

SAINT LOUIS CITY COVID-19: INDOOR DINING REGULATIONS

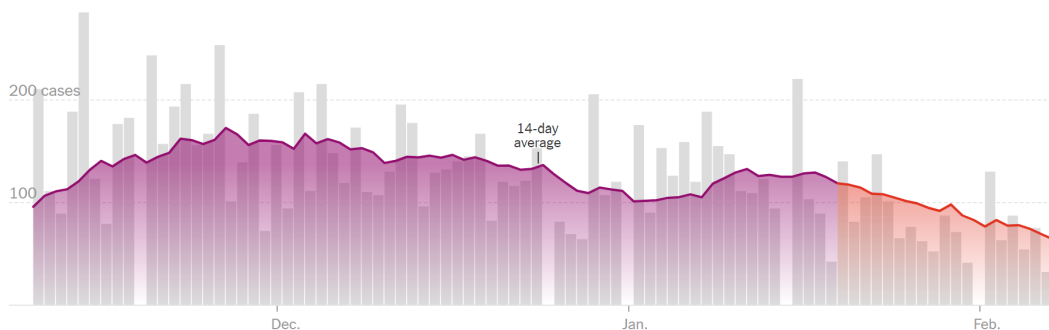


IMPLICATIONS OF CONTINUING TO ALLOW RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF SAINT LOUIS TO DINE INDOORS

In an attempt to curb the spread of COVID-19, in March of 2020 many cities in the US began to limit their restaurants to only serve take-out or delivery. Although the caseload continues to increase, Saint Louis City officials say that indoor dining is not tied to an increase in COVID-19 cases and continues to allow restaurants to offer dine-in services at 50% capacity.



New reported cases by day
TOTAL ON FEB. 7 32 14-DAY CHANGE -39%



SAINT LOUIS REGULATIONS DO NOT MITIGATE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19.

Saint Louis officials say that indoor dining is not linked to super-spreader events of COVID-19. However, contact tracing efforts in the city of Saint Louis are not adequate to measure case origins. At a time when data is tenuous, the City of Saint Louis should be doing all that it can to reduce the spread. Major cities that allowed for indoor dining after successfully slowing the spread experienced large outbreaks and an increase in case numbers.

In order to protect St. Louis residents and mitigate the spread of COVID-19, Saint Louis City must either ban indoor dining or create stricter regulations to allow for more social distancing.



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

ST. LOUIS LEADERS SHOULD BAN INDOOR DINING OR CREATE STRICTER REGULATION THAT ALLOWS FOR BETTER CONTACT TRACING EFFORTS.

Other large cities showed marked success upon closing indoor dining and reopening upon careful examination of the data. Recent studies demonstrate the high risk of dining indoors and why it is important for local jurisdictions that still have a high COVID case count to consider the implications of allowing such practices. In the City of Saint Louis, our policy recommendation is to reduce the capacity for restaurants offering indoor dining services and require restaurants to collect contact information for customers who choose to dine in.

Although we recognize the economic impact of restricting indoor dining for local businesses, we must decrease the contact that residents have with others and create infrastructure that allows for better contact tracing and case investigation.

ENDNOTES

1. St. Louis, Missouri Covid Case Tracker - The New York Times. [https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/us/city-of-st-louis-missouri-covid-cases.html?action=click&module=Top Stories&pgtype=Homepage](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/us/city-of-st-louis-missouri-covid-cases.html?action=click&module=Top%20Stories&pgtype=Homepage). Accessed February 8, 2021.
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1. St. Louis Is So Overwhelmed With Covid-19 It's Asking People To Do Their Own Contact Tracing. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rachelsandler/2020/11/16/st-louis-is-so-overwhelmed-with-covid-19-its-asking-people-to-do-their-own-contact-tracing/?sh=59725e571a35>. Accessed February 8, 2021.
1. St. Louis Contact Tracers Confront A Lack Of Trust When Working As Disease Detectives | St. Louis Public Radio. <https://news.stlpublicradio.org/health-science-environment/2020-10-06/st-louis-contact-tracers-confront-a-lack-of-trust-when-working-as-disease-detectives>. Accessed February 8, 2021.
1. Scientific studies. 2020. doi:10.1038/s41586-020-2923-3.

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FEBRUARY 2021