

March 23, 2021

Greetings Travel Partners,

As a member of the NC Restaurant & Lodging Association and as courtesy to our travel partners, the Wilmington and Beaches CVB shares NCRLA's March 23 breaking news bulletin regarding Governor Cooper's announcement to ease capacity restrictions. Read on for highlights of the governor's announcement.

FROM NCRLA:

Breaking News: Gov. Cooper Announces Easing of Capacity Restrictions for Restaurants, Bars, Hotels, and Event Venues

Today NCRLA celebrates the easing of restrictions at restaurants, bars, hotels, and event venues across North Carolina. At his press briefing today, Gov. Cooper announced Executive Order 204, which goes into effect Friday, March 26, 2021, at 5 p.m.

Highlights of today's announcement include:

Capacity restrictions eased for indoor dining in restaurants to 75 percent capacity and outdoor dining to 100 percent capacity. Social distancing and other COVID regulations will remain in place.

- Capacity restrictions eased for bars to 50 percent for both indoor and outdoor service, with no cap on maximum number of people
- All COVID-related restrictions on alcohol service are lifted (11 p.m. curfew lifted)
- Capacity restrictions for meetings and events at hotels, convention centers, and event venues eased to 50 percent capacity both indoors and outdoors, with no cap on maximum number of people
- The allowance of Cocktails To-Go will continue

Gov. Cooper's Executive Order 195 was set to expire Friday, March 26, and Executive Orders 190 and 191 were set to expire Wednesday, March 31. NCRLA has been actively lobbying Gov. Cooper to ease restrictions on businesses as COVID cases, hospitalizations, and test positivity rates have declined in recent weeks, while vaccination rates have been increasing. NCRLA President & CEO Lynn Minges, who has worked all year with Gov. Cooper and NC leadership on behalf of the hospitality industry, said, "We celebrate today's announcement about the lifting of capacity restrictions at restaurants, bars, hotels, and event venues across the state. While we know things still won't be normal for a while, this is a huge step forward towards our recovery, and we encourage folks to get out and enjoy your favorite restaurant."

"We are inspired by the declining COVID cases and the significant number of people getting vaccinated across our state. That, coupled by warmer weather, longer days, and increasing consumer confidence, bode well for a strong spring and summer season for businesses across our state," she added.

For more information, visit [our website](#). For questions, email [Shannon McGuire](#).

The North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association serves to advance and protect the interests of more than 20,000 businesses who employ 11 percent of the state's workforce and generate more than \$27.3 billion in sales annually.

www.ncrla.org | 919-844-0098