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Whatcom County Executive Delays Payment Deadlines, Waives Late Fees for Restaurants and Taverns

BELLINGHAM, WA — Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu is delaying permit fee payments for restaurants and taverns until July 1. Sidhu's executive order also allows restaurant owners whose permits expire between April and June to continue to operate without penalty.

Late fees assessed against these businesses between February 1 and April 30 because of a failure to pay for permit renewals will be waived, and no additional late fees will be charged until after February 28, 2021.

An ordinance proposing to extend the term for food establishment operating permits beyond the one year established in County Code will also be submitted to the County Council.

The food service industry is an important part of our county's economy. Most food establishments have suffered a significant loss of revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This order provides restaurant owners some relief while they weather the economic consequences of COVID-19.

"As we work to slow the spread of COVID-19, we must also take steps to limit the economic impacts on our community," Executive Sidhu said. "Delaying these required payments is just one small measure, but I hope it will help our restaurants focus on recovery planning, so that they can reopen and rebuild their business when it is safe to do so."

Although late fees will be waived until March 2021, permits are still required to be renewed by July 1 2020, and any that are more than 60 days overdue will be considered lapsed.

The full text of [Executive Order 2020-07](#) Amending the 2019-2020 Unified Fee Schedule for Food Establishments and Taverns is available on the Whatcom County website.

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