**City of Somerville Community Alert Regarding Local Emergency Declaration**

This is a message from the Somerville, MA Community Alert System.

Hello, this is Mayor Joe Curtatone. I’d like to update you on three important steps taken at the State and local level to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

First, I declared a local state of emergency in Somerville. This formal declaration gives the City the ability to take decisive action to control the spread of the coronavirus and allows us to request reimbursement from the federal government for emergency response to this crisis.

Second, Governor Baker made the right decision yesterday and mandated that all bars and restaurants provide only takeout and delivery services -- with safety and social distancing guidelines in place -- through April 6. The Governor also closed all schools in the state for three weeks, starting tomorrow.

We understand the devastating economic impact these measures may have on local residents and businesses. My staff and I are working to eliminate any red tape that would prevent our Somerville establishments from operating takeout and delivery services, and we are working with state and federal legislators to provide economic aid to the workers, families, and small businesses impacted by these coronavirus-related closures.

The Somerville Public Schools are continuing to provide meals to families, and other emergency food resources are available for anyone who needs them— please call 311 for more information if you’re worried about running out of food

Third, I am mandating, effective at 12 a.m., Tuesday March 17, that all gyms, health clubs, theaters, entertainment venues, social clubs, and houses of worship be closed through at least April 6.

Also, the City of Somerville’s playgrounds will be closed to the public and fields and courts will only be open for passive use – no team games. I strongly urge parents, if you are able, to keep your children home from daycare and avoid playdates. Please, for your own health and the health of our community take these precautions seriously.

I’d also like to advise anyone 60 or older and anyone with a weakened immune system to stay at home, as health experts have warned they are more vulnerable to COVID-19. Taking these measures now could help you avoid serious illness.

But let me be clear: Social distancing will save lives. We are living in unprecedented circumstances, and we cannot go on with business as usual. As a community, we must drastically change our way of life in the short-term to prevent even more dire consequences in the long-term, particularly for our most vulnerable.

Please continue to stay informed on our City website at [www.somervillema.gov/coronavirus](http://www.somervillema.gov/coronavirus), or call 311 at any time with any questions you might have.

There is more work to be done. We will get through this pandemic together.