Dear Restaurant and Bar Owners and Managers:

In light of the expanding COVID-19 pandemic, and the recommendations released on March 16th, 2020 by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Governor Ricketts, I am urging bars and restaurants in the ELVPHD health district abide by the guidelines—thus allowing only 10 people in the establishment at time, not including staff. However, if the establishment is small to the extent that everyone within the premises cannot abide by the 6-foot social distancing rule, the 10-people rule must be deducted accordingly. These guidelines will be followed from March 16 – March 31, but this timeframe could be extended.

Please know, that at the time of this writing, this letter serves as a recommendation. Thank you to those establishments that have taken the initiative to be proactive. We would like to strongly urge restaurant and bar owners and managers to voluntarily adopt these measures. Should that not happen, local public health authorities reserve the right to pass Directed Health Measures—if passed, would allow for law enforcement to issue misdemeanor tickets that could have negative impacts on liquor license holders.

Keeping your patrons and workers safe should be your highest priority. I am also recommending the following:

- Posting of signage on the door advising no patrons or workers be allowed on the premises with cough or fever. There should be no flexibility on this.
- Do not allow meetings or group gatherings within your facility. This includes coffee groups, card clubs, etc. Strongly discourage diners over the age of 60.
- Have hand sanitizer stationed throughout your business.
- Have a strict handwashing policy for all workers, washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds between serving meals to different groups of people in the restaurant.
- For takeout, drive-through, or walk-up window orders, frequent handwashing will need to occur to help keep workers healthy.
- For delivery orders, the use of hand sanitizer before delivery and immediately following delivery is recommended to help prevent the spread of disease.
- Surface disinfection will be a key in helping disrupt the cycle of COVID-19 transmission, as well. This includes menus, kiosks, door knobs, debit card machines, salt and pepper shakers, condiment containers, telephones, cash register buttons, pens, etc. Do this at least twice per day, but more often is better.
- Move to online payment or accepting checks, if possible; cash and credit cards, and credit card machines carry germs!

The ultimate goal is to protect the health of our community. In addition, if a positive COVID case occurs, points-of-exposure are released to the community so they can risk and exposure for the general public. Should the business be named, the entire list of contacts will be obtained from the sick person. Public scrutiny and business damage can result when long lists of names are obtained, despite the ten-patron rule. To that end, we will be asking city mayors and law enforcement to help our department in communicating and supporting these recommendations. We are receiving a lot of calls from concerned citizens within communities about crowded establishments.

Should you have any questions, please call our office at 402-529-2233.

Sincerely,

Gina Uhing, Health Director
Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health Department