



Dear neighbor,

As of Friday afternoon, the number of deaths in New York State rose to 18,610, with 289 people dying in the last 24 hours. While these lives cut short, are a terrible loss, the number of daily deaths has fallen for several days now.

Another indicator that we are moving in the right direction is the falling hospitalization rate. With New Yorkers adhering to social distancing rules, fewer infections are being recorded.

On April 15, New York recorded 11,571 new coronavirus cases in one day. Today, there were 954. While 1,000 new cases a day is not yet where we need to be, we are well on our way.

The Center for Disease Control recommends the state and regional hospitalization rate be in decline for 14 days before a phased re-opening can begin. Additionally, after elective surgeries resume, regions will need to free up 30% of their hospital and ICU beds in order to ensure their hospital systems do not reach capacity in case of an uptick. This is where testing will be key.

Planning has begun to start Phase 1 of that process on May 15, with construction and manufacturing resuming in the Upstate and Central regions. Two weeks later, if there is no significant increase in cases, certain low risk businesses will be allowed to open their doors, followed by businesses considered higher risk and less essential. With the downstate area accounting for the largest percentage of new infections, we should expect a delayed reopening.

Stay safe and healthy,

Dan

Absentee ballots

Last week, the Governor issued an executive order that ensures all registered New York voters will receive an absentee ballot application in the mail. While polls will remain open, voters will have the ability to vote by mail if they don't feel comfortable voting in-person. No one should have to risk their health to vote.

For weeks we pushed the New York City Board of Elections to transition to a fully online registration for absentee ballots. They have heard our call and now NYC voters can fill out their application for an absentee ballot online, without having to mail the paper application. You can request your absentee ballot by visiting: <https://nycabsentee.com/>

Resources and Volunteer Opportunities

Face masks: Every New Yorker is required to wear a face mask or covering in public when social distancing is not possible. According to the Center for Disease Control, wearing even a simple cloth face covering can slow the transmission of the virus and prevent its spread from an unknowing person to the next.

Read the CDC's guidance on face masks and learn how to make your own here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

PBS learning media: PBS and your local station have curated free, standards-aligned videos, interactives, lesson plans, and more for teachers, parents, and students. The platform has seen a 10x increase in usage since the beginning of the school shut down.

Additionally, new, special broadcasting schedules have been developed to better serve homebound families during the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more here: <https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/>

The Met Opera livestream: Although the Met Opera had to shutter its doors due to the novel coronavirus outbreak, they are providing a myriad of online cultural resources and outlets for the community. Since it went live on March 16th, The Met Opera has streamed a free opera from its vast digital library via its website.

Over 3 million people have already taken advantage of this great opportunity. Visit here to tune in: <https://www.metopera.org/user-information/nightly-met-opera-streams/>

Health insurance: New York State is extending the open enrollment period for uninsured New Yorkers until May 15. To sign up for health insurance, visit: nystateofhealth.ny.gov

Mental health hotline: COVID-19 has left many of us feeling stressed, depressed, anxious, and isolated. A free and confidential mental health hotline is available for all New Yorkers, from 8am – 10pm, 7 days a week. If you are in need of emotional support, a consultation, or a referral to a provider please call 1-844-863-9314.

Free meals: The New York City Department of Education is committed to making three free meals available for every New Yorker. No one will be turned away. To find a meal hub, visit: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/food/free-meals>

Support local business: Community Board 8 has compiled a list of local businesses that have remained open. You can add a business to the list or see what's open here: <https://www.cb8m.com/2020/03/local-businesses-coronavirus/>

Donate blood: Due to COVID-19, New York is experiencing a blood shortage. If you are able to donate blood, please call 800-933-2566 or go to www.nybc.org.

Donate supplies: If you or your business have supplies you'd like to donate such as PPE, including face masks or gloves, medical equipment, or cleaning supplies, please contact my office at quartd@nyassembly.gov.