

10.5.20 Notes from the Governor's Briefing:

COVID:

- Day 219
- Top 20 zip codes at 5.5% infection rate
- Statewide infection rate is 1.01%
- Statewide with hotspots included is 1.22%
- 8 fatalities
- 636 hospitalizations
- 149 ICU patients
- 70 intubations
- Gov. discussed infection spikes across the country and globe
- Gov. stated NY is the "exception to the rule" that the infection spikes in the Fall
- Current hotspots:
 - Western NY: 1.2%
 - Broome: 3.1%
 - Orange: 4.7%
 - Rockland: 6.2%
 - Brooklyn: 2.5%
- Gov. discussed importance of reducing hotspots, compliance and enforcement necessary

Call with NYC:

- Gov. said he spoke today with Mulgrew, de Balsio, NYC Council Speaker Johnson, NYC Comptroller Stringer
- Gov. said it was a "good" call, but these are complicated issues
- Viral spread is known to occur most at schools, religious gatherings public spaces, businesses
- Gov. stated infection is increasing in hotspots because residents are not complying with safety protocols

Schools:

- Some schools have not been doing testing, so state needs data on these clusters
- Gov. said schools in hotspots will close tomorrow

Religious Gatherings:

- City plan leaves religious institutions open
- If kept open, communities must abide by safety protocols
- Gov. meeting with ultra-Orthodox community tomorrow
- Gov. said if compliance is not satisfactory, he will mandate closures

Enforcement:

- NYC engaged in only 26 enforcement actions with over 1,000 violations
- Gov. said state did 1,200 enforcement actions on bars and restaurants, with 228 license revocations
- State will take over enforcement in all hotspot areas, local governments will provide personnel

Hotspots:

- Targeting by zip code is imperfect: can leave out some communities infected, can include communities with low infection rate
- Zip code is a "template", other methods are being looked into to better analyze data for infection rates, spread
- Schools can also be comprised of students from various zip codes
- Non-essential businesses, public spaces with close once better method is determined, but schools will close immediately

Q&A:

- On why businesses are not being closed:
 - Gov. said businesses are not primary contributor to spread, schools, religious institutions are primary factors
 - Gov. said there is better method to determining closures than zip codes
- On why Gov. is not closing schools Wednesday as Mayor proposed
- Gov. said Mulgrew, Speaker Johnson, Comptroller Stringer recommended tomorrow

- Gov. also noted no testing being done in some schools, children should not be sent if there is no data on safety
- Decision was just made, he is closing them as soon as is possible

- On why schools are not being closed in Rockland, Orange
- Gov. said speaking with community leaders in those regions tomorrow
- Closures will occur if necessary

- On whether individuals are subject to enforcement, violations:
- Mass gatherings are the priority at parks, religious institutions, young people
- Individuals not wearing masks are currently subject to enforcement

- Aren't Orange and Rockland higher infection rates
- Gov. said it depends, there are disparities in infection rates within counties

- On whether Gov. thinks he has legal authority to ban religious events
- Gov. said he believes, so, was upheld in court previously
- DeRosa added rule on mass gatherings was upheld previously, legal issue was discrepancy in capacity for businesses and places of worship upon reopening
- DeRosa added even with ban on mass gatherings, individuals can still enter institutions to pray

- On potential nonessential businesses closures:
- Gov. reiterated need for better template than zip codes
- Addresses, census data can better determine regions for closures

- On state overseeing enforcement with local personnel:
- Gov. stated a task force run by DOH and State Police will be put together
- local governments will assign personnel, violations will be from state
- DeRosa added state has seen that violations have been from local officials overlooking violations from people they know and one-time events
- DeRosa also noted that SLA Task Force was to target individual violations, as opposed to closing entire industries
- Gov. added local governments are more likely to comply if state is being held responsible, no political repercussions for them

- On why Gov. and Mayor cannot hold joint announcement:
- Gov. stated the governments operate separately, this issue falls under state's jurisdiction

- On what testing should look like in NYC schools:
- Gov. consulting global experts
- If a school is a hotspot, testing should be done before children are allowed to attend
- Gov. added timeframe between tests is also a factor

- If indoor/outdoor dining will be closed in hotspots:
- Gov. said possibly, new geographic template other than zip codes need to be reviewed first

- Follow-up on why Mayor de Blasio and Gov. cannot form unified message
- Gov. said he discussed issues with mayor many times
- de Blasio put out plan prior to issuing to state for review

- On Gov.'s team on mask wearing, as they currently are not wearing masks
- Gov. said they have sat 6ft apart since beginning of pandemic
- Gov. added they wear masks where needed

- On how to prevent those in hotspots from traveling outside them
- Gov. stated this points to importance of drawing lines by parameter other than zip code
- Other governments close entire cities, counties, towns
- Enforcement will be the same regardless of how lines are drawn

- If no data on some schools, should those schools not have opened to being with

- Gov. said city approved plans, schools were required to post plans online for parents, teachers, and the public to review and comment on
- Gov. said state issued guidance to schools, plans were supposed to be in accordance with state guidance

- On event in Brooklyn going on currently, who should be enforcing
- Gov.: NYC, NYC DOH, NYPD all should be enforcing laws