



MARCH 2020 UPDATE TO COMMUNITY BOARD 3

Dear Friends:

We're in the first week of a new phase in our COVID-19 response: New York State on Pause. All non-essential businesses statewide closed on Sunday evening, any non-essential gatherings have been postponed, and we are all practicing "social distancing" of six feet or more when walking outside.

This is a fundamental change to our daily lives, and public health experts estimate it may continue for months. I want to make sure you are informed, prepared and ready to do your part as we address the challenges of COVID-19. In this report, you'll find resources and updates about COVID-19 and other district information.

My office is working around-the-clock to help constituents impacted by COVID-19. If you have an issue you'd like us to address, please contact us by leaving a voicemail at 212-633-8052 or by emailing me directly: Hoylman@NYSenate.gov.

Best,

Brad



Senator Hoylman's COVID-19 Resource Guide

My office is continuing to update our COVID-19 resource guide with the latest news and information. You'll be able to read up on health tips you should know, new resources from State and Local government, and places to get help if you need it. [Click here to read our COVID-19 Constituent Resource Guide](#).

Topline Resources

There is an incredible amount of new information being dispensed quickly and much of it deeply impacts our everyday lives. It can be overwhelming and hard to know where to begin. While by no means exhaustive, here are the resources we give out most often:

- [NYC Department of Health](https://nyc.gov/health) [nyc.gov/health]
 - o NYC text alerts - text 692-692
 - o [NYC Coronavirus page](https://nyc.gov/coronavirus) [nyc.gov/coronavirus]

- [NYS Department of Health](https://health.ny.gov) [health.ny.gov]
 - o Coronavirus hotline: 888-364-3065
 - o Submit a question online [[click here](#)]
 - o NYS Essential Businesses ([Click here](#))
 - o Report complaints about price gouging online [here](#)
 - o [NYS Coronavirus page](https://health.ny.gov/coronavirus) [health.ny.gov/coronavirus]
 - [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention \(CDC\)](https://cdc.gov) [cdc.gov]
 - [Federal Coronavirus website](https://coronavirus.gov) [coronavirus.gov]
 - [Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center](https://coronavirus.jhu.edu) [coronavirus.jhu.edu]
- User-friendly case # tracker (their [interactive map](#) is great)

What can you do to stay safe and keep others safe?

At this point, we must do everything possible to slow the spread of COVID-19 so that we do not overwhelm our healthcare system. The key to this in New York City is density reduction – stay away from groups and crowds, and maintain physical distance from other people. You can read more about this on the [NYC Department of Health website](#).

Since this virus is highly contagious (even more than the flu) and deadly for some of us, we all have a responsibility to each other and to our communities to do our part to prevent the spread of this disease. The primary things you should do are the following:

- Social Distancing (stay at least 6 feet away from others at all times)
- Stay home as much as possible, but if you feel sick, you **MUST STAY HOME** and self-quarantine and contact your doctor. If it is an **emergency call 911**.
- Wash your hands often (and use hand sanitizer when available).
- Avoid touching your face.
- Sanitize hard surfaces often (the virus can live on some surfaces for 2 days)
- Avoid visiting elderly or otherwise vulnerable people.

While no one is safe from the potentially life-threatening impacts of this highly contagious virus, some are more at risk than others. They include:

- Elderly people
- Those with preexisting medical conditions such as: chronic lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, or a weakened immune system.

Unfortunately, New York City has become the epicenter of this virus in the United States. But doing these simple things will help.

Our COVID-19 Virtual Town Halls – Sundays at 8pm

For the past two weeks, Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal and I co-hosted our virtual town halls with three infectious disease specialists. These scientists explained the latest



scientific news related to COVID-19, including the best ways to practice social distancing and whether there is a potential pharmaceutical treatment on the horizon. The full videos are on [YouTube](#) and I encourage you to watch.

To join our virtual town hall, visit my Facebook page: [www.Facebook.com/BradHoylman](https://www.facebook.com/BradHoylman). At 8:00 P.M., you'll see a live video begin. If you don't see the Facebook Live video at first, hit "refresh" in your web browser after 8:00 P.M. to reload the page and find our video. Once the Facebook Live video begins, you'll be able to watch, listen, and ask questions of the infectious disease specialists by adding comments to the video.

Volunteer To Help Your Neighbors

Even in a scary and uncertain time, New Yorkers rise to the occasion. It's been heartening to see so many neighbors calling me to ask how they can help those less fortunate in the community.

My office has [created a web form](#) to help connect constituents with local non-profits who are looking for volunteers to help senior citizens, immunocompromised individuals, and anyone for whom COVID-19 poses the highest health risk. If you're interested in volunteering, [please click here and fill out the form](#).

If you are a medical professional such as a retired doctor or nurse, New York State is eagerly seeking your help. Governor Cuomo has asked retired medical professionals and individuals with administrative experience to volunteer in hospitals, walk-in clinics and other medical settings. If you are interested, please fill out this form from the Governor's office: <https://www.health.ny.gov/assistance/>.

Financial Help In An Uncertain Economy

New York State's Department of Labor (NYS DOL) is now able to pay benefits to anyone whose employer temporarily ceases operations due to COVID-19, thereby preventing employees from coming to work. After the New York State Legislature passed emergency legislation last week, the 7-day waiting period for unemployment claims has been eliminated.

You can immediately file for unemployment insurance by visiting the NYS DOL's website: https://labor.ny.gov/UI/how_to_file_claim.shtm. NYS DOL is also allowing New Yorkers to file by phone: 1-888-209-8124.

The New York State Attorney General's office is taking applications for the suspension of debt collection activity. To apply for a suspension of debt collection, [visit the Attorney General's website](#). Please note that the Attorney General has already temporarily halted medical and student debt collection, and there is no application necessary to pause that debt collection.

If you own a small business that is struggling, the federal Small Business Administration (SBA) is offering low-interest federal disaster loans. Learn more about how this can impact you in New York by [visiting this website](#).

The National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors (NAIFA) is also offering free information on how to avoid consumer scams. Visit <https://security.naifa.org/COVID-19> to learn more.

Shortage of Medical Supplies & How You Can Help

COVID-19 has created unprecedented strain in our healthcare system. In response, Governor Cuomo has selected a location in my Senate district to be a temporary FEMA hospital site: the Jacob J. Javits Convention Center. This will become a temporary medical site that can host over 1250 additional beds. Learn more from [the Governor's tour of the site](#) today.

State and City officials have warned that without crucial equipment, New York City's medical professionals will be unable to treat the high number of cases. There is an urgent need for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) like face masks, gloves and gowns. If you own a small business that may be able to manufacture PPE, please contact:

- New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYC EDC) is looking for businesses that can source or produce medical supplies and equipment. [Sign up here](#).
- Empire State Development, the State's economic development organization, is also looking for businesses that can manufacture or donate these much-needed products. Email COVID19supplies@esd.ny.gov to learn more.


My Legislation to Crack Down on Price Gouging of Face Masks, Hand Sanitizer, and Other Medical Supplies

In response to growing fears of COVID-19 coronavirus, retailers have begun price gouging on consumer medical supplies. Prices on items like face masks and hand sanitizer have skyrocketed in Manhattan, including in the Upper West Side and Chinatown, due to apparent price gouging from retailers and distributors. In areas of the world where coronavirus is most prevalent, price gouging is a major issue: Amazon announced that tens of thousands of third-party listings unfairly charged customers for medical supplies, and countries including Italy and Australia have seen massive price gouging.

My legislation amends New York’s price gouging statute to establish that an “unconscionable excessive price” is a price greater than 10% higher than before a public health emergency began. The bill would prohibit selling consumer medical supplies (such as hand sanitizer, face masks, and over-the-counter medications) during a public health crisis at an unconscionably excessive price. It would also empower the New York Attorney General to enforce a civil penalty of up to \$25,000 against businesses proven to have participated in price gouging.

Census is live!

For the first time, New Yorkers have three different ways to fill out the census: you can fill out a traditional paper form that will be mailed to you, you can call 1-844-330-2020 or you can visit the secure online portal at my2020census.gov.



Brad Hoylman @bradhoylman Mar 23
Standing in front of the New York Public Library's Central Branch are two marble lions.

In the depths of the Great Depression, Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia named them for two qualities he thought New Yorkers would need:

Patience.

Fortitude.

I'm sure you've been hearing a lot about the Census, so I wanted to take a moment to explain why it's so important to everyone in our community: The census determines distribution of federal funds to go to education, health care, housing, and transportation, as well as our congressional representation in Washington. The federal government distributes \$675 billion in funding based on the results of the census. If every New Yorker fills out their census form, we will be able to get our full fair share of those funds and use it to help improve public schools, build and repair roads, invest in hospitals and many additional important projects.

In the 2010 Census, the city’s self-response rate was less than 62%. A D grade doesn’t cut it for me. We have to do better.

If you have any ideas, questions, or concerns, you can always contact me or **Caroline Wekselbaum** in my office at **212-633-8052** or via e-mail at wekselba@nysenate.gov

You can email me at hoylman@nysenate.gov or visit my website at hoylman.nysenate.gov to find copies of my letters, testimonies, and press releases.