City of Milwaukee

Equity Impact Statement

1. Describe the proposed ordinance or resolution. File number: _____

2023 Wisconsin Act 12 creates 252.03(2j), Wis. Stats., which prohibits a local health official from issuing a mandate to close a business in order to control an outbreak or epidemic of communicable disease for longer than 30 days, unless the Common Council approves the extension of the order for no more than an additional 30 days. Moreover, a health mandate to temporarily close businesses may not distinguish between essential and nonessential businesses.

2. Identify the anticipated equity impacts, if any, of this proposal.

This proposal could have positive and negative equity impacts. For instance, minorities who are business owners may benefit from this legislation because it would ensure that their businesses could remain open to customers after a maximum of 30 days closure. On the other hand, disease outbreaks are more likely to be detrimental to lower-income, minority communities, where diseases often spread faster among people who often live in tight-knit environments and who cannot easily afford medical treatment.

3. Identify which minority groups, if any, may be negatively or positively impacted by the proposal.

The inability for the health officials to close businesses for longer than a 30-day window could accelerate the spread of disease at a faster pace among racial minorities, leading to uneven health outcomes. COVID-19 data show that the death rate among African-Americans was 97.9 out of 100,000 people, compared to 81.9 for Indigenous people, 64.7 for Latinos, 46.6 for Whites, and 40.4 for Asians. While future disease outbreaks will likely differ in nature from COVID-19, these statistics suggest that varying levels of access to important information and quality health care among racial groups contributes to uneven results.

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4. Describe any engagement efforts with minority communities potentially impacted by the proposal.

This is a new, state-mandated effort, not a City-led proposal. Therefore, there has been no organized engagement of minority communities to date.

5. Describe how any anticipated equity impacts of the proposal will be documented or evaluated.

Incidence of disease by racial group
Death rate as a result of disease by race and gender
Incidence of disease before and after business closings
Number of permanent closings of minority-owned businesses before and after temporary closings

6. Describe strategies that will be used, if any, to mitigate any anticipated equity impacts.

None identified at this time.

Name: **Alex Highley**

Signature:

Date: **6/22/23**