



**GREATER BOSTON
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU**

**March 20, 2020
COVID-19 INDUSTRY UPDATE**

At this juncture, with so much still unclear, we need to emphasize that the GBCVB is here for you. Regardless of who your main contact is at the Bureau, or how you typically partner with us, know that our entire staff is here to support you, our members. We are always available. Call us, email us, text us, whatever the best channel is for you to reach us, even if you're not sure if we'll have the right answer or update, please reach out and we will find that answer or update. Of course, there are many questions right now that simply have no adequate answers, but we will do our very best at every turn.

For those of you who have not yet viewed the video message that Marriott President & CEO Arne Sorenson shared yesterday, you can [view it here](#). This message is at once realistic and resilient, poignant and impassioned, and it reflects the enduring commitment that industry leaders have to our most important constituencies – our employees and our visitors.

We share this commitment. For all the crushing developments that are hitting our partners on a daily basis, we also see the compassion of our industry shine through in both subtle and compelling ways. It's the hotels donating beds to hospital workers, it's Time Out Market Boston and MarketStreet Lynnfield using their excess foodstuffs (which cannot be sold on location) to feed people who are suddenly unemployed, and it's initiatives like encouraging people to purchase restaurant gift cards, which helps the restaurants now and can be redeemed by patrons later.

And we will do our part too.

Since the Governor's order to close on-site dining, the Bureau has been building a [list of restaurants](#) offering delivery and take out services. This week, on the heels of Dine Out Boston, we've launched a new social media campaign called [#DineInBoston](#). The purpose of this initiative is twofold: to support our restaurant partners by encouraging people to share pictures on social channels of their take out and delivery meals, and to cultivate a virtual community of Bostonians using the hashtag #DineInBoston to share scenes from their homes, even if they are enjoying their own homemade concoctions and not delivery or take out service. Please use this hashtag and share it with others. In these distressing times, people are seeking a sense of community. We want to help.

We are doing our best to stay on top of temporary closures and event cancellations. Please visit our [COVID-19 Info & Resources](#) page to find these listings and to advise us on what needs to be added or updated. We understand that closures and anticipated re-opening dates are very fluid, and we will diligently update this page.

A few updates related to developments this week. On Wednesday Massport shared with us a document on [international air service impact](#). As you probably know, international routes are now severely reduced, including air travel to Canada. WestJet and Porter have both suspended operations into Boston, while Air Canada has ceased flying to Halifax and Ottawa (AC is still flying to Toronto and Montreal). Also this week, to ensure the safety of our employees and visitors, we decided to temporarily close our main Visitor Information Center located on Boston Common. No one knows what the ultimate effect of this crisis will be on our global systems and the global economy, but the forecasts are harrowing. Tourism Economics updated their projections this week and they now believe that US travel sector revenue will be down 75% in March and April, and down by about 55% in May. International markets will be hardest hit, with travel from Europe and Asia to the United States down 30% in 2020. Domestic travel will recover first, but it will also be dramatically curtailed in 2020. Overall, the adverse economic impact on the travel industry is projected to be 6 times worse than 9/11.

We will tirelessly advocate for relief and stimulus packages, both here in Massachusetts and nationally. Today we sent a [letter to local editors](#) urging Congress to create a Travel Workforce Stabilization Fund. We believe all of our elected officials – in the Commonwealth and in Washington, D.C. – will understand the crushing blow that this crisis continues to deliver and that they will act accordingly. Here in Massachusetts, we commend the measures [already enacted](#) and we will not rest until full measures are put into place to mitigate impact and then ensure recovery.

We are here for you.

Martha

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