you to Mayor de Blasio and Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg for listening to suggestions and making this plan a reality in the coming days."

"Outdoor dining will be a lifeline for local restaurants, which have been devastated by months of shutdown and uncertainty. As we begin down the path towards recovery, the Open Restaurants program will also help breathe life back into our neighborhoods. We will all have to continue doing our part to wear masks and keep a healthy distance, but having a meal outside will be a safe pick-me-up, for families and for our local economy," said **Council Member Brad Lander**.

"New York City is nothing without its robust restaurant scene. From fine dining establishments to neighborhood mainstays to spots that expose us to new cultural experiences, almost all owners agree: without safe seating options, they cannot begin to recuperate from the devastation COVID-19 has wrought on their businesses," said **Council Member Carlina Rivera**. "I look forward to City Hall implementing an outdoor dining program that reactivates our storefronts safely while adhering to smart access and zoning parameters that will benefit and respect these establishments and the communities around them."

“This pandemic has been extremely hard on many of the small businesses that serve Black, Latino, and Asian communities. Many restaurants in Northern Manhattan and in underserved communities were not afforded the same kind of support and financial assistance other restaurants in wealthier neighborhoods received,” said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez**. “I am happy to hear that restaurants will be able to slowly start opening their doors and their outside area for New Yorkers to enjoy. As the City begins Phase 2 we need to make sure that we are taking all proper precautions to keep all New Yorkers safe. I am hoping to work with this administration to continue giving priority to the hardest hit zip codes, which saw the highest number of deaths and economic devastation.”

"Using public open space to help our struggling restaurants is a huge win. I'm proud the Council has been pushing for these efforts to save our small businesses. We need to reimagine how our public space is used going forward, including how curbside parking, our public space, is used. I'm incredibly pleased to see a simple straightforward application for our restaurants to succeed going forward," said **Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer**.

"New York City's hospitality industry needed some good news, and the outdoor dining plan unveiled today will help thousands of restaurants and bars begin to reassemble their businesses and recuperate from the financial devastation this pandemic has caused. We applaud Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Johnson, Councilmembers and other supporters who led this initiative, and we look forward to the culinary capital of the world welcoming workers and customers back safely and generating revenues again so our city can recover," said **Andrew Rigie, Executive Director and Robert Bookman, General & Legislative Counsel, NYC Hospitality Alliance**.

"Following a months-long shutdown, New Yorkers are keen to get back outside and find a new routine in the era of COVID," said **Liam Blank, Policy & Communications Manager for Tri-State Transportation Campaign**. "The Mayor's outdoor dining plan is a lifeline for many businesses and a safer way for New Yorkers to spend time and money in their community. In the long term, this is an opportunity to rethink and expand healthy public spaces."

"We commend the Mayor for authorizing DOT to implement the Open Restaurants initiative. Reallocating public space for outdoor dining shows respect for working class New Yorkers, who are the backbone of a resilient economy. Restaurant staffers suffered life and livelihood as victims of COVID 19 and street, plaza, curbside and sidewalk seating will provide essential options to residents in a very fair way. The existing Open Streets program has been a success during an immensely stressful time for families. Extending this to business districts is an obvious next step towards our recovery," said **Cristina Furlong, Co-Founder, Make Queens Safer**.

"Our streets are a pathway to New York City's recovery from this pandemic, so we're pleased to see that restaurants will be able to reclaim space once occupied by cars," said **Transportation Alternatives Executive Director Danny Harris**. "We commend the Department of Transportation for moving forward with this program, and we expect it to be implemented quickly and equitably across the five boroughs."

"Today is an exciting day! We want to thank Mayor de Blasio for giving us an opportunity to reimagine outdoor seating in NYC. This will give restaurants a fighting chance at survival after covid-19 shutdowns and continued social distancing requirements. Our members are committed to expanding outdoor seating in a responsible way that creates an enjoyable experience for both customers and the community. We have a lot of work ahead of us and we'll need to ramp up quickly but we welcome the challenge with open arms," said **Jeffrey Garcia, President of NYS Latino Restaurant, Bar & Lounge Association**.

"The Open Restaurants plan to permit the use of sidewalks and parking spaces for outdoor dining puts NYC on par with cities worldwide who are leveraging public space to aid the survival of businesses," said **Regina Myer, president of Downtown Brooklyn Partnership**. "This is a

timely step forward in providing the infrastructure necessary for the City's economic recovery, and for the preservation of its unique culture. We look forward to working with our restaurants on implementation, on further reorienting streets to prioritize people over cars, and with the City on expanding this program to similarly support our retail businesses."

"Providing more outdoor seating options encourages New Yorkers to get fresh air while maintaining social distancing and supporting local businesses. This type of redistribution of our streetscape will help slash emissions from cars and improve air quality. We thank Mayor de Blasio for signing this executive order and commend DOT Commissioner Trottenberg for her leadership on reimagining our streetscape," said **Julie Tighe, President of the New York League of Conservation Voters.**

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