

## A Message From ASSEMBLYMEMBER HARVEY EPSTEIN



### ASSEMBLY MEMBER HARVEY EPSTEIN COMMUNITY BOARD REPORT, MARCH 2020

---

On Friday, March 21st, Governor Cuomo issued an Executive Order all nonessential businesses should have reduced the number of employees at their place of business by 100%. Only employees and businesses that are considered essential should head into work. [You can read find the list of essential businesses and read more about the Executive Order here.](#) This order is subject to change so please keep up on this. This will have a huge impact on our community and state. I will push for resources to come back to our community for the loss of revenue.

My office is now working remotely, we are all working but doing so safely. Please continue to reach out to us if you need any help. We are available by phone or email

**We are having a virtual Hang with Harvey if you have any questions for me about what is happening around the state. You can register here: [bit.ly/virtualdistrict74](https://bit.ly/virtualdistrict74)**

In addition the Mayor has moved all schools to remote learning. This started on Monday March 23. For food, Department of Education has specific pick up locations for “grab and go” breakfast and lunches and dinner. This food will be available to all children 18 years of age and younger at the schools shown here, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. through 1:30 p.m. [Find a location near you here.](#) Reminder, [if you need a free tablet apply here](#) or you can also call 718-935-5100 and choose Option 5 on the menu. DOE has also provided guidance on a Special Education Remote Learning Plan that will be developed for all students with IEPs in the school by their special education teacher or other school based staff with

knowledge of the student, and that each child's plan will be shared and discussed with their family. [Here are remote learning materials you can access for special education!](#)

Please stay safe and socially distance yourself. As we keep saying, please stay home for all non essential work activities. Going out for shopping or solitary exercise is important as well. As always, if you need additional assistance or have any questions please contact my office at 212-979-9696 or [help.district74@gmail.com](mailto:help.district74@gmail.com).

See you soon from a distance,



Harvey

### **Comcast Offers Internet Service for Those With Low-Incomes**

As our country continues to manage the COVID-19 emergency, Comcast is taking immediate steps to help connect low-income families to the Internet at home. New Internet Essentials customers will receive two free months of Internet service, which is available to all qualified low-income households for \$9.95/month plus tax. Apply by April 30, 2020.

Additionally, for all new and existing Internet Essentials customers, the speed of the program's Internet service has increased to 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream. That increase will go into effect automatically for no additional fee and it will become the new base speed for the program going forward. Learn more here: <https://www.internetessentials.com/covid19>.

### **Relief for Small Businesses**

Businesses in New York City with fewer than 5 employees can apply for employee-retention grants [here](#). Businesses with fewer than 100 employees will soon be able to apply for low-interest loans from New York City and can find more information and complete an interest form [here](#).

### **Assembly Passes Legislation Providing Paid Sick Leave During Coronavirus Outbreak**

Yesterday, I co sponsored legislation that will immediately provide all New Yorkers with sick leave during the coronavirus pandemic ([A.10153](#), Nolan). In order to help protect New York's workers and to curb the spread of COVID-19, this legislation will make all private and public

sector employees eligible for sick leave and wage replacement during a mandatory or precautionary order of quarantine or isolation due to COVID-19. Employees that work for small sized employers, which includes employers with 10 or fewer employees and that have a net income of less than \$1 million, would receive unpaid sick leave and immediately become eligible for Paid Family Leave and Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) benefits. Those working for medium sized employers, which includes employers with 10 or fewer employees that have a net income of greater than \$1 million and employers with between 11 and 99 employees, would receive at least five days of paid sick leave, followed by eligibility for Paid Family Leave and TDI benefits. Those working for employers with 100 or more employees, as well as all public employees, would receive a minimum of 14 days of paid sick leave.

The bill will allow these employees to collect Paid Family Leave benefits, supplemented by increased TDI benefits to make their weekly wages whole, for those who earn up to a maximum of \$150,000 annually. Additionally, it eliminates the waiting period for these benefits, as well as for unemployment insurance for claims related to the coronavirus. It also expands Paid Family Leave benefits to cover an employee or their dependent child if they are under a mandatory or precautionary order of quarantine or isolation due to coronavirus.

While this is a good first step, I think we need to be doing more for the vast majority of New Yorkers who are self-isolating who have not been tested but are out of work.

## **Eviction**

## **moratorium**

I am glad to see our [letter](#) and [draft bill](#) caught the eye of the court and were convinced to [close the court system and suspend evictions and foreclosures](#). It is the right thing to do. We must protect families from needlessly being forced from their home and into the streets, especially during this pandemic. It would be terrible to take a family with coronavirus and make them go out on the street or into the shelter system. It will be the Government's responsibility to help find ways to pick up the pieces once we get past the crisis, and we will get past the crisis.

[N.Y. lawmakers seek relief from evictions amid coronavirus crisis](#) - New York Daily News

## **NYS is on PAUSE - What does that mean?**

In addition to nonessential businesses reducing their workforce, New York is also on PAUSE. PAUSE stands for Policies Assure Uniform Safety for Everyone. PAUSE issues guidance and policies that will also begin being enforced tonight at 8pm. Learn more below:

- All non-essential gatherings of individuals of any size for any reason are temporarily banned.
- The general public is encouraged to stay at home as much as possible and avoid any non-essential gatherings. Only gatherings for essential services will be permitted. This

includes avoiding team sports of any kind: people are allowed to do solitary exercise activities such as walking or running, but not team sports like basketball or even tennis.

- Enacting Matilda’s Law to protect New Yorkers age 70+ and those with compromised immune systems
  - Remain indoors
  - Can go outside for solitary exercise
  - Pre-screen all visitors by taking their temperature
  - Wear a mask in the company of others
  - Stay at least 6 feet from others
  - Do not take public transportation unless urgent and absolutely necessary
- All barber shops, hair salons, tattoo or piercing salons, nail salons, hair removal services and related personal care services will be closed to the public effective Saturday, March 21 at 8:00PM.
- New York will implement a 90-day moratorium on evictions for residential and commercial tenants.
- Casinos, gyms, theaters, retail shopping malls, amusement parks and bowling alleys are closed until further notice. Bars and restaurants are closed, but takeout can be ordered during the period of closure.
- The state has cancelled all standardized tests for the remainder of the year.
- The state is calling for help from companies of any kind who can help manufacture medical supplies (masks, gloves, cover-alls, etc.). The state is offering to “pay a premium” and is asking companies to get creative to help. Companies who also have extra masks, gloves, etc. can also opt to donate. Companies can reach out to the state at [COVID19supplies@esd.ny.gov](mailto:COVID19supplies@esd.ny.gov).

We have called upon the Governor to stop allowing construction in occupied buildings except for essential services because of the health risk posed to the workers as well as the residents in those buildings. Look for the letter in upcoming days.

### **Senior Hours at Local Supermarkets**

Many supermarkets in our community have created senior only hours. This includes:

- Union Market (240 E Houston St): 7-8 AM
- Westside Market (84 Third Ave): 7-8 AM
- Whole Foods (94 E Houston St): 7-8 AM
- Morton Williams (278 Park Ave S): 7-8 AM
- Morton Williams (311 E 23rd St): 7-8 AM

- Key Food (43 Columbia St): Wednesdays, 8 AM-3 PM

### **NYC Parks COVID-19 Update – 3/21/20**

Parks continue to be open., However, NYC Parks will suspend all special event permits and athletic field permits until further notice. Additionally, new permit requests will not be processed. NYC Parks will also post signage at fields and courts to promote social distancing, and clarify that team or contact sports are not permitted for the time being.

Please refer to the NYC Parks webpage regarding further park updates and changes:  
<https://www.nycgovparks.org/about/health-and-safety-guide/coronavirus>

For further DOHMH guidance about COVID-19, please refer to the DOHMH website:  
<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/coronavirus.page>

### **HRA cash assistance apply online**

All in-person HRA appointments have been cancelled. No negative actions will be taken on your case. [See everything you can do online on ACCESS HRA](#)

Eligible families may receive up to 60 months of federally funded cash assistance under the Temporary Aid to Needy Families Program (TANF). Single individuals without children and families who have already received cash assistance for 60 months may receive benefits under the New York State Safety Net Program. Are you eligible for Cash Assistance? [Find out what documents you need to apply.](#)

### **Budget Update**

While we see businesses closing every day, New York State has the opportunity to create a State program to reduce the pain all small businesses are facing in this global crisis. I will be fighting for new funding to save our small businesses that we have forced to close. We have pushed for new taxes on millionaires [A08532](#) and on predatory equity funding through mezzanine debt [A09041](#)

We will be negotiating the budget over the next few days and it is critical for you to let you state elected officials and our Governor what your priorities are. I will continue to look for additional revenue sources to counter the impact of the billions in lost revenue.

I do not believe billions of dollars in healthcare cuts in a moment in time where we are more dependent than ever on our healthcare system. On Thursday March 19, the Governor Medicaid Redesign Team recommended over 2.5 billion dollar in cuts in a system already

stretched too thin. [Read it here](#). I look forward to hearing from you over the coming days as we finalize our state budget to learn about your priorities.

### **Find time to take of yourself - Free activities**

- Watch Movies with Friends Virtually Netflix Party is a new Chrome extension that allows you to watch any Netflix show you want with loved ones while you're social distancing.
  - Learn at Home With Scholastic Keep kids reading, thinking, and growing with [Scholastic's Learn at Home](#) program. Kids can do them on their own, with their families, or with their teachers. Just find your grade level and let the learning begin.
  - Support Local Businesses Local restaurants may have had to shut their doors, but many of them still offer takeout or delivery.
  - Share Books Online If you love your books, let them go. [Kindle](#) and [BEE Book Exchange](#) are great apps that allow you to share and lend books online with readers you don't necessarily know.
  - Get Gaming with Kingdom Rush (It's Free) The Kingdom Rush series is offering games completely free on both [iOS](#) and [Android](#). Get ready for an epic journey to defend your kingdom against trolls, evil wizards, and fantasy creatures with epic battles.
  - Keep Calm with Meditation Apps Ease your mind and reduce stress with a little help from [Headspace](#). Right now, the meditation app is offering all US healthcare professionals who work in public health settings free access to Headspace Plus through 2020. All other new users can have access to a two-week free trial and access to meditations, sleep, and movement exercises.
  - Stay Connected With UpHabit. [UpHabit](#) is a contact relationship app for your important contacts that helps users stay connected and strengthen relationships with important people in their lives. You and those close to you can use UpHabit for free during the next 3 months.
  - Stay Fit at Home [Fitness Blender](#) is offering free full length workout videos, workout routines, healthy recipes and more -- for every fitness level. Or check out this [at-home yoga routine](#) to reduce stress.
  - Find online virtual events to participate in: <https://www.eventbrite.com/d/online/events/> and <https://www.eventbrite.com/c/the-best-online-events-to-attend-right-from-your-home-cwwqhp/>
  - If you have kids trapped at home, you might be interested in [the online "History at Home" online classes that the N.Y. Historical Society](#) is offering.
-

## Census

While at home, remember to fill out the census. It is simple and confidential. It will mean billions of federal dollars for New York! Go to [My2020Census](#) to get started!

- **Virtual Hang with Harvey-** Friday March 27th - 11am. You can register at [Zoom](#)

*Feel free to contact Assembly Member Harvey Epstein's office with any questions or concerns.*

*Our office is temporarily remotely working*

*Monday - Friday 11-4PM*

*You can email us at [help.district74@gmail.com](mailto:help.district74@gmail.com) or call us at 212-979-9696*