

From: "Senator Daphne Jordan" <jordan@nysenate.gov>

Date: Thursday, April 09, 2020 03:16PM

Subject: News You Can Use in the Fight Against the Coronavirus



Dear Friend:

Welcome to an early edition of my Weekly Wrap. I'm issuing this edition one day early so you can have access to the latest news, information and resources about New York State – and local governments – ongoing response to the Coronavirus. I'll continue working to provide you the latest informational updates as my office receives them. My staff and I continue helping individuals throughout the 43rd Senate District with requests for assistance with state government, and we also act as a liaison for federal and local government inquiries.

My office has already received several hundred phone calls and emails and answered countless requests. We are here, ready and able to assist YOU! Please call me at (518) 371-2751 or email me at jordan@nysenate.gov if I may be of assistance with an unemployment claim, small business assistance, providing information about testing, and state and local resources that are available to assist you during this trying time. Happy Passover and Easter, stay safe, and remain positive. Together, we are New York strong! – **Senator Daphne Jordan, 43rd District**

Latest News and Developments

Some of the very latest news regarding New York State's ongoing response to the

Coronavirus include the following updates from the Governor's office which are listed directly below:

- Governor Cuomo directed schools and nonessential businesses to stay closed for an additional two weeks through April 29th.

- NYS is investing in private companies to bring rapid testing to scale: interested businesses should contact Empire State Development at 212-803-3100 or COVID19Supplies@esd.ny.gov.

- The Department of Health has developed a test to detect antibodies to the COVID-19 infection in an individual's blood.

- SUNY Albany President Havidan Rodriguez is working with State Department of Health and Northwell Health to conduct more COVID-19 data research and increase testing in minority communities.

- \$600 in additional weekly unemployment benefits will be made available to all New Yorkers; and the period covered by unemployment benefits is being extended for another 13 weeks, for total of 39 weeks.

- Flags on state government buildings have been directed to be flown at half-staff in honor of those we have lost to COVID-19 and will remain lowered while New York is on PAUSE.

- An executive order is being issued to ensure New Yorkers can vote absentee in the June 23rd primary elections.

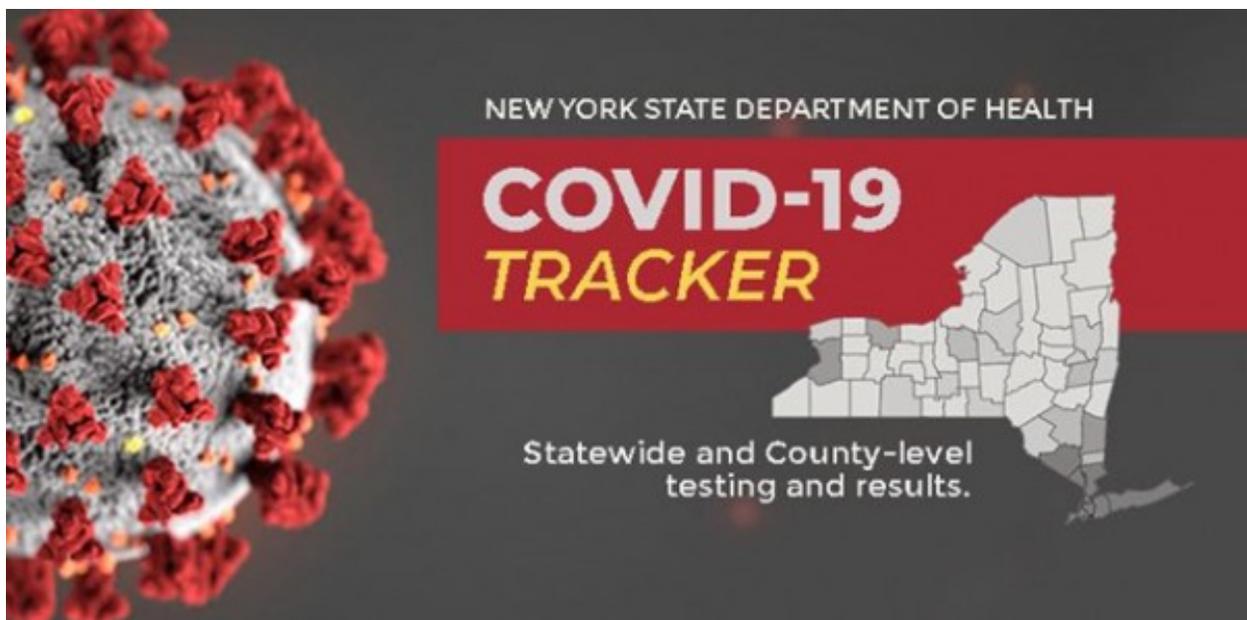
- NYS is increasing the maximum fine for violations of the state's social distancing protocol from \$500 to \$1,000 to help address the lack of adherence to social distancing protocols.

- New Yorkers without health insurance can apply through NY State of Health through May 15, 2020; must apply within 60 days of losing coverage.

- New Yorkers can call the COVID-19 Emotional Support Hotline at 1-844-863-9314 for mental health counseling.

- Testing is free for all eligible New Yorkers as ordered by a health care provider.

New York State Department of Health's COVID-19 Tracker



Staying informed is always important, especially during a major public health crisis. That's why the State Department of Health has just created a new website which will provide the most up-to-date coronavirus testing data to the public. The website will be updated daily with the latest data and will also present visualizations of statewide and county-level testing and results. The public can also access the testing data through Open New York at data.ny.gov, which offers machine readable datasets in downloadable standard formats that can be sorted, searched, analyzed and applied to new uses. Learn more at: www.ny.gov/covid-19tracker

Domestic Violence Hotline and Resources

**Senator Jordan has a message for
victims of domestic violence during
this stressful time: You Are Not Alone.**

Call 1-800-942-6906

**You do not have to stay in a dangerous
situation. We will help you find safe
shelter. We will help you relocate.
If you are in immediate danger, call 911.**

In recent weeks there have been a number of reports about a disturbing increase in domestic violence calls. If you or a loved one is the victim of domestic violence, you are not alone. Help is available, even amidst the turmoil and challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic. New York State has just unveiled a new domestic violence hotline at 1-800-942-6906. Authorities will respond to each and every call this hotline receives. So please, if you or someone you know is in danger, please call 1-800-942-6906. The decision to do it could save a life.

**Important Columbia County Update from Board of Supervisors Chairman,
Matthew Murrell**



Wednesday, April 8, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM: Chairman Matt Murell

TEST KITS ON ORDER

As of Wednesday, the Columbia County Department of Health had placed an order for 1,000 test kits, which are expected to ship at the end of next week. The total cost for the kits will be \$12,000, said county DOH officials. They are the Thermo Fisher Kits, offered by Command Sourcing, Inc.

“I’m looking forward to the opportunity to conduct more extensive testing in the County,” County DOH Director Jack Mabb said earlier in the week. “Testing is key to understanding the extent of the disease – and aiding in the fight against it -- in our community.”

PROPER WEARING OF MASKS

On Wednesday, the county Department of Health reminded everyone of the proper procedure for wearing a simple face mask. As follows:

1. Before putting on a mask, clean hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water.
2. Cover mouth and nose with mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask. Mold the metal part to your nose and cheeks.
3. Avoid touching the mask while using it; if you do, clean your hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60%) or soap and water.
4. Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp or gets wet, or soiled. Best policy is to not re-use single-use masks. However, due to the shortage of masks consideration should be made to use one mask per shift.
5. Masks can only be reused by the same person. It may be reused no more than 4-7 days maximum and kept in a paper (not plastic) bag in between uses.
6. To remove the mask: remove it from behind (do not touch the front of mask); discard immediately in a closed bin; clean hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water.

COUNTY EARNS ‘D’ RATING IN SOCIAL DISTANCING

Based on cellphone results compiled over the past several weeks, Columbia County residents have earned a “D” rating for social distancing practices, according to the data analysis company Unacast. Those who participate in the process have signed up for tracking by the company.

“As we begin to see some positive signs regarding the flattening of the curve, much of which can be attributed to social distancing, it’s as important as ever to keep at least six feet between yourself and others. It’s not time to let up on the gas pedal,” said county Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT DELIVERIES

Columbia County Emergency Management Director David W. Harrison, Jr., said Wednesday that the county has not received an emergency delivery of PPE from the New York State stockpile since April 1.

“Agencies continue to look for vendors who can supply medical grade PPE at a decent price in a reasonable amount of time. They are also relying on donated items, for which they are extremely grateful and fortunate to be receiving,” said Harrison.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEET TONIGHT ON YOUTUBE

The regular monthly meeting of the county Board of Supervisors will be conducted tonight, April 8, on YouTube. The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. and can be viewed via the link published on the home page of the Columbia County website (columbiacountyny.com).

DONATIONS

Those wishing to make donations of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as N95 masks, face shields, and gowns, are advised to contact the Emergency Management Office at 518-828-1212. If no one answers, leave a message and someone will return the call.

Nitrile gloves are considered suitable for medical use, while other types of gloves must explicitly state they are for medical use. Food donations should be directed to the county Office for the Aging (518828-4258) and local pantries.

Monetary donations intended for the purchase of much-needed equipment for emergency responders, medical personnel, and others on the front lines of the coronavirus fight are advised to send a check in care of Columbia County, with coronavirus noted in the memo field. The check can be sent to the Columbia County Controller's Office, 401 State Street, Hudson, NY 12534. All money received is being placed in a dedicated account.

HOTLINE FOR ELDERLY AND VULNERABLE

Columbia County Sheriff David Bartlett has established a new hotline for “the elderly and vulnerable in our county, including those with medical conditions or are disabled,” who would welcome a deputy checking on their well-being on a daily basis. The number for the hotline is 518-828-0601, extension 1400.

SELF-ISOLATION

Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell continues to urge anyone migrating from outside Columbia County to self-quarantine for 14 days upon their arrival.

“This is a critical component of our fight against the virus. We understand that people are coming here to escape the disease, but everyone should consider they are a carrier of the coronavirus,” said Murell.

The state's coronavirus website, with up-to-the-minute information, can be located at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>.

DISCLAIMER

It is the county's intention to issue accurate information regarding the coronavirus situation under conditions that can change by the minute. For the most up-to-date, accurate information, visit the County Department of Health's website at <https://www.columbiacountynyhealth.com/home/coronavirus-covid-19> or their Facebook page @: <https://www.facebook.com/Columbia-County-Department-of-Health-469399129790791/>.

The county will issue a daily press release on the coronavirus situation every afternoon at 4. The releases can be found on the Columbia County website and the Facebook pages of the Columbia County Board of Supervisors, Sheriff's Office, the Department of Health, and the Emergency Management Office.

Update From Hudson Valley Community College:



Glad to share this terrific update from Hudson Valley Community College that highlights some of the many ways HVCC is helping its students, faculty, staff, and our community respond to the Coronavirus. Thank you HVCC for always caring about our community!

Your Community College is Open

College Continues Community Outreach and Assistance

COVID-19 Emergency Fund Update:

The COVID-19 Emergency Fund was established last month through a \$7,500 gift from the members of the college Foundation Board. In establishing the emergency fund, the board hoped college donors, alumni and friends could match their gift so the Foundation can help students, faculty and staff continue to take classes and work remotely.

Knowing many students and staff do not have the technical equipment to support learning and working remotely, the fund will help purchase equipment to loan. Already, the funds have been used to purchase 18 laptops which are being used by students who need them. Distribution is taking place through the college's Information Technology Services (ITS) office. The Faculty Student Association also took up the challenge with a gift of \$7,500 and the executive committee of the Student Senate voted to reallocate \$10,000 in funds that were set aside for last year's class gift to go toward the emergency fund. The NTP Association also contributed a gift of \$1,000. If you are interested in supporting the COVID-19 Emergency Fund you can do so at www.hvcc.edu/giving.

Phi Theta Kappa Students Step Up to Offer Help

Student board members of the academic honor society Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) have been in contact with the college's Distance Learning office and working out a way to assist their peers with getting comfortable in the online learning environment. The high achieving students in the honor society will undergo training through the Distance and Online Learning office and hopefully be able to assist their peers with any issues related to online learning as the semester progresses.

College Loans Respiratory Device to Local Company Working on Ventilator Prototype

Cohoes-based manufacturing company PVA is designing a simple ventilator prototype which could be used to help COVID-19 patients, but to move forward the company needed access to what's called a Michigan Lung Simulator. The college's Respiratory Care program was able to loan one of its simulators to the company this week so they could continue their prototyping work and also apply for FDA approval.

Faculty Sourcing Supplies for Face Shield Production on Campus

Faculty members in the Advanced Manufacturing Technology program were designing a prototype protective face shield that they hoped to put into production and eventually deliver to local hospitals. It seems that many other companies, colleges and universities with access to 3D printing technology had the same idea, and the raw materials to create the mask frames are now unavailable.

"Every company that stocks the plastic we need is sold out for at least two weeks," said Instructor Dean Odell, who initially thought of the idea.

Odell said he will continue to work on the prototype and be ready for production if the need persists and materials become available.

Ongoing Equipment Donations

The college's LaPan Services Building continues to serve as a county-wide point of distribution for the county's law enforcement and emergency services personnel. This week, the departments of Dental Hygiene and Nursing provided surgical gowns, gloves, goggle frames with disposable lenses, protective eye-wear and facial masks.

The college's Print Shop was able to add 24 boxes of nitrile examination gloves to the supplies being stockpiled in the college's Point of Distribution for Rensselaer County. Needing disinfectant supplies with laboratory grade, the Dental Hygiene department was able to provide a supply to the City of Albany Fire Department.

We will attempt to keep you informed with regular updates as we move forward in the coming weeks. Be well!

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Local farms are vital during the COVID-19 Crisis

Today's Troy Record had a good read on the critical importance of our local farms during the Coronavirus crisis, as mentioned by the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rensselaer County. Article also discusses local farms that are part of Harvest Connection, a farm-to-table initiative that connects consumers with farm-fresh products. Thank you to all our hard-working family farmers who've moved heaven and earth to keep our food supply safe and available!

https://www.troyrecord.com/news/local-news/cornell-cooperative-extension-of-rensselaer-county-highlights-local-farms/article_f402a7da-78e5-11ea-be5a-e757506ca78c.html

Lending a Helping Hand



If you are looking for ways to help make a difference during this difficult time, there are a number of options to keep in mind. For those who are able, it is always a good time to make a monetary donation to your favorite local charity, hospital, nursing home, volunteer fire and EMS company, or PBA. Also at the local level, a number of civic groups and organizations have set up food delivery services for seniors and vulnerable citizens. Particularly during times such as this, these groups often find themselves in need of good volunteers.

A number of larger charities are providing direct assistance during this crisis, including some that focus on ensuring that our courageous medical professionals have the proper safety gear and equipment they need. To help people donate with greater confidence, the not-for-profit called Charity Navigator conducts reviews and provides information about a wide range of philanthropic groups. They now have a special section on their website that is devoted to coronavirus-related charities.

<https://www.charitynavigator.org/index.cfm?bay=content.view&cpid=7779#group-470>.

These are obviously difficult times for all New Yorkers, but by working together — and supporting our heroic medical professionals, first responders, and residents in need — we will overcome the challenges that confront us.

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THE NEW YORK STATE SENATE

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