

2.17.21

Notes from Governor Cuomo's Conference Call:

COVID:

- Day 354
- 3.58% statewide positivity rate
- 3.6% rate on 7-day average, lowest since Nov. 28th
- 109 deaths
- 6,574 hospitalizations, down 46
- ICU patients up 2
- Intubations down 24
- 82 U.K. variant cases, up 12 since Saturday, 11 of those are in NYC

Positivity Rate by Region:

- Long Island: 4.5%
- Mid Hudson: 4.4%
- NYC: 4.3%
- North Country: 3.7%
- Western NY: 3.1%
- Finger Lakes: 2.2%
- Capital Region: 2.0%
- Mohawk Valley: 1.9%
- Central NY: 1.6%
- Southern Tier: 0.8%

- Bronx: 5.7%
- Queens: 4.5%
- Staten Island: 4.4%
- Brooklyn: 4.3%
- Manhattan: 2.5%

Vaccinations:

- 3.3 million total doses
- 2.2 million first doses administered
- 1 million second doses administered
- 94% of weeks 1-9 doses administered
- President Biden announced increase in doses for week 11
- Gov. spoke with local officials yesterday on the distribution program
- Gov. discussed confusion in distribution system between federal government, states, and localities
- Gov. said once there is adequate supply, multiple points of distribution will be beneficial
- Gov. said he stressed equitable distribution be prioritized by local officials
- Gov. stated inequities are partially due to access, partially due to hesitancy to accept vaccine
- 91 pop-up vaccination sites, 13 more to come this week
- Gov. said joint state-FEMA mass vaccination sites will be opened in Queens and Brooklyn
- Another four will open in "socially vulnerable" communities in Buffalo, Rochester, Albany, and Yonkers
- Each site will have capacity to administer 1,000 doses a day
- Gov. announced all nursing home residents and staff have been vaccinated except for those who have refused
- Gov. stated storms across the country might be delaying delivery of vaccine doses this week

Amusement Parks, Summer Camps:

- Effective March 26th, indoor family entertainment centers can reopen at 25% capacity, with safety protocols
- DOH will issue guidance
- Attractions that cannot be cleaned or socially distanced must remain closed
- Outdoor amusement parks can open April 9 at 33% capacity with safety protocols in place
- Summer camps can plan to reopen for now provided numbers do not increase, testing protocol required

On Assemblymember Kim:

- Gov. addressed "hostile" relationship with Assemblymember Ron Kim
- Gov. said this stemmed from a bill regarding nail salons, which Kim supported then changed his position on
- Gov. asserted Kim used his lobbying firm to lobby on behalf of business owners in his district against the bill
- Gov. asserted Kim still utilizes his own lobbying firm to raise campaign funds, which Gov. called "unethical" and potentially illegal
- Gov. continued that Kim's criticism on nursing home data is "wrong"
- Gov. repeated that the legislature was informed about the delays in releasing data from DOH
- Gov. stated the immunity bill Kim criticized was passed in the budget by the legislature

On NY Post's coverage of Nursing Home:

- Gov. claimed NY Post is politically-driven, presenting Republicans' point of view
- Gov. referenced directive from DOH on March 25th, stating this guidance originally came from the CDC
- Gov. stated health experts do not believe this guidance was a mistake, but suggested if it is, it is the responsibility of the federal government

Q&A:

On Gov.'s previous comments on oversight of his emergency powers, nursing homes:

- Gov. said oversight is "fine", is the role of the legislature
- Gov. stated his previous comments were that an investigation is not needed because he admitted data was withheld for a reason, and the legislature was notified
- Gov. said it is extortion if the legislature conducts investigations, threatens subpoenas in order to gain more control over the budget
- Gov. asserted extortion was brought up by the media, said those were not comments from him
- Gov. again acknowledged a "void" in information being made public by his administration, stating it created confusion

On nursing home vaccinations, and how to ensure those coming into facilities will be vaccinated:

- Gov. said the state will keep doses on reserve for new residents, staff that might be coming in
- Local DOHs will have the supply, facilities will contact them
- Rhodes added unused doses are currently being collected from pharmacies to provide to local health departments
- Gov. added that residual allocations from hospitals are being provided to local health departments, which is approximately an additional 10%, to administer to those with comorbidities

On when visitation for long-term care facilities will be reinstated:

- Gov. stated caution is still needed despite the availability of the vaccine
- Gov. stressed that the vaccine is not mandatory, and although every resident was offered vaccine, not all accepted it
- Rhodes stated 49% of current staff, and 73% of residents have been vaccinated
- Zucker added that rapid testing for staff is being prioritized, as staff is still bringing the virus into facilities
- Zucker reiterated even if vaccinated, the virus can still spread

On if Biden DOJ has contacted Gov. on nursing homes:

- Gov. said DOJ did not become a new agency with Biden's inauguration

On Gov.'s comments on Assemblymember Kim, and whether divisive rhetoric should be refrained from:

- Gov. said he "works very hard to be cooperative", condemned "hyper-vitriolic" rhetoric
- Gov. claimed Assemblymember Kim personally attacked him via press release with accusations, and he is correcting the information
- Gov. repeated he believes Kim acted illegally with his lobbying firm, and believes this is relevant