



Date: December 27, 2021

To: Lori Lightfoot, Mayor, City of Chicago

From: Roger Romanelli, Coordinator, Chicago Restaurants Coalition & Executive Director, Fulton Market Association
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Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, most of Chicago's 7,000 restaurants have followed U.S. CDC guidelines to keep people safe. As our city continues to struggle with the virus, restaurants again pledge their commitment to keep people safe. Our Coalition urges everyone to get vaccinated, boosted and follow COVID-prevention guidelines.

At the same time, restaurants and voters participating in our Coalition are hereby petitioning our City Hall government for reasonable policies to ensure the financial survival of restaurants and protect thousands of restaurant employees:

1) Please follow the mayors of Boston and Washington DC who are giving restaurants until Jan. 15, 2022 to start checking for proof of COVID vaccines and identifications as a condition for indoor dining. Please do not force Chicago's 7,000 restaurants to suddenly implement such significant changes on Jan. 3, 2022.

On Dec. 21, 2021, you ordered restaurants to overhaul their operations in 13 days to check for vaccines and identifications. However, restaurants need proper time to train and possibly hire staff, install security cameras to record interactions with guests and set new emergency protocols if guests get angry, which has happened in other cities with customers physically attacking staff. Please revise your vax-checks start date to Jan. 15, 2022.

2) Please ask the Chicago Police Superintendent to post written instructions on his website telling restaurants what to do if they encounter angry customers. Please ask Chicago's Office of Emergency Management to be ready for 911 emergency calls from restaurants if they have serious problems with angry customers.

3) In line with your ordering vax and identification checks at restaurants, please require vax and identification checks for entrance to government buildings in Chicago starting Jan. 15: city, county, state and federal government buildings.

4) Please issue a letter to U.S. Senators Duckworth and Durbin to allocate \$60 billion more federal funds for U.S. Restaurant Revitalization Fund grants for thousands of Chicago restaurants struggling to survive. Most restaurants that applied received \$0. They need public funds to cover costs related to your new vax-checks policy.

5) Please use Chicago's \$1.9 billion federal COVID funds to fight the COVID crisis and stop Chicago's crime crisis. Over \$1 billion of these funds simply can't be used to plug City Hall overspending deficits through 2023. Instead, please cut City Hall spending and use these federal funds to stop COVID and stop crime. We offer these examples:

Cash lotteries can be held in vax-lagging neighborhoods, and disadvantaged Chicagoans can be paid to enroll in job-training and job-placement programs, as well as substance-abuse programs to transform their lives and prevent crime. Our Coalition has more ideas to end Chicago's COVID and safety crises. Let's work together to improve Chicago.