



**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND  
RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

**IN THE MATTER OF:  
The Ave Bar and Grill  
Violations of Executive Orders and  
RI Department of Health Regulations**

**IMMEDIATE COMPLIANCE ORDER AND  
NOTICE OF VIOLATION AND COMPLIANCE ORDER**

Now comes the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Health (“RIDOH”), as informed by the Chair (“Chair”) of the Rhode Island COVID-19 Enforcement Task Force (“Task Force”), and pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 23-1-20 and 23-1-21, Executive Orders 21-27 and 21-29 (“Executive Orders”), and the RIDOH rules and regulations pertaining to Safe Activities By Covered Entities During the COVID-19 Emergency (216-RICR-50-15-7) (“Safe Regulations”), determines that there are reasonable grounds to believe that The Ave Bar and Grill (“Respondent”) is in violation of applicable Executive Orders and/or the Safe Regulations, and that, with respect to bar requirements, Respondent is in violation of applicable Executive Orders and/or the Safe Regulations, which violation requires immediate action to protect the health, welfare, and safety of the public.

**NEED FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION**

On March 9, 2020, Governor Gina M. Raimondo declared a state of emergency for the State of Rhode Island due to the dangers to health and life posed by COVID-19. The Safe Regulations were promulgated as an emergency rule, pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-35-2.10, based on a finding that an imminent peril to the public health, safety, or welfare required immediate promulgation of the rule,

specifically that “[i]n order to prevent further spread of COVID-19 as individuals begin to leave their homes more frequently and establishments begin to reopen, protective measures must be followed and implemented for individuals and establishments to resume operations so that the public’s health and welfare is protected.”

#### **GROUND S FOR DETERMINATION OF VIOLATIONS**

- I. Respondent is a dining/bar establishment located at 1428 Hartford Avenue in Johnston.
- II. Respondent is a covered entity, as defined in the Safe Regulations. As such, Respondent is required to comply with applicable Executive Orders and the Safe Regulations.
- III. On or about March 26, 2021, a Task Force inspector conducted a spot check of the Respondent to determine compliance with bar requirements. The inspector observed multiple violations as described below.
- IV. Of significance is the fact that the Respondent failed to ensure that if parties were seated at the bar, no staff were permitted to work in any areas behind the bar unless a physical, non-porous barrier of appropriate height is installed between the bar work areas and customers; that even with physical barriers between the bar work areas and customers, staff may only serve seated customers drinks and food through a gap or opening in the barrier that is no more than eight (8) inches in size; and/or that working bar areas, such as drink making stations or glassware storage, must be located at least six feet from the gaps.
- V. Based on the foregoing, and in the absence of any other information to rebut the allegations, the Director of RIDOH has determined that Respondent is in present violation of multiple provisions of applicable Executive Orders and/or the Safe Regulations and that, with respect to the bar requirements, immediate action is necessary to protect the health, welfare, or safety of the public.

## **VIOLATIONS**

### **ALLEGED VIOLATIONS**

The following alleged violations stem from the March 26, 2021 reinspection.

- I. Respondent is in violation of Section 7.4.1(A)(3) of the Safe Regulations, which requires all individuals in an establishment to wear cloth face coverings unless an exception applies and requires establishments to deny entry to any employee, who is not otherwise exempt from the requirement, who refuses to wear a cloth face covering when required. The inspector observed one employee who was improperly wearing a cloth face covering under his chin (See "Exhibit A") and another who was improperly wearing a cloth face covering under his nose (See "Exhibit B"). Neither employee claimed an exception.
  
- II. Respondent is in violation of Section 7.4.2(A)(6) of the Safe Regulations, which requires that:
  - a. when parties are seated at the bar, no staff are permitted to work in any areas behind the bar and all work areas behind the bar unless a physical, non-porous barrier of appropriate height and made of a material which complies with the interior finish requirements of the State Fire Code, is installed between the bar work areas and customers; and
  - b. even with physical barriers between bar work areas and customers, staff may only serve seated customers drinks and food through a gap or opening in the barrier that is no more than eight (8) inches in size; and,
  - c. working bar areas (e.g. drink making stations or glassware storage) must be located at least six (6) feet from these gaps. Drinks and/or food may not be passed to customers under, over, or around such barrier by staff behind the bar.

The inspector observed that multiples parties were seated at the bar and there was no physical barrier separating the bar work areas and customers. (See "Exhibits B and C")

- III. Respondent is in violation of Section 7.4.1.(A)(12) of the Safe Regulations, which prohibits congregating and/or mingling in an establishment or areas under the establishment's control. The inspector observed numerous individuals to be congregating and/or mingling in areas under the establishment's control. (See "Exhibit D")

**ORDER**

**IMMEDIATE COMPLIANCE**

It is hereby **ORDERED**, that Respondent is to immediately close its bar/bar area until such time as violations are remedied to the satisfaction of the Director of RIDOH by fulfilling the conditions as set forth below:

- I. Respondent shall ensure that:
  - a. when parties are seated at the bar, no staff are permitted to work in any areas behind the bar and all work areas behind the bar unless a physical, non-porous barrier (i.e., plexiglass) of appropriate height and made of a material which complies with the interior finish requirements of the State Fire Code is installed between the bar work areas and customers; and
  - b. even with physical barriers between bar work areas and customers, staff may only serve seated customers drinks and food through a gap or opening in the barrier that is no more than eight (8) inches in size; and
  - c. working bar areas (e.g. drink making stations or glassware storage) are located at least six (6) feet from these gaps and that drinks and/or food is not passed to customers under, over, or around such barrier by staff behind the bar.

## NOTICE OF COMPLIANCE

It is hereby ORDERED, that on or before the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day from service of this Notice of Violation and Compliance Order, Respondent shall remedy the above cited violations and come into full compliance with applicable Executive Orders and Regulations, by fulfilling the conditions as set forth below:

- I. Respondent shall require all employees in its establishment to wear cloth face coverings unless an exception applies. In accordance with Section 7.4.1(3)(a) of the Safe Regulations, Respondent shall deny access to its establishment to any employee who refuses to wear a cloth face covering when required by the Safe Regulations unless an exception applies.
- II. Respondent shall ensure that no congregating and/or mingling occurs within the establishment or any area under the establishment's control.

**With respect to the Notice of Compliance, a written request for a hearing may be filed within ten (10) days of this notice.**

Entered this 30<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2021.



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# EXHIBIT A



# EXHIBIT B



# EXHIBIT C



# EXHIBIT D

