

5.20.20 Notes from the Governor's Briefing:

Hospitalizations are down.

Net change in hospitalizations are down.

The number of new cases per day is down.

112 lives lost yesterday: 82 in hospitals, 30 in nursing homes.

TESTING:

- Primarily, we are still seeing increased numbers in poor minority communities.

- Antibody test results in NYC church sites:

- 8,000 tests were held.

- Overall, 27% of individuals test positive for COVID-19 antibodies.

- Bronx had the highest percentage of positive tests: 34%

- Data shows continued high community spread in NYC.

- Community spread comes from a lack of PPE, hand sanitizer, social distancing, and education.

- NY will implement targeted strategies to highly impacted communities:

- Northwell Health will double the amount of testing sites to 44 churches

- SOMOS will open 28 additional testing sites

- Expanding testing from 8 to 40 public housing developments.

REOPENING:

- Thursday, religious gatherings of no more than 10 will be allowed.

- Drive-in services will be available as well.

- The state will convene the Interfaith advisory council to discuss proposals to bring back religious services.

- Gov stressed that our actions today will determine the numbers two weeks from now.

- Gov reiterated the importance of wearing a mask.

- NYPD, DOCCS, transit workers, and health care workers all have lower infection rates than the general population.

WEAR A MASK CAMPAIGN:

- Gov launched a contest on May 5 asking New Yorkers to create and share videos on why they wear masks.

- The winning video would be used as a public service ad.

- Mariah Cuomo reported there are five finalists for the contest:

- The five finalist ads were shown live during the briefing.

- Go to www.wearamask.ny.gov to vote for the best ad.

- Voting ends May 25.

Q&A:

TESTING:

- Gov said that the goal is to test every person in the state.

- We have about 180,000 people in nursing homes.

- DeRosa: Nursing homes turned in proposals saying they are struggling to meet goals. Kits will be sent to every nursing home.

- Gov stated that nursing home staffing numbers might be a better indicator of community spread.

- On testing grocery workers: DeRosa said that they have started testing pharmacy and grocery workers.

- Maltras: the state is up to 40,000 tests a day now. The state is prioritizing diagnostic testing because there is less delay.

DATA:

- Gov reiterated day to day numbers have to be taken with a grain of salt.

- There is a two week lag on the hospitalization rate.
- Malatras: Finger Lakes and Central NY regions have seen upticks, but nothing significant yet.
- Gov stated that nursing home staffing numbers might be a better indicator of community spread.

MISCELLANEOUS:

- Gov stated that natural gas demands have dropped on Long Island.
 - This information comes from utility companies.
 - They say is currently no need for a new pipeline due to this reduced demand.
- On casinos: Gov stated that casinos are a large gathering spot.
 - There is no set date yet but it is likely in Phase 4.
- On OPWDD homes: DeRosa stated that staff has had to be moved around, but now volunteer portals are being used to keep workers in one place.
- Gov reiterated that there is no official interfaith council report.
 - There will be discussion with various religious groups to determine best practices.

SCHOOLS:

- Some education advocates claim that distance learning is inadequate.
 - Gov agreed that classroom teaching is the best method.
 - Gov stressed the importance of reduced classroom sizes.
- What does reimagining education mean?
 - Gov claimed that a similar crisis may happen again, so the state must be prepared for future situations.
- There is a bill that would force the Governor to submit weekly reports to the legislature during a state of emergency.
 - Gov stated that he has not heard of this bill, but believes that he has been very informative during this crisis.