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**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
Shelby County Health Department

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### HEALTH DIRECTIVE No. 18 LIFTS MORE RESTRICTIONS ON BUSINESSES

**Shelby County, TN** – The Shelby County Health Department issues Health Directive No. 18 today to go into effect at midnight on February 20th. Health Directive No. 18 further lifts restrictions on businesses, particularly restaurants, that serve the public.

Key changes in Health Directive No. 18:

- Permits food and beverages service until midnight (12:00 a.m.).
- Eliminates capacity restrictions for dine-in services but requires that for all indoor/outdoor dining, seating must be separated 6 feet apart and arranged so that each person seated at one table must be separated 6 feet from other persons seated at another table.
- Customers may be seated and served food and beverages at a bar as long as there is fixed seating for groups of no more than two people and each set of two seats is separated by six feet (and separated from any other tables by six feet as well).
- Cigar/Hookah lounges will have the same restrictions as restaurants. All businesses should prohibit indoor smoking or vaping due to the risk of airborne transmission of the virus. Any indoor smoking that is allowed must comply with Tennessee law on age, time, and place requirements.

While the COVID-19 virus remains a threat, these activities are deemed allowable now because our community has experienced reduced transmission of the virus for a period of greater than 14 days.

- Viral reproductive rate in Shelby County is 0.8, the lowest since the start of the pandemic
- Case numbers have continued to decline since early January
- Weekly COVID-19 test positivity rates are the lowest they been since October.

For more information about Shelby County's response to the pandemic, please visit our COVID-19 informational page: [www.shelby.community](http://www.shelby.community).

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