



Sheriff Bob Gualtieri

Pinellas County Sheriff's Office

"Leading The Way For A Safer Pinellas"

March 18, 2020

Dear Owner/Manager:

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and health emergency, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-68 on March 17, 2020. Further, under the Pinellas County Local State of Emergency declared by the Board of County Commissioners on March 13, 2020, (Resolution 20-16), Pinellas County Administrator Barry A. Burton issued an order yesterday imposing additional restrictions on the sale of on-site consumption of alcoholic beverages after 10:00 p.m.

The Governor's Executive Order directs that persons on all beaches in the state of Florida adhere to the CDC guidelines, including **that gatherings are limited to no more than 10 people and people maintain a distance of 6 feet from other parties.** The Governor's order leaves the decision whether to close beaches to local authorities.

After much consideration and deliberation, Pinellas County has decided for a variety of well debated reasons to not close our beaches. However, to maintain this position and not reconsider our decision we need your help. We need all hotels and other businesses with beach access to self-enforce the requirements of the governor's Executive Order and ensure that your guests and others on your beaches are strictly adhering to the social distancing requirements. This may inherently mean that you allow fewer people on your beaches, but distancing is absolutely necessary in the effort to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

There is enforcement authority granted in law to enforce emergency orders; however, we have no desire to undertake that action. We simply need your help in these difficult times to keep our community, including our beaches, as safe and enjoyable as possible.

Please help us help you and your businesses by making reasonable, good faith efforts to comply with the Executive Order's requirements so that we do not have to even consider any further regulatory or enforcement measures. We do not expect perfect, just reasonable compliance.

As far as no on-site consumption alcohol sales after 10:00 p.m. under the local order, this applies to all establishments, and again we ask for your voluntary compliance. As to the required closure in the Governor's Order of certain bars and night clubs, it is my position and understanding that this applies only to those establishments that operate mainly as "bars" and not to establishments that operate bars within restaurants or places such as beach cabana bars, hotel lobby bars, etc. Any enforcement of this requirement will come from State beverage enforcement administrative authority and not from the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office or other law enforcement entities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Gualtieri", written over the word "Sincerely,".

Sheriff Bob Gualtieri
Pinellas County, Florida

BG/sj