



June 1, 2020

Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 300  
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Chair Garvey,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce appreciates Arlington County's quick action to establish Temporary Outdoor Seating Areas to help our restaurants serve customers and maintain appropriate distance between tables while their existing facilities are not available for full standard use. Much as allowance is now being provided for restaurants to utilize sidewalks and parking lots for temporary service, fitness facilities need a similar opportunity to conduct classes outdoors in public parks and other open spaces.

Fitness and exercise facilities are limited to outdoor operations only during Phase One of Forward Virginia, and are likely to face continued restrictions on indoor activities as Forward Virginia continues. Parks and other open spaces have the potential to provide opportunities for fitness classes to spread out and to allow patrons to space out to exercise safely. The impact of the pandemic has been devastating to fitness facilities, as it has to our restaurants. They need to be provided with a path to being able to operate, including collecting revenue from patrons, in accordance with the guidelines in place.

The existing Department of Parks and Recreation special events permit policy was not designed with these unique circumstances in mind. Much as Arlington County did for restaurants, we encourage establishing a simple, administrative process for fitness-related businesses to obtain a permit to hold paid activities in public parks and other open spaces.

We thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Bates". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate Bates  
President & CEO

CC: Arlington County Board members Katie Cristol, Matt de Ferranti, and Christian Dorsey; County Manager Mark Schwartz; Deputy County Manager Michelle Cowan; Arlington Economic Director Telly Tucker; Department of Parks and Recreation Director Jane Rudolph