Novel Coronavirus Updated Talking Points

March 30, 2020
(Updated 4:00 PM)

DOH ACTION ITEMS FROM GOVERNOR’S BRIEFING POINTS

- GOVERNOR HELD MEETING WITH STATEWIDE HEALTHCARE LEADERS
- DEVELOPING STATEWIDE HOSPITAL PLAN
- HEALTHCARE COMMAND CENTER BEING ESTABLISHED
- JAVITS CENTER TEMPORARY HOSPITAL UP AND RUNNING
- USNS COMFORT ARRIVES IN NYC
- CONTINUING TO PROVIDE SUPPLIES

UPDATED CASE NUMBERS

- Today, Governor Cuomo confirmed 6,984 new cases of novel coronavirus, bringing the total to 66,497 confirmed cases in New York State.
- We have cases in NYC and 55 counties.
- Here is the geographic breakdown for positives and tests:

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- **Testing**: 186,468 people have been tested statewide and 14,108 were tested yesterday.

- For **national context**, New York is still by far the most impacted state in the nation with 66,497 cases in NY out of 148,924 cases nationwide.

- For **international context**, there are 732,153 positive cases around the world and 34,686 deaths. So far, there are 154,673 total recoveries and 542,794 pending cases worldwide.

- **Current Hospitalization Count in NYS**: There are 9,517 New Yorkers currently hospitalized due to the coronavirus with 2,352 patients in ICU and 4,204 patients discharged (+632 discharged since yesterday).

- New single day hospitalizations: 1,014 (down from 1,175 yesterday).

- Single day ICU admissions are up from yesterday’s 282 to 315 admissions today.

- **Deaths in NYS**: 1,218 (up from 965 yesterday). There are 2,739 deaths nationwide.

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**GOV’S MESSAGES**

- Governor Cuomo’s messages to all New Yorker’s today:
There are only two missions. There are only two operations that we need to perform. First, the public has to be responsible. Stay at home, when I issued the stay-at-home order, it wasn't 'it would be nice if you did.' It is a mandate. Stay at home.”

“Mission two, and this will be more and more clear as we go on. The frontline battle is in the health care system. The frontline battle is going to be hospitals across the city, across the state, and across this nation. That is where this battle is fought. It is that simple... don't let the hospital system get overwhelmed. The soldiers in this fight are the health care professionals. It's the doctors, it's the nurses, it's the people working in the hospitals, it's the aides. They are the soldiers who are fighting this battle for us.”

"We need more healthcare professionals, we need more supplies, we need more capacity and we need it now. The entire country has been playing catch up with this virus since day one, but in New York we have been trying to plan forward and get ahead of the problem. We are continuing to stockpile supplies in preparation for the apex of the curve, and we have reached an agreement with the statewide healthcare system to coordinate and work together as one entity to balance the load of patients and share staff and resources."

TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **MEETING WITH STATEWIDE HEALTHCARE LEADERS:** Today the Governor met with healthcare leaders from around the state to develop a coordinated statewide hospital plan.

- **STATEWIDE HOSPITAL PLAN:** The Governor announced the resulting statewide public-private hospital plan to fight COVID-19 at a press conference earlier today.
  - As part of the plan, public and private hospitals from across the state have agreed to implement a new balanced approach to fighting the virus where
hospitals that are beginning to reach or exceed capacity can transfer patients to other hospitals that are not as full.

- The hospital systems across the state have also agreed to share supplies, staff and other resources as needed.

- **HEALTHCARE COMMAND CENTER:** The State Department of Health will work with the statewide healthcare system to create a command center to share information between hospitals about the supplies each hospital has in stock and the supplies each hospital is ordering.
  - This central inventory system will help ensure purchasing and distribution of supplies is done strategically and efficiently.

- **JAVITS CENTER TEMPORARY HOSPITAL:** The Governor also announced that the first 1,000-bed temporary hospital at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center is open and accepting patients today.
  - The temporary hospital site was constructed in one week.

- **USNS COMFORT:** The Governor greeted the Navy hospital ship *USNS Comfort* as it arrived in New York today.
  - The hospital ship will not be used for COVID patients but will take on patients from NYC area hospitals to free up beds and ICU units.

- **ONE WORLD TRADE CENTER IN RED, WHITE & BLUE:** Governor Cuomo announced today that the lights of One World Trade Center’s 408-foot spire will be lit red, white and blue this evening in recognition of the ongoing nationwide effort to combat COVID-19.
  - The Governor said, “We are dealing with a deadly serious situation right now, and it is more important than politics and more important than partisanship. This is a war and if there is division at this time, the virus will defeat us.”
  - “This virus doesn’t discriminate — it attacks everyone, and it attacks everywhere. There are no red states, and there are no blue states, and there are no red casualties, and there are no blue casualties. It is red, white and blue. If there was ever a moment for unity, this is it.”
“Tonight, the World Trade Center spire will be lit red, white and blue as a symbol of our commonality — because we are all Americans and we will fight this war and get through this difficult time together.”

- **NATIONAL DOCTORS DAY:** The Governor wished doctors in New York a happy National Doctors Day.
  - Governor Cuomo: “Doctors are truly busy and truly stepping up to their oath and their passion, and literally saving lives.”

- **TWO MISSIONS:** Today the Governor talked about New York’s two main missions:
  - **One:** Public responsibility
    - Stay home
    - No proximity
    - No density
  - **Two:** The front line battle is our healthcare systems.
    - Our soldiers are our healthcare professionals.
    - We must support them both – our hospitals and our healthcare staff.

- **SUPPORT OUR “TROOPS”**: Governor Cuomo stressed the importance of continuing to recruit more healthcare workers and volunteers.
  - Also need to share healthcare professionals within the state and among the states.

- **SUPPLIES**: We’re continuing to get the necessary supplies to where they are desperately needed NOW.

- **CURRENT SUPPLY STOCKPILE**: The Governor yesterday provided an update on the current stockpile and distribution of supplies.
  - **N-95 masks**: 2.5 million stockpiled – 625K distributed
  - **Surgical masks**: 6 million stockpiled – 1.5 million distributed
  - **Exam gloves**: 2.7 million stockpiled – 600K distributed
  - **Protective gowns/coveralls**: 500K stockpiled – 200K distributed
  - **Face shields**: 300K stockpiled – 65,000 distributed

- **KEY CONCEPTS:**
o Planning Forward
o Getting ahead of the problem
o “Don’t fight the last battle” - focusing on the tasks at hand
o Getting ready for the APEX
o Preparing the stockpiles NOW
o “It’s too late to prepare when the storm hits”
o Follow science and data

RESOURCES

• RESOURCE REMINDER: Want to make sure New Yorkers have access to the available resources, including:

• COVID-19 HOTLINE: NYS DOH maintains a Coronavirus Hotline (1-888-364-3065) where New Yorkers with questions about the coronavirus can speak with public health experts in their preferred language.

• MENTAL HEALTH HELPLINE: Again, New Yorkers can get free online mental health assistance related to COVID-19 by calling the state’s hotline at 1-844-863-9314.


• ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES FOR NEW YORKERS:

  o New Yorkers can sign up for email updates here: https://now.ny.gov/page/s/coronavirus-updates

  o To ask questions about COVID-19 online here: https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/form/ask-us-a-question

YESTERDAY’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **EXTENDING PAUSE:** Governor Cuomo announced all **NYS on Pause** functions will be extended for the next two weeks, until April 15th.
  - The Governor also directed the **state nonessential workforce to continue to work from home** for an additional two weeks through April 15th.
  - The state **will re-evaluate** after this additional two-week period.

- **EXECUTIVE ORDERS EXTENDED:** In-person workforce restrictions, which have been implemented through various Executive Orders — 202.3 (restaurants and bars, gyms, fitness centers, movie theaters and casinos); 202.4 (local government workforces, school districts; village elections); 202.5 (malls, public amusement facilities); 202.6 (all non-essential reduce 50%); 202.7 (barber shops, salons, other personal care); 202.8 (DMV); 202.10 (non-essential gatherings of any size); 202.11 (extension of school district closure until April 15, 2020) — are **also extended until April 15, 2020** to enable uniform extension and review of such restrictions, and any such restrictions **may be extended by future executive orders**.

- **NEW TESTING:** Governor Cuomo also announced that **New York State’s Wadsworth Lab** has developed a **new, less intrusive test for COVID-19**.
  - The new test is done through a **saliva sample and a self-administered short nasal swab** in the presence of a health care professional.
  - Additionally, healthcare professionals can self-administer the test without another healthcare professional present.
  - This **new test will help conserve personal protective equipment**, or PPE, for healthcare workers, reduce potential exposure of the virus to healthcare workers and **will allow the state to continue to test as many individuals as possible** in New York amid the national shortage of the more intrusive nasopharyngeal, or NP, swabs.
o Self-collection of nasal swabs has been done before for other respiratory viruses such as flu and it has been shown to be effective and safe, and collection of a saliva sample is simple and non-invasive.

o This new testing will begin within a week.

- MOBILE TESTING CENTER IN BRONX: Governor Cuomo also announced, in partnership with Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Senator Jamaal Bailey, Assemblyman Michael Benedetto and Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., that the State is launching a new mobile testing site in Co-Op City, the largest public housing development (Mitchell Lama) in the country.

  o This new mobile testing site located at the Bay Plaza Mall Parking Lot, AMC Cinema entrance in the Bronx will provide tests by appointment only and will prioritize symptomatic individuals who had close exposure to a positive COVID-19 case, healthcare workers and first responders displaying symptoms, and those working in or having recently visited a nursing home who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms.

  o To get an appointment, New Yorkers can call the Coronavirus hotline at 1-888-364-3065.

- FREE DAY CARE: The Governor also issued an executive order to allow schools to host day care free of charge.

- FREE PHARMACY HOME DELIVERY: After speaking with the state’s major pharmacy chains, the Governor announced that pharmacies have agreed to offer free home delivery to help reduce long lines for prescriptions at their facilities.

- VOLUNTEER STAFF: 76,109 healthcare workers have volunteered so far.
  
    o Over 8,000 physicians
    o Nearly 40,000 nurses
    o Nearly 4,000 nurse practitioners

- ROLLING APEX: The “Rolling Apex” will hit around the country and around the state at different times and with different levels of intensity.
  
    o Curve hits HIGH points depending on when it started and the rate of spread.
Right now the curve (or wave) is hitting New York City, Westchester and Long Island the hardest, at some point that apex will move across the state.

**LOCAL HEALTH SYSTEMS MUST WORK TOGETHER:** Local health systems consist of both public and private hospitals that normally operate independently.
- Each hospital must now **work with other hospitals** in their system or in their area.
- No hospital is an island. We need a new mentality or new culture of hospitals **working together, sharing resources and sharing capacity.**
- For example, Elmhurst Hospital in Queens will need assistance from Bellevue, Coney Island, Javits – both permanent and temporary hospital facilities.
- The Governor will be asking Mayor de Blasio and Comptroller Stringer to work with the 11 H+H hospitals on recommendations to improve the system and prepare for the Apex.

**STATE COORDINATION:** The Governor said state coordination is needed among the hospital systems, both downstate and upstate to ensure we can meet the needs of local communities as that Rolling Apex moves across the state.
- We need to take advantage of the rolling curve and get ahead of it and stay ahead.

**REGIONAL TRAVEL ADVISORY:** President and CDC ordered a travel advisory for New York, New Jersey & Connecticut.
- It is **NOT** a lockdown it is a **travel advisory** to be implemented by the states.
- As the Governor has said it’s **consistent with everything we’ve been doing.** Non-essential workers should still stay at home.

**PREVIOUS ANNOUNCEMENTS / ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**ELECTIONS:** Amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Cuomo is issuing an **executive order to move the presidential primary election from**
April 28 to June 23rd, aligning it with the congressional and legislative primaries in New York.

- **TAX FILING DATE:** The Governor also issued an executive order to enable the tax filing deadline for personal and corporate taxes to be pushed back to **July 15**. The Federal government took similar action earlier this month.

- **ANTIBODY TESTING:** The Governor also announced that the State Department of Health Wadsworth Lab, in partnership with Mount Sinai, has begun antibody testing to identify patients recently recovered from COVID-19 who have high levels of immunity in the form of antibodies in their blood.

- **THREE NEW EMERGENCY SITES:** The Governor also announced that the state has acquired three new sites – South Beach Psychiatric Center in Staten Island, Westchester Square in the Bronx and Health Alliance in Ulster County – to serve as a place for emergency beds. **The three new sites will add 695 more beds to the state’s capacity.**
  - Additionally, the State will begin using some facilities only for COVID-19 patients.
  - The state has identified three sites – South Beach Psychiatric Facility in Staten Island, Westchester Square in the Bronx and SUNY Downstate in Brooklyn – that will provide more than 600 beds specifically for COVID-19 patients.

- **FOUR NEW TEMPORARY HOSPITALS:** Following a conversation with President Trump this morning, Governor Cuomo also announced the federal government has approved four new sites for temporary hospitals for construction by the Army Corps of Engineers - the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal, the Aqueduct Racetrack facility in Queens, CUNY Staten Island and the New York Expo Center in the Bronx - adding an additional 4,000 beds to the state’s capacity.
- The Governor toured the four sites yesterday.
- These temporary hospital sites are part of the Governor’s goal of having a **1,000-plus patient overflow facility** in each New York City borough as well as in Westchester, Rockland, Nassau and Suffolk counties.

**JAVITS CENTER:** The Governor also announced that the first **1,000-bed** temporary hospital at the **Jacob K. Javits Convention Center** is expected to open on Monday. The temporary hospital site was constructed in one week.

**ESD SUPPORT:** The Governor also announced that the **Empire State Development Board of Directors** approved **$7.5 million in COVID-19 Business Counseling support** to 70 non-profit partners across New York State.
- The funding will enable these organizations to provide small businesses with necessary guidance to secure disaster assistance, such as Small Business Administration Economic Injury Disaster Loans, amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Up to **24 Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers** and up to **23 Small Business Development Centers** will receive $5 million, with an additional $2.5 million awarded to up to **23 Community Development Financial Institutions**.

**FIRST COMPLETE TEMPORARY HOSPITAL:** Governor Cuomo announced that the **first 1,000-bed temporary hospital is now complete** at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center.
- This temporary hospital site is part of the Governor’s goal of having a **1,000-plus patient overflow facility in each NYC borough** as well as Westchester, Rockland, Nassau and Suffolk counties.

**FOUR NEW TEMPORARY HOSPITAL SITES:** Governor Cuomo also announced the state and Army Corp of Engineers have toured and identified **four new sites for temporary hospitals** for construction by the Army Corps of Engineers:
- Brooklyn Cruise Terminal
- Aqueduct Racetrack facility in Queens
- CUNY Staten Island
- New York Expo Center in the Bronx
- Adding an additional 4,000 beds to the state’s capacity.
- Governor is asking President Trump to approve these sites immediately so construction can begin.

**INCREASING BED CAPACITY:** These new temporary hospital sites — together with the site at the Javits Center and the temporary hospitals that are being built at locations at SUNY Stony Brook, SUNY Old Westbury and the Westchester Convention Center — are part of the Governor’s plan to create thousands of new beds to bolster existing hospital capacity, with the goal of being open to patients in early- to mid-April.

- The state is also preparing college dormitories and hotels across the downstate region, and identifying nursing homes and other facilities to serve as a place for emergency beds.

**SCHOOLS REMAIN CLOSED:** The Governor also announced that all schools in New York State must remain closed for an additional two weeks until April 15th to ensure consistency and uniformity across the state in instructional time for this extraordinary school year. Schools will be required to continue child care, meal and distance learning programs, and the state will extend the 180-day waiver to April 15th.

**LIFE INSURANCE:** The Governor also announced that for a 90 day period, consumers experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19 may defer paying life insurance premiums.

- No late fees will be assessed and no negative data will be reported to credit bureaus during this time, and late payments will be payable over a one-year period. LICONY, or the Life Insurance Council of New York, which represents over 80 percent of the life insurance industry, has agreed to these measures.

**INSURANCE PREMIUM PAYMENTS:** For a 60 day period, consumers and small businesses experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19 may defer
paying premiums for property and casualty insurance, including auto, homeowners, renters, workers comp, medical malpractice, livery and taxi.

- **No late fees** will be assessed and **no negative data** will be reported to credit bureaus during this time, and late payments will be payable over a one-year period.

**HEALTH INSURANCE:** New Yorkers who are without health insurance should apply now through NY State of Health. If you lost employer coverage, you must apply within 60 days of losing that coverage.

- Because of a loss of income, **New Yorkers may also be eligible for Medicaid, the Essential Plan or Child Health Plus.**

**HEALTHCARE VOLUNTEERS:** The Governor also announced that since yesterday, an additional **10,000 healthcare workers**, including retirees and students, have signed up to volunteer to work as part of the **state's surge healthcare force** during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, bringing the total number of **volunteers to more than 62,000.**

**MENTAL HEALTH VOLUNTEERS:** Additionally, more than **10,000 mental health professionals**, including individuals from other states, have now signed up to **provide free online mental health services**, with 1,400 volunteers signing up in the last day. New Yorkers can call the **state's hotline at 1-844-863-9314.**

**GOVERNOR’S PRESENTATION MESSAGE POINTS:**

- We are dealing with **public health crisis and the resulting economic crisis.**
- We’re doing everything to **flatten the curve** and **increase hospital capacity.**
- Looking for a **reduction in the rate of increase** in cases, not just the number of cases.
- The optimum is to **not have an apex** – to **eliminate the spike** in the curve – so we don’t overwhelm our hospital system.
- Average time on a ventilator for a non-COVID patient is **3-4 days.**
We’re seeing average time on a ventilator for a COVID patient is significantly longer: **11-21 days.**

We will be shifting the load from downstate hospitals to upstate hospitals and **expanding upstate hospital capacity.**

Whether we’re talking hospital beds, PPE, volunteers, or ventilators, we need to get equipment to those **locations with the most urgent need.**

Economic consequences for New York State – looking at **$10-$15 billion in lost revenue.**

Congressional stimulus bill failed to address the needs of **NYS and NYC.**

And failed to address the **needs of local governments.**

New York State is receiving $5 billion, only for COVID-19 expenses, not for economic recovery expenses. **Not enough.**

At this point, we don’t know the **final rate loss**, and don’t know when the **economy will bounce back** and we don’t know the final **federal help** we will eventually receive.

At this point, the State budget will need initial **projections adjusted down** and we will look to **adjust throughout the year** based on **actual revenue.**

Outpouring of **support is inspiring.**

Keep in mind this is not a sprint. It’s a marathon.

**NEW SITES FOR TEMPORARY HOSPITALS:** Governor Cuomo announced the state is **scouting additional new sites** for temporary hospitals, with a goal of having a **1,000-plus patient overflow** facility **in each NYC borough** as well as **Westchester, Rockland, Nassau and Suffolk** counties.

These new additions, together with the temporary hospitals that are being built at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center and locations at SUNY Stony Brook, SUNY Old Westbury and the Westchester Convention Center, are aimed at building thousands of new beds to bolster existing hospital capacity, with the goal of being **open to patients in early- to mid-April.**
The state is also preparing college dormitories and hotels for emergency beds.

**ADDITIONAL HEALTHCARE VOLUNTEERS:** The Governor also announced that an additional 12,000 healthcare workers, including retirees and students, have signed up to volunteer to work as part of the state’s surge healthcare force during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, bringing the total number of volunteers to more than 52,000.

**MENTAL HEALTH HELPLINE AND VOLUNTEERS:** Additionally, more than 8,600 mental health professionals, including individuals from other states, have now signed up to provide free online mental health services.

- New Yorkers can call the state’s hotline at 1-844-863-9314.
- The helpline is staffed by specially trained volunteers, including mental health professionals, who have received training in crisis counseling related to mental health consequences of infectious disease outbreaks, typical stress reactions, anxiety management, coping skills, and telephonic counseling.
- The helpline will be accessible to New Yorkers who are deaf or hard of hearing and to non-English speaking callers through the use of the Language Line.

**DONATIONS:** Governor Cuomo announced the state has received significant donations from a number of major corporations, philanthropic organizations and celebrities to help increase the state’s supply capacity amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

- The donations include personal protective equipment, hand sanitizer, equipment for field hospitals, free flights for incoming medical volunteers and other medical supplies and support items.
- Additionally, other companies and individuals have reached out about making donations and the state is engaged with them to secure those donations.

**A breakdown of initial donations** is available below:

- **Goldman Sachs:** 195,000 masks
- **Boll and Branch**: 1,000 hospital mattresses
- **Restore Global**: 150,000 coveralls
- **Facebook**: 2,500 gallons of hand sanitizer
- **Rihanna Foundation**: Various PPE supplies
- **Dominion Energy**: Masks
- **L’Oréal**: Hand sanitizer
- **SoftBank**: 1.4 million N-95 masks
- **Suburban Propane**: Propane services for generators and heaters
- **Wayfair**: Mattresses, linens, sheets and pillows for field hospitals
- **Jet Blue**: Free flights for incoming medical volunteers
- **Walmart**: Use of parking lots and store facilities infrastructure
- **Niagara Bottling**: 560,000 bottles of water
- **Keurig/Dr. Pepper**: Coffee and beverages for volunteers working in the field
- **Four Seasons Hotel on 57th Street in Manhattan**: Providing their facility to serve as free housing for nurses, doctors and medical personnel currently working to respond to the coronavirus outbreak
- **St Regis Hotel**: Providing their facility for non-critical care patients
- **The Palace Hotel**: Providing their facility for non-critical care patients
- **Yotel**: Providing their facility for non-critical care patients for a month
- **Room Mate Grace Hotel**: Providing their facility to serve as free housing for nurses, doctors and medical personnel currently working to respond to the coronavirus outbreak
- **Wythe Hotel**: Offering free hotel rooms through April for nurses, doctors and medical personnel currently working to respond to the coronavirus outbreak
- **Kelly Ripa and Mark Consuelos**: $1 million
- **JUDY**: 25,000 N-95 masks
- **Amneal**: 20,000 bottles of Hydroxychloroquine
- **The Estée Lauder Companies**: 10,000 hand sanitizer bottles (8 ounces each) per week for 4-5 weeks
- Long Island Ambulatory Surgery Center: Ventilator
- Uniqlo: 1.05 million masks
- The Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities in New York: 12 ventilators and thousands of pieces of PPE
- Corning Life Sciences: 60,000 15ml centrifuge tubes and 40,000 4ml cryovials
- NBCUniversal: Medical supplies and PPE
- Huawei: 10,000 N-95 masks; 20,000 isolation gowns; 50,000 medical goggles; and 10,000 gloves
- Office of Attorney General Letitia James: 1,700 protective masks and 33,000 pairs of gloves

- STREET CLOSING PILOT: Governor Cuomo also announced New York City will pilot closing streets to vehicles and opening them to pedestrians as part of the city's plan to address the lack of adherence to social distancing protocols.
  - As part of the plan, the Governor is also enacting a voluntary playground social density protocol that prohibits close contact sports such as basketball.

- ROLLING DEPLOYMENTS: The Governor also urged the federal government to implement a "rolling deployment" of equipment and personnel to address the critical needs of hotspot areas with high numbers of positive COVID-19 cases instead of providing limited quantities to the entire country at once.
  - As part of the plan, the Governor has pledged to personally manage the deployment of supplies and equipment and technical assistance to the next hotspots around the country once New York State's number of hospitalizations begins to decrease.

- VOLUNTEER STAFF ACCOMODATIONS: The Governor also announced that the Four Seasons Hotel on 57th street in Manhattan is the first of several hotels that is providing their facility to serve as housing for nurses, doctors, and medical personnel during this crisis.
  - The 350 room hotel will provide medical personnel currently working to respond to the coronavirus outbreak lodging free of charge.
• POSTPONING UTILITY RATE INCREASES: At Governor Cuomo's direction, the Public Service Commission today approved orders postponing rate increases for nearly 2 million customers of New York American Water and National Grid (upstate) that were scheduled to go into effect on April 1st.
  
  o This will provide relief to families and businesses affected by COVID-19.
  
  o NYAW's increase will now go into effect in September and National Grid's increase will go into effect in July.
  
  o These are the only major utilities in New York State that were due to increase their rates on April 1.
  
  o The Department of Public Service is asking other utilities to consider postponing rate increases, depending on continued movement reductions due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

• FLATTENING THE CURVE: Governor Cuomo said the number of COVID-19 cases in the state is doubling about every three days despite a statewide stay-at-home order aimed at curbing the spread.
  
  o We've yet to flatten the curve. It's actually increasing.
  
  o Problem is overwhelming hospitals.
  
  o Need 140,000 beds but currently have a 53,000 bed capacity.
  
  o Need 40,000 ICU beds and have about 3,000.

• SLOWING THE SPREAD: We are aggressively exercising all options.
  
  o Closed businesses
  
  o Reduced street density
  
  o Increased testing
  
  o But nothing is slowing spread quickly enough
  
  o We must increase hospital capacity dramatically and quickly
  
  o Apex could be 14-21 days away

• BUILDING HOSPITAL CAPACITY: Focusing on 3 primary elements.
  
  o More beds (hospitals must increase capacity by 50% - 100%, emergency hospitals, hotels, dorms)
  
  o More staff (Using retirees)
- More equipment (masks, PPEs, Ventilators)
- **NEW DRUG TRIALS:** Starting on multiple fronts.
  - Hydroxychloroquine and Zithromax – testing getting underway
  - DOH plasma injections
  - Antibody tests
- **DISTRIBUTING MEDICAL SUPPLIES:** Governor Cuomo announced the distribution of medical supplies and equipment to hospitals across New York City, Long Island and Westchester to help front line healthcare workers combat COVID-19.
  - **Supplies:** 339,760 N-95 masks, 861,700 surgical masks, 353,300 gloves, 145,122 gowns and 197,085 face shields are being deployed from the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center to hospitals in those regions today.
  - **New York City** will receive 169,000 N-95 masks, 430,850 surgical masks, 176,750 gloves, 72,561 gowns and 39,364 face shields.
  - **Westchester County** will receive 16,988 N-95 masks, 301,595 surgical masks, 17,675 gloves, 72,561 gowns and 3,926 face shields.
  - **Long Island** will receive 33,976 N-95 masks, 86,170 surgical masks, 35,350 gloves, 14,512 gowns and 7,853 face shields.
  - **Rest of New York State** will receive 118,916 N-95 masks, 301,595 surgical masks, 123,735 gloves, 50,793 gowns and 27,485 face shields.
  - This **disbursement is on top** of the 1 million N95 masks that the State purchased and sent to New York City and the approximately 500,000 N95 masks that the State purchased and sent to Long Island last week.
  - The supplies are being **distributed in consultation** with the Greater New York Hospital Association and the Healthcare Association of New York State, both of which are helping identify hospitals in greatest need.
  - **Supplies and equipment** are going where the **need and urgency** is greatest. Look at the hot spots, look at the numbers, look at the positive cases, look at the hospitalizations, and look at the ICU cases.
- **PRIORITIZE RESOURCES:** We need federal help **NOW**.
- Deploy ventilators around the country as they are needed.
- Different regions have different curve rates of infection.
- After the apex in New York, move the ventilators to where they are needed.

- **TEMPORARY HOSPITALS & SUPPLIES:** Governor Cuomo announced an initial delivery of hospital supplies to the Jacob K. Javits Center where FEMA has started to build a 1,000-bed temporary hospital that will help increase New York’s hospital capacity to combat COVID-19 and open next week.
  - This is in addition to the four sites selected by the Army Corps of Engineers that will create temporary hospitals in downstate New York with total capacity up to 4,000.
  - The federal administration has deployed 339,760 N-95 masks, 861,700 surgical masks, 353,300 gloves, 145,122 gowns and 197,085 face shields to New York State, with many state supplies already located at the Javits Center.

- **TASK FORCE LEADERSHIP:** The Governor also announced that three former Secretaries to the Governor — Steve Cohen, Bill Mulrow and Larry Schwartz — are joining the Governor’s COVID-19 Task Force.
  - Mulrow and Cohen will be tasked with developing a NYS Forward Plan – a strategy to restart the economy following the NYS on Pause executive order.
  - Schwartz is tasked with helping the State acquire healthcare equipment and supplies and increasing New York’s hospital surge capacity.

- **INCREASING HOSPITAL CAPACITY:** Governor Cuomo signed an executive order requiring all hospitals to increase capacity by a minimum of 50 percent, with a goal of increasing capacity by 100 percent.
• **INCREASING MEDICAL STAFF CAPACITY**: To support hospital surge capacity, the Governor also announced the State Department of Financial Services is requesting that health insurers disclose the number of nurses, doctors and other health professionals they employ so the state can reach out to those employees and ask them to temporarily serve in the medical field during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

• **DRUG TREATMENT APPROVAL**: The Governor also announced that the FDA has approved the use of a new experimental drug in New York on a compassionate care basis to help treat patients with COVID-19.
  o The trial will use antibody injections to help stimulate and promote individuals’ immune systems against the virus.

• **100 PERCENT FED COST SHARE**: Governor Cuomo also announced that the federal government has agreed to cover 100 percent of the cost for the National Guard.
  o Separately, the Governor has also requested 100 percent federal cost share under New York’s major disaster declaration that was approved on Friday, March 20th.

• **MOBILE TESTING UPDATES**: Additionally, the Governor announced that the state is opening a drive-thru COVID-19 mobile testing facility in the Bronx.
  o This follows the success of the mobile testing centers in New Rochelle, Rockland County, Staten Island and Long Island in addition to the Bronx.
  o Drive-through mobile testing facilities help keep people who are sick or at risk of having contracted coronavirus out of healthcare facilities where they could infect other people.

• **NY STRONGER TOGETHER CAMPAIGN**: The Governor also launched the ‘NY Stronger Together’ campaign urging New Yorkers to stay home, stop the spread and save lives.
• **TEMPORARY HOSPITALS:** Governor Cuomo accepted the recommendation of the Army Corps of Engineers for **four temporary hospital sites** in New York State in an effort to **address imminent capacity issues** resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.
  
  o The Governor visited the four sites – the **Jacob K. Javits Convention Center**, and locations at **SUNY Stony Brook**, **SUNY Old Westbury** and the **Westchester Convention Center** — yesterday, and New York State is ready for the Army Corps of Engineers to **begin construction immediately**.
  
  o Hospitals at the SUNY campus sites will be constructed indoors with outdoor tent support and the dormitories on the campuses will be used for healthcare staff to stay while working at the sites.

• **FEMA ASSISTANCE:** Governor Cuomo also announced that FEMA will erect **four additional federal hospital facilities** within the Javits Center, in addition to the temporary hospital to be constructed by the Army Corps.
  
  o Each of the four federal hospitals will have **250 beds** and come **fully equipped and fully staffed** by the federal government.

• **REPURPOSING FACILITIES:** The Governor also announced that the state is continuing to quickly identify sites to **repurpose existing healthcare facilities** to be used as **temporary hospitals**.
The state on Saturday leased the Brooklyn Health Center for Rehabilitation and Healthcare to serve as a temporary hospital with capacity up to 600 beds.

- **DEFENSE PRODUCTION ACT:** Additionally, Governor Cuomo called on the federal government to immediately implement the Defense Production Act and nationalize the contracting and acquisition of medical supplies.
  
  - New York State is already seeing a shortage in medical supplies and personal protective equipment – or PPE – including masks, gloves, gowns and ventilators.
  - This shortage is also impacting other states, leading to price gouging by companies, hospitals competing with one another and states competing with other states and even other countries for supplies.
  - Implementing the Defense Production Act would give the federal government legal authority to mandate private companies to manufacture these critical supplies for all states.

- **FINANCIAL HELP:** The Governor also called on the federal government to prioritize sending stimulus funding to individuals, state and local governments and businesses.
  
  - As part of his call, the Governor made it clear that funding to corporations should not be a gift at the expense of taxpayers, and that taxpayers must share in the success of corporations.

- **DRUG TRIALS:** The Governor also announced that the state will begin to implement drug trials and has acquired 70,000 doses of Hydroxychloroquine, 10,000 doses of Zithromax and 750,000 doses of Chloroquine. The trials will start Tuesday.

- **NEW TESTING:** Governor Cuomo also urged the FDA to immediately approve serological testing for COVID-19 antibodies, which will help determine which individuals already had the virus and resolved.
  
  - This will allow more individuals to return to work, including healthcare workers to help address the shortage of medical staff in hospitals.
• **NEW HOSPITAL CAPACITY PLANS:** Governor Cuomo also announced a new State Department of Health Emergency Order requiring all hospitals to develop plans to expand capacity within hospitals. The plan must expand capacity by a **minimum of 50 percent** with a **goal** of expanding capacity **by 100 percent**.

• The Governor also announced that the state will mandate that all hospitals must **cancel all elective, non-critical surgeries** to help expand hospital capacity – effective **Wednesday, March 25th**.

• After visiting **New York City** yesterday, the Governor is also directing **New York City** to come up with a **plan for review** by the state in the **next 24 hours** to address the **lack of adherence to social distancing protocols** in the area, including at parks and other public spaces.

• **THRUWAY TOLL ANNOUNCEMENT:** The New York State Thruway Authority announced **emergency toll procedures** will be in place effective **Sunday, March 22 at approximately 8 p.m.,** at cash toll lanes on the Thruway’s ticketed-system.
  
  o This plan will **convert the collection of cash tolls to toll billing by the license plate** during the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) response. The procedures will be in place until further notice.

  o We are implementing these emergency toll procedures for the health and safety of our employees and motorists.

  o Effective Sunday, March 22 at approximately 8 p.m., when non-E-Z Pass customers enter the Thruway in a cash lane, they will continue through the lane **without collecting a ticket**.

  o When the customer exits the Thruway, they will inform the toll collector which exit they entered the Thruway and provide the toll collector their license plate information, without paying cash to the toll collector.

  o Motorists will then be **sent a bill in the mail in approximately 30 days**. Toll bills will be sent to the registered owner of the vehicle at the address on file with the Department of Motor Vehicles. Once they receive a bill in
the mail, **customers can pay with a credit card** through the Thruway Authority’s website.

- **TEMPORARY HOSPITALS:** Governor Cuomo announced four sites identified by the Army Corps Of Engineers for **temporary hospitals**
  - Governor will **visit these sites** today and make a **final determination:**
    - Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
    - SUNY Stony Brook
    - SUNY Old Westbury
    - Westchester Convention Center
  - Over the past few days, an **inspection team** led by the Army Corps of Engineers, and including state officials from the Office of General Services, the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York, the Department of Health and the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs, has **visited more than a dozen sites** to review for temporary hospital use.
  - Upon the Governor’s determination, the **Army Corps** is expected to immediately begin work to **construct the temporary hospitals**.
  - The Governor is also requesting **FEMA designate four field hospitals with 250 beds each for the state**, intended for use in the Javits Center, in addition to the temporary hospitals to be constructed by the Army Corps.

- **PPE:** Governor Cuomo announced new actions to **increase the State’s supply of Personal Protective Equipment** (PPE).
  - The state has identified **two million N95 masks** for purchase and will send **one million to New York City** and **500,000 to Long Island**.
  - **Apparel manufacturers** in the state are **converting their operations to begin manufacturing masks** and other medical equipment, and the state is also exploring manufacturing masks.
Additionally, the **state is gathering ventilators** from different health facilities from across the state to be used in the most critical areas and has already **purchased 6,000 additional ventilators**.

- **FEMA GRANT**: The Governor also announced the federal government **approved New York’s request for a major disaster declaration** that allows FEMA to step in financially and assist the state.
  - Under the current declaration **FEMA will pay 75 percent** of funding and New York is responsible for 25 percent. The Governor is **urging the President** and his administration to grant a **100 percent federal cost share** under this declaration.
  - The Governor also urged the federal government to **quickly grant** the state’s **pending request to support homeowners** through additional **individual assistance programs** and **statewide hazard mitigation assistance**.

- **PAUSE EXECUTIVE ORDER**: Governor Cuomo announced the "New York State on PAUSE" **executive order**, a 10-point policy to assure uniform safety for everyone.
  - It includes a new directive that all non-essential businesses statewide must close in-office personnel functions effective at **8PM on Sunday, March 22**, and temporarily bans all non-essential gatherings of individuals of any size for any reason.
  - **Businesses will have to keep 100% of employees at home**.
  - **Businesses that violate the new rules face fines and closure**.
  - **PAUSE includes the following**:

- **MATILDA’s LAW (for seniors over 70 and most vulnerable groups)**:
  - Remain indoors
  - Can go outside for solitary exercise
  - Pre-screen visitors by taking their temperature
  - Do not visit households with multiple people
All vulnerable persons should wear a mask
Always stay six feet away from individuals
Do not take public transportation unless urgent

PAUSE FOR NON-VULNERABLE
Non-essential gatherings are cancelled
Practice social distancing
Even essential businesses must facilitate social distancing
Limit outdoor activity
Limit use of public transportation

ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES OR ENTITIES: including any for profit or non-profit, regardless of the nature of the service, the function they perform, or its corporate or entity structure, are not subject to the in-person restriction.

(Essential Businesses must continue to comply with the guidance and directives for maintaining a clean and safe work environment issued by the Department of Health).

This guidance is issued by the New York State Department of Economic Development d/b/a Empire State Development and applies to each business location individually and is intended to assist businesses in determining whether they are an essential business and steps to request such designation. With respect to business or entities that operate or provide both essential and non-essential services, supplies or support, only those lines and/or business operations that are necessary to support the essential services, supplies, or support are exempt from the restrictions.

For purposes of Executive Order 202.6, "Essential Business," means:

1. Essential Health Care Operations, Including:
   - research and laboratory services
   - hospitals
   - walk-in-care health facilities
• emergency veterinary and livestock services
• elder care
• medical wholesale and distribution
• home health care workers or aides for the elderly
• doctor and emergency dental
• nursing homes, or residential health care facilities or congregate care facilities
• medical supplies and equipment manufacturers and providers

2. Essential Infrastructure, Including:

• utilities including power generation, fuel supply and transmission
• public water and wastewater
• telecommunications and data centers
• airports/airlines
• transportation infrastructure such as bus, rail, or for-hire vehicles, garages
• hotels, and places of accommodation

3. Essential Manufacturing, Including:

• food processing, manufacturing agents, including all foods and beverages
• chemicals
• medical equipment/instruments
• pharmaceuticals
• sanitary products
• telecommunications
• microelectronics/semi-conductor
• agriculture/farms
• household paper products

4. Essential Retail, Including:

• grocery stores including all food and beverage stores
• pharmacies
• convenience stores
• farmer’s markets
• gas stations
• restaurants/bars (but only for take-out/delivery)
• hardware and building material stores

5. Essential Services, Including:

• trash and recycling collection, processing and disposal
• mail and shipping services
• laundromats
• building cleaning and maintenance
• child care services
• auto repair
• warehouse/distribution and fulfillment
• funeral homes, crematoriums and cemeteries
• storage for essential businesses
• animal shelters

6. News Media

7. Financial Institutions, Including:

• banks
• insurance
• payroll
• accounting
• services related to financial markets

8. Providers of Basic Necessities to Economically Disadvantaged Populations, Including:

• homeless shelters and congregate care facilities
• food banks
• human services providers whose function includes the direct care of patients in state-licensed or funded voluntary programs; the care, protection, custody and oversight of individuals both in the community and in state-licensed residential facilities; those operating community shelters and other critical human services agencies providing direct care or support

9. Construction, Including:
• skilled trades such as electricians, plumbers
• other related construction firms and professionals for essential infrastructure or for emergency repair and safety purposes

10. Defense
• defense and national security-related operations supporting the U.S. Government or a contractor to the US government

11. Essential Services Necessary to Maintain the Safety, Sanitation and Essential Operations of Residences or Other Essential Businesses, Including:
• law enforcement
• fire prevention and response
• building code enforcement
• security
• emergency management and response
• building cleaners or janitors
• general maintenance whether employed by the entity directly or a vendor
• automotive repair
• disinfection

12. Vendors that Provide Essential Services or Products, Including Logistics and Technology Support, Child Care and Services:
• logistics
• technology support for online services
• child care programs and services
• government owned or leased buildings
• essential government services

If the function of your business is not listed above, but you believe that it is essential or it is an entity providing essential services or functions, you may request designation as an essential business.

Houses of worship are not ordered closed however it is strongly recommended no congregate services be held and social distance maintained.

Businesses and entities that provide other essential services must implement rules that help facilitate social distancing of at least six feet.

Requests by businesses to be designated an essential function as described above, should only be made if they are NOT covered by the guidance.

To request designation as an essential business, please click here.

Restrictions on requesting designation as an essential business:

• Any business that only has a single occupant/employee (i.e. gas station) has been deemed exempt and need not submit a request to be designated as an essential business.
• Businesses ordered to close on Monday, March 15, 2020 under the restrictions on any gathering with 50 or more participants, including but not limited to, bars, restaurants, gyms, movie theaters, casinos, auditoriums, concerts, conferences, worship services, sporting events, and physical fitness centers, are presumed to be compliant with NYS issued restrictions and must remain closed and are not eligible for designation as an essential business for purposes of this guidance.


Local health department contact information can be found at: https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact_information/index.htm

**ADDITIONAL NEW DENSITY REDUCTION RESTRICTIONS:** Governor Cuomo, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont and Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf announced new density reduction restrictions to help slow the spread of COVID-19 - part of their uniform, multi-state approach to combating the virus.

- All barbershops, hair salons, tattoo or piercing parlors, nail salons, hair removal services, and related personal care services will be closed to members of the public effective Saturday, March 21 at 8PM, as these services cannot be provided while maintaining social distance.

- Yesterday, the four governors announced indoor portions of retail shopping malls, as well as amusement parks and bowling alleys in the four states would close by 8 PM Thursday.

- Earlier in the week, the Governors announced limits on crowd capacity for social and recreational gatherings to 50 people.

- The governors also announced restaurants and bars would close for on premise service and move to take-out and delivery services only. The governors also temporarily closed movie theaters, gyms and casinos.
• **DMV:** Governor Cuomo issued an Executive Order temporarily **closing DMV in-office transactions:**
  o **Online transactions**, including for license renewals, are still available.
  o **License and permit** expirations will be extended.

• **MENTAL HEALTH:** Gov. Cuomo today **asked the professional mental health community** — including psychiatrists, psychologists and therapists — to **volunteer their time** to get the network up and running.
  o Sessions would be held **over the phone or over video chat**.
  o If we get enough volunteers, New York State will set up a Mental Health Electronic Help Center.
  o The initiative is the **first move by a U.S. state government** to try to address the mental health consequences that have arisen from the COVID-19 crisis.

• **TAX DEADLINE:** Moved from April 15 to July 15 for both state and federal income tax returns.

• **EVICTIONS MORATORIUM:** New York is implementing a 90-day moratorium on evictions in the state

• **MORTGAGE RELIEF:** The Governor also announced the **Department of Financial Services has issued a new directive** to New York State mortgage servicers to provide **90-day mortgage relief** to mortgage borrowers impacted by the novel coronavirus.

  • **The directive includes:**
    o Waiving mortgage payments based on financial hardship;
    o No negative reporting to credit bureaus;
    o Grace period for loan modification;
    o No late payment fees or online payment fees; and
    o Postponing or suspending foreclosures.
• **FINANCIAL FEES WAIVED:** Additionally, the Governor has asked DFS to instruct state chartered banks to waive ATM fees, late fees, overdraft fees and fees for credits cards to help lessen the financial hardship of the COVID-19 pandemic on New Yorkers.

• **HOSPITAL EFFICIENCY:** The Governor also announced new measures to free up staff and speed up the admission and discharge process at hospitals for 90 days.
  o The Department of Financial Services will issue a directive to health insurers allowing scheduled surgeries and admissions without insurer preapproval and allowing inpatient hospital services without insurer approval.
  o Under the measure, insurers will pay inpatient hospital services and emergency services without waiting to review for medical necessity.
  o It will also allow the discharge of patients to a rehabilitation center or nursing after an inpatient hospital stay without insurer preapproval, and encourage self-funded plans to adopt these same provisions.

• **PAID LEAVE:** Governor Cuomo signed a bill to guarantee Paid Leave for New Yorkers under mandatory or precautionary quarantine due to COVID-19.

• **NAVY HOSPITAL SHIP:** Governor Cuomo announced the Navy hospital ship USNS Comfort will be deployed to New York harbor and is expected to arrive in April.
  o The 1,000-bed hospital ship has 12 fully-equipped operating rooms and will significantly increase New York’s hospital surge capacity.

• **EXECUTIVE ORDER FOR BUSINESSES:** The Governor also announced he will issue an executive order directing non-essential businesses to implement work-from-home policies effective Friday, March 20.
  o The Governor also recognized the following partners in this effort:
    ▪ The Business Council of NY
- Retail Council of NYS
- ABNY
- Partnership for New York City

- **REGIONAL APPROACH:** Governor announced that **Pennsylvania has joined New York, New Jersey and Connecticut** in a regional approach to combating COVID-19.
  - Governor Cuomo, Governor Murphy, Governor Lamont and Governor Wolf directed **temporary closure** of all indoor portions of retail shopping malls, amusement parks & bowling alleys.

- **STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES:** On Monday, Governor Cuomo directed nonessential **state employees** statewide to **work from home**.
  - The Governor also directed local governments to reduce their overall workforce by 50 percent and allow nonessential employees to work from home.

- **DRIVE-THROUGH TESTING:** continues in locations including New Rochelle in Westchester County, Jones Beach in Nassau County…Staten Island and Rockland County.
  - Drive-through mobile testing facilities help keep people who are sick or at risk of having contracted coronavirus **out of healthcare facilities** where they could infect other people.
  - These facilities are a **critical part of the Governor's nation-leading program** to test thousands of people per day for COVID-19 by this week.

- **SUPPLIES:** Local governments seeking to obtain additional stocks of hand sanitizer or other supplies should work with their County’s emergency Manager and local Health Department to submit requests directly into NY RESPONDS, the state’s web-based system which enables both local governments and state agencies to submit and share vital emergency-related information and resource requests.
• **HOSPITAL SURGE CAPACITY COUNCIL:** The Governor has asked the Greater New York Hospital Association President Ken Raske and Northwell Health President Michael Dowling to lead a council to develop hospital surge capacity.

• **SUPPLEMENT HEALTHCARE PERSONNEL:** The state is reaching out to qualified former doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals to supplement the personnel at hospitals.
  
  - The State Department of Health and the State Education Department have sent letters to retired health care professionals and all schools of nursing, public health and medicine encouraging qualified health care personnel to sign up for on-call work during the COVID-19 crisis.
  - Healthcare professionals who wish to volunteer can contact the State Department of Health at health.ny.gov/assistance.

• **TELEMEDICINE:** Governor Cuomo announced the State Department of Financial Services will require insurance companies to waive co-pays for telehealth visits.
  
  - This action will encourage New Yorkers to seek medical attention from their homes rather than visit a hospital or doctor’s office — ultimately reducing strain on the healthcare system and preventing further spread of the virus.

• **TESTING GUIDANCE:** We have received lots of questions around testing guidance and who can or should get tested now. Here’s an excerpt from the current guidance.

**Testing for COVID-19 shall be authorized by a health care provider when:**
  
  - An individual has come within proximate contact (same classroom, office, or gatherings) of another person known to be positive; or
  - An individual has traveled to a country that the CDC has issued a Level 2 or Level 3 Travel Health Notice, and shows symptoms of illness; or
  - An individual is quarantined (mandatory or precautionary) and has shown symptoms of COVID-19 illness; or
- An individual is symptomatic and has not tested positive for any other infection; or
- Other cases where the facts and circumstances warrant as determined by the treating clinician in consultation with state and local department of health officials.

**NURSING HOMES:** There are new limits on visitations to nursing homes - Only Medically Necessary Visits Will Be Allowed to Protect Most Vulnerable.

- **All staff are required to wear masks.**
- **All staff will be monitored for symptoms.**
- **No non-medical/staff personnel may enter unless** there’s an exigent circumstance. In such a case, visitors must then wear protective clothing including masks.
- NYS DOH sent **updated guidance to** all nursing home administrators around the state. That guidance is posted on the State Department of Health’s COVID-19 website.

**CHILD CARE:** Governor Cuomo also directed the Greater New York Hospital Association and the Healthcare Association of New York State to work with 1199 SEIU to develop a plan to create drop-in child care opportunities and expand child care facilities at their hospitals to ensure child care for hospital workforce. They will submit a joint plan to the state by Friday.

**WORKING WITH COUNTIES:** The Governor also tasked SUNY Empire State College President Jim Malatras with working with counties to develop contingency plans in preparation for school closings, including how to provide meals to food insecure children and ensuring families have adequate access to childcare.

**NYS COURT SYSTEM:** Governor Cuomo asked Chief Judge Janet DiFiore to develop a plan to reduce density in the court system, including limiting nonessential proceedings, without disrupting criminal justice system.

**ELECTIONS DELAYED:** Governor Cuomo issued an executive order delaying village elections statewide.
Delaying village elections will help ensure poll workers and voters are not potentially exposed to the virus and at the same time maintain integrity in our election system.

Any village election to be held March 17, 2020 shall be postponed and any elected official holding such position shall remain in office until such time as a new election is held.

**ELECTION PETITIONS:** In an effort to keep New Yorkers safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today signed an **executive order temporarily modifying election procedures** to help reduce the spread of the novel coronavirus.

- **Governor Cuomo said:** "This executive order modifies the election process in a way that both protects public health and ensures the democratic process remains healthy and strong regardless of the ongoing pandemic."

- The executive order **suspends the candidate petitioning process** — effective 5PM on Tuesday — for the June primaries for Congressional, State Senate, State Assembly and Judicial races.

- The executive order also **modifies the signature requirements for ballot access**; candidates will only need to collect 30 percent of the statutory threshold.

- **For Congress**, candidates would need 375 signatures rather than 1,250.

- **For State Senate**, candidates would need 300 signatures rather than 1,000.

- **For State Assembly**, candidates would only need 150 signatures rather than 500.

- The executive order also **modifies deadlines and procedures** to better allow New Yorkers to vote absentee for the **Queens Borough President special election** on March 24. It extends the current deadline to register to vote absentee to March 23, the day before the special election. Absentee votes must be postmarked or delivered in person up until the day of the election on March 24.
**SCHOOL CLOSINGS UPDATE:** Governor Cuomo signed an executive order directing all schools in New York to close by Wednesday, March 18 for two weeks ending April 1.

- At that time, the state will reassess whether to extend the school closures further and **continue to suspend the 180-day instructional** requirement. Schools that exceed the closure period without state authorization will not be exempted from the 180-day rule.
- About **86% of all schools** in the state have closed already.

**UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE:** As part of the Governor’s Executive Order, the state will **waive the 7-day waiting period** for workers in shared work programs to **claim unemployment insurance** for those that have been put out of work by COVID-19.

**EMPLOYEE PROTECTIONS:** To address the immediate need of employees affected by COVID-19 who are **subject to mandatory or precautionary orders of quarantine or isolation**, the Governor’s legislation will provide the following:

- **Employers with 10 or fewer employees** and a net income less than $1 million will provide job protection for the duration of the quarantine order and guarantee their workers access to Paid Family Leave and disability benefits (short-term disability) for the period of quarantine including wage replacement for their salaries up to $150,000.

- **Employers with 11-99 employees** and employers with 10 or fewer employees and a net income greater than $1 million will provide at least 5 days of paid sick leave, job protection for the duration of the quarantine order, and guarantee their workers access to Paid Family Leave and disability benefits (short-term disability) for the period of quarantine including wage replacement for their salaries up to $150,000.

- **Employers with 100 or more employees**, as well as all **public employers** (regardless of number of employees), will provide at least 14 days of paid sick leave and guarantee job protection for the duration of the quarantine order.
• **STUDENT DEBT:** Governor Cuomo and Attorney General Letitia James announced that — effective immediately — the state will *temporarily halt the collection of medical and student debt owed to the State of New York* and referred to the Office of the Attorney General for collection, for at least a 30-day period, in response to growing financial impairments resulting from the spread of 2019 novel coronavirus, or COVID-19.
  
  o In an effort to support these workers and families and *ease their financial burdens*, the OAG will halt the collection of medical and student debt owed to the State of New York and referred to the OAG for collection from March 16, 2020 through April 15, 2020.
  
  o After this 30-day period, the *OAG will reassess the needs of state residents for a possible extension*.
  
  o Additionally, the OAG will *accept applications for suspension* of all *other types of debt owed* to the State of New York and referred to the OAG for collection.

• **PARK FEES WAIVED:** The Governor also announced New York State will *waive all* fees for state, local and county parks.

• **PUBLIC UTILITIES:** The Governor also directed the New York State Department of Public Service to *suspend public utilities from cutting off service* - including power and heat - to customers affected by COVID-19. The State’s major utilities will take immediate action to suspend service shutoffs to households during the COVID-19 outbreak and will continue to *offer deferred payment plans* for customers struggling financially due to the outbreak.

• **NATIONAL GUARD:** At the direction of Governor Cuomo, the *New York National Guard has mobilized Army and Air National Guard members* in State active duty status to assist in New York State’s efforts to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus.
  
  o The soldiers come *from units located across New York.*
- The soldiers will be on duty as long as required and are assisting in the distribution of food supplies and state-provided hand sanitizer, aiding with the cleaning and disinfecting of public spaces, and helping with transportation and logistical needs.

- **DOCCS**: The New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision has suspended visitation at facilities state wide.

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