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Statewide non-essential business closures, stay-at-home advisory extended till May 4

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by Angela Yang

On Tuesday, Gov. Charlie Baker extended the statewide closure of non-essential businesses and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's stay-at-home advisory until May 4.

Both were originally set to end on April 7.

Baker also extended his 10-person limit on social gatherings to May 4. The closure of schools and non-emergency childcare programs had already been in effect until then.

With these extensions, Baker said in a news conference, his administration is issuing an updated list of businesses and organizations considered to provide essential services.

The updates include clarifying the supply chain that supports other essential businesses, adding more health care providers, such as optometrists and chiropractors, and expanding types of sanitation workers.

The DPH will also issue an order with more specifics surrounding the hospitality industry, including hotels, motels and short-term rentals, such as Airbnbs, Baker said.

These spaces must be used only for purposes related directly to the fight against COVID-19, like to house frontline health care workers, displaced residents or essential workers.

Baker said he appreciates the impact his administration's recent decisions have made on the economy and residents' lives, and

that they have not been made lightly. But social distancing, he said, must still be the priority.

“As most of you know, my weekly visits with my 91-year-old father are phone calls. And as I said previously, neither one of us are very good at that,” Baker said. “And I miss him. But that’s just the way it is. And it’s the way it should be.”

Also on Tuesday, Boston Calling Music Festival announced it is canceling its 2020 event due to coronavirus concerns.

Those who have already purchased tickets will choose to either receive refunds or roll their tickets over to next year’s festival, according to a statement by organizers on their website.

The three-day Allston event, usually held over Memorial Day weekends, gathers on average more than 30,000 attendees annually.



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