

Dear Friends,

Moving forward I will be sending out regular updates to provide you with timely information you might find helpful. If there are topics not discussed here that you would like to see covered in future newsletters, please let us know!

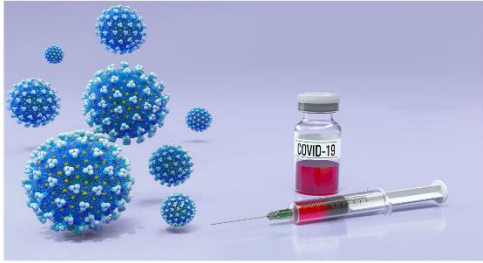
[COVID-19 Vaccination Update](#)

New York continues to struggle with vaccine shortages, with approximately 300,000 doses being delivered every week for the now approximately 10 million people who are eligible. Believe me when I tell you, I share your frustration.

Expanded Eligibility

Eligibility has been expanded to New Yorkers with the following comorbidities and pre-existing conditions:

- Cancer (current or in remission, including 9/11-related cancers)
- Chronic kidney disease
- Pulmonary Disease, including but not limited to, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), asthma (moderate-to-severe), pulmonary fibrosis, cystic fibrosis, and 9/11 related pulmonary diseases
- Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities including Down Syndrome
- Heart conditions, including but not limited to heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies, or hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) including but not limited to solid organ transplant or from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, use of other immune weakening medicines, or other causes
- Severe Obesity (BMI 40 kg/m²), Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 kg/m² or higher but < 40 kg/m²)
- Pregnancy
- Sickle cell disease or Thalassemia
- Type 1 or 2 diabetes mellitus
- Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain)
- Neurologic conditions including but not limited to Alzheimer's Disease or dementia
- Liver disease



Health).

Appointments with State-run vaccination providers are available at: <https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov>. **Please be aware that you will need to bring evidence of the eligible morbidity or pre-condition to your appointment.** When your appointment is scheduled, please confirm with the provider what evidence they will need. For comorbidities and pre-existing conditions, it may be one of the following: 1) A doctor's note; 2) medical evidence; 3) certification from a local government (such as the Westchester County Department of

For the most updated list of ALL those who are eligible to get the COVID-19 vaccination, [please click here](#).

Where to Go for an Appointment - Additional Guidance

We have been provided some additional guidance that we hope will help clarify where you should be going to make your appointment, based on your eligibility category:

- **If your eligibility is due SOLELY to a comorbidity or pre-existing condition**, you **MUST** schedule your appointment via the [state website](#) or via the hotline by calling 1-833-NYS-4-VAX ([1-833-697-4829](tel:1-833-697-4829)).
- For those who are 65 and older, you may go through the [state website](#) or hotline, or you may be able to schedule an appointment with select retail pharmacies, physician networks or practice groups. For the most updated list of these non-State providers in the area, [please click here](#). Please note, however, **retail pharmacies, physician networks and practice groups have been asked by the State to *only* vaccinate persons aged 65 years and older.**
- For those in [Phase 1A & 1B](#) who qualify based on their employment (healthcare workers, teachers, first responders and [other qualifying essential employees](#)), you may [make your appointment](#) at a state facility, **however it is recommended you contact your employer first**, as often employers are coordinating vaccinations for their employees.

Opening Our Schools

A number of you have reached out to me about opening our schools for increased in-person instruction. Needless to say, this is a conversation that is happening all over the country.

Since first taking office on January 1, I have been working assiduously in a number of areas regarding our schools, ranging from re-instating school sports like football, to increasing Foundation Aid and other school funding. Likewise, I also am fully engaged in the discussion about school re-openings.

Throughout this process, I have been working closely with my colleagues in the Westchester Assembly delegation. We have had numerous conversations and virtual meetings with representatives of the Governor and the NYS Department of Health (DOH), including most recently a meeting with the DOH ([click here to read the post-meeting statement](#)). Chief among the issues being discussed is the amount of flexibility schools will be allowed in their reopening plans, including whether social distancing of fewer than six feet may be accomplished safely.



We are also working with County Executive George Latimer, who has been very supportive. The Westchester County Department of Health is coordinating with school districts to assist with their reopening plans and also to provide for the vaccination of teachers and school personnel.

The situation regarding school reopenings is very fluid, and in reality will likely vary by district based on a variety of factors, including the population and the ability of the schools to safely distance their students and staff. As new developments arise, I will continue to keep you up-to-date on this very important issue.

[Additional Openings & Extended Health Insurance Open Enrollment](#)

Recently the governor's office announced the following:

- Subject to strict health and safety protocols, [beginning March 15th, weddings and catered events can resume statewide](#). Venues are restricted to 50 percent capacity, with no more than 150 people per event. All attendees and patrons must be tested prior to the event. Mask wearing and other safety protocols will be required.
- [Indoor entertainment centers and places of amusement can open at 25% capacity beginning on March 26th. Outdoor Amusement parks can open at 33% capacity beginning April 9th](#). Face coverings and social distancing will be required for all customers and staff, and customers will be required to have a health screening with temperature checks prior to entry.
- [Day and overnight summer camps in New York State can begin to plan for reopening](#). The Department of Health will issue specific reopening guidance, including details on timing, in the coming weeks.
- Due to the ongoing health emergency, [New York's health insurance Open Enrollment Period](#) will be further extended to [May 15, 2021](#). Enrollment can be made through [New York's health insurance Marketplace](#), or directly through insurers.



Unemployment Insurance Fraud



We are seeing an increasing number of cases of unemployment insurance fraud – people receiving mail from the Department of Labor about a claim in their name that they did not file. Sometimes they are receiving debit cards for the claims. **If you suspect you are the victim of unemployment insurance fraud, please go to <https://www.labor.ny.gov/agencyinfo/report-fraud.shtm> to learn how you can report the fraud with the NYS Labor Department.**

We also are happy to help in any way we can, so please don't hesitate to reach out.

Gestational Surrogacy Legalized in New York

On February 15th, a law legalizing gestational surrogacy in New York went into effect. The Child-Parent Security Act, passed last year, repealed archaic laws that made gestational surrogacy illegal and gestational surrogacy agreements unenforceable. Finally, LGBTQ+ couples and couples struggling with infertility will have the opportunity to start and/or expand their families.

Congratulations to my colleagues Assemblywoman Amy Paulin and Senator Brad Hoylman who -- along with the Governor and advocates from across the state -- fought to get this law passed. It is a real step forward for many New York families.

For more information about surrogacy in New York, please visit <https://health.ny.gov/community/pregnancy/surrogacy>.



Amending the NYS Constitution to Include the Right to Clean Air and Water On the Ballot in November

The environment has always been an issue of utmost importance to me, and the climate crisis always one of my top priorities. When I was selected to be on the Environmental Conservation Committee, I couldn't have been more pleased.



I am proud to have voted both in committee and on the Assembly floor for an amendment to the NYS Constitution that states, "Each person shall have the right to clean air and water, and a healthful environment."

As the proposed amendment has passed the legislature for the two consecutive sessions, it will now be on the ballot this November for New Yorkers to vote on. Stay tuned for additional information.

[Celebrating Black History](#)



(Image Credit: [vecteezy.com](https://www.vecteezy.com))

On a final note, I would like to use this opportunity to mention (if you don't already know) that February is Black History Month.

Here in Westchester County, our history is rich with the significant contributions that African-Americans have made. I urge you to consider exploring and celebrating those contributions, not just in February, but all year round.

Please [click here](#) for more information.

I hope you have found this information helpful. **As a reminder, please follow me on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for the most up-to-date information.**

As I mentioned in my previous newsletter, if my office can be of any assistance – or if you need any further information on the topics discussed above – please don't hesitate to reach out to me at burdickc@nyassembly.gov or [\(914\) 244-4450](tel:9142444450). We are here to help you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Burdick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a white background behind it.

DISTRICT OFFICE
100 South Bedford Road
Suite 150
Mount Kisco, NY 10549
[914-244-4450](tel:9142444450)

ALBANY OFFICE
TBA
Albany, NY 12248
[518-455-5397](tel:5184555397)