

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019

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HOUSE BILL 536
Committee Substitute Favorable 5/1/19
Committee Substitute #2 Favorable 6/27/19
Committee Substitute #3 Favorable 7/8/19
Fifth Edition Engrossed 7/9/19
Senate Commerce and Insurance Committee Substitute Adopted 5/26/20

Short Title: Temp Outdoor Restaurants for Outdoor Seating.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 3, 2019

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE CERTAIN EXISTING ESTABLISHMENTS TO OFFER AND
3 OPERATE OUTDOOR DINING AND BEVERAGE SERVICE OPTIONS WHILE ALSO
4 SAFEGUARDING THE PUBLIC HEALTH TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF
5 CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19).

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.** Notwithstanding any declaration of emergency issued under Article
8 1A of Chapter 166A of the General Statutes or any municipal or county ordinance adopted under
9 that Article related to the public health emergency created by COVID-19, any establishment that
10 prepares or serves food or drink, as defined in and regulated under Part 6 of Article 8 of Chapter
11 130A of the General Statutes, may open and operate its food and drink service for on-premises
12 consumption provided all the following apply:

- 13 (1) The establishment was in existence on March 10, 2020, is properly licensed
14 and permitted, and holds all necessary State and local regulatory permits,
15 including, if applicable, any necessary ABC permits.
- 16 (2) If the establishment holds ABC permits, the establishment is not any of the
17 following:
18 a. A private club as defined by G.S. 18B-1000.
19 b. A private bar as defined by G.S. 18B-1000.
20 c. A winery permitted pursuant to G.S. 18B-1101 or G.S. 18B-1102.
21 d. A distillery permitted pursuant to G.S. 18B-1105.
- 22 (3) The food and drink service operation for on-premises consumption is limited
23 to any authorized indoor seating and to the outdoor seating location. The
24 owner or owners of that outdoor seating location must have granted the
25 establishment permission to use the location for its food and drink service
26 operation.
- 27 (4) The outdoor food and drink service seating capacity is limited to fifty percent
28 (50%) of the current indoor seating capacity of the establishment, or 100
29 customers, whichever is less.
- 30 (5) The outdoor seating location is on the same parcel or is contiguous to or in
31 close proximity to the underlying establishment and contains or has access to
32 lavatory and toilet facilities for employees and customers as required for such



1 establishments under rules established by the North Carolina Department of
2 Health and Human Services.

- 3 (6) If the establishment holds ABC permits and serves alcohol pursuant to those
4 permits, the outdoor seating location must have delineated vertical boundaries
5 that the consumer would recognize as indicating the boundaries that
6 physically separate areas where consumption of alcohol is allowed from areas
7 open to the general public other than customers of the establishment.
- 8 (7) The establishment maintains and enforces the social distancing requirements
9 recommended by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and
10 the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.
- 11 (8) The establishment complies with all rules and regulations promulgated by the
12 Division of Public Health of the North Carolina Department of Health and
13 Human Services applicable to outdoor food and drink service.
- 14 (9) The outdoor seating location may include a covered patio or areas covered by
15 tents, awnings, tarps, umbrellas, or other similar coverings. For purposes of
16 this subdivision, "tent" shall mean a temporary structure, with or without side
17 panels, constructed by draping or otherwise attaching sheets of fabric, plastic,
18 or other material to a framework of poles or supports.
- 19 (10) The outdoor seating location may include areas on a public sidewalk if the
20 local government allows through its ordinances or permitting process the use
21 of public sidewalks for the service of and consumption of food or drink and
22 the establishment obtains any necessary local government approval. Nothing
23 in this act is intended to require a local government to approve the use of
24 public sidewalks for the service of and consumption of food or drink.
- 25 (11) The outdoor seating location may include areas on a public street if the local
26 government allows through its ordinances or permitting process the use of
27 public streets during periods of temporary street closure for the service of and
28 consumption of food or drink and the establishment obtains any necessary
29 local government approval. Nothing in this act is intended to require a local
30 government to temporarily close public streets for the service of and
31 consumption of food or drink or to allow the service of and consumption of
32 food or drink on public streets during a period of temporary closure.

33 **SECTION 2.** The outdoor seating area authorized in Section 1 of this act shall not
34 be prohibited by a municipality or county because the outdoor seating area is not a permitted use
35 for operation of food and drink services under zoning ordinances.

36 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law and expires upon the later of
37 (i) 30 days after any declaration of emergency prohibitions and restrictions applicable expire or
38 are otherwise terminated to permit the establishment to open for full unrestricted service of food
39 and drink or (ii) October 31, 2020.