

Councilor Abreu's mandatory CPR motion for smaller New Bedford food establishments passes

New Bedford City Councilor Ian Abreu's motion to have the Health Department consider requiring New Bedford food establishments with less than 25 patrons to have CPR training passed a unanimous voice vote during the New Bedford City Council meeting on 28 September, 2017.

The motion reads as follows:

WRITTEN MOTION, Councilor Abreu, requesting, that the City Council engage in dialogue with our Health Department and the Department of Inspectional Services about implementing mandatory CPR and Heimlich training and certifications for all New Bedford restaurants, bars, food-related cafes and establishments which seat less than 25 patrons, currently, Massachusetts General Law (105:CMR – Mass Dept. of Health 590.003(A)(2) Mgmt. and Personnel) has only established a mandatory statewide law for all restaurants which seat 25 or more patrons that they must have on its premises while food is being served a person trained and certified in CPR; and further, a collaborative approach on the local level on this issue could help potentially save lives. (To be Referred to the Committee on Ordinances, the Health Department and the Department of Inspectional Services.)

"A constituent and personal friend of mine had recently choked at a local restaurant here in our city, and unfortunately for her, the restaurant staff was not prepared to assist her in her time of desperate need," said Councilor Abreu. "Luckily, 911 was called and her life was saved. What happened to my

friend inspired me to delve into our local policies and procedures centered around CPR and Heimlich certifications/trainings at our local food-related establishments.”

Councilor Abreu continued, Upon further investigation, what I had found was that, according to Mass General Law (105:CMR – Mass Dept. of Health 590.003(A)(2) Mgmt and Personnel), all food-related establishments which seat 25 or more patrons must at all times have someone on the floor who is CPR-certified. However, if a food-related establishment seats less than 25 patrons, they do not need to have someone on the floor who is CPR-certified. This, to me, is troubling, because someone can have a heart attack or choke on a piece of food just as easily at a small café as they can at a large restaurant.”

The passing by a voice vote means the motion is sent to the Committee on Ordinances, the Health Department and the Department of Inspectional Services to have a draft ordinance crafted. Once complete, the City Council will vote on the final ordinance at a future date.