



Weekly Report from Assemblyman Charles D. Fall

April 24, 2020



Wishing a safe, healthy, and fulfilling Ramadan Mubarak to everyone observing and fasting during the holy month. Ramadan is a month of self and spiritual reflection, and one for giving back to those in need. This Ramadan will be unique due to the COVID-19 crisis. I will certainly miss the community gatherings at the masjids for prayers, iftar (dinner) with friends and neighbors, and meeting new folks that are committed to community service such as Muslims Giving Back, Council of Peoples Organization, Muslim Community Network, and Bait ul Jamaat.

Despite having to adjust our traditions this Ramadan, the core values and practices of the holy month remain, and we can all continue connecting with friends and family virtually and uplifting community members most in need throughout the holy month.

Updates From Albany



What Suicide Prevention Efforts for Veterans and Law Enforcement did the Legislature Include in the 2020-21 State Budget?

This year's budget:

- Includes an investment of \$1 million to partner with organizations to help our veterans, law enforcement and first responders with suicide prevention efforts.
- The enacted budget also directs state agencies like the NYS Office of Mental Health and the NYS Division of Veterans' Affairs to expand suicide prevention strategies for veterans, law enforcement, correctional officers, and first responders, including a new campaign to reduce the stigma of mental illness.

- The State will also put together a panel of stakeholders and experts at its annual Suicide Prevention Conference to develop and implement strategies for preventing suicide among these brave populations.

The loss of one more first responder or veteran to suicide is one too many. From my many conversations with mental health care advocates and first responders, we not only need to expand funding for first responder mental health programs, we also need to expand peer to peer programming for veterans to speak to veterans, police officers to speak with police officers, and firefighters to speak with firefighters.

I plan to continue working with professionals to make this happen. We need to be proactive, not reactive, especially on this issue.

Find mental health resources for our first responders and the general public:

- **Crisis Text Line**: Law Enforcement text BLUE to 741741 and non-law enforcement text TALK to 741741
- **NYPD Internal Mental Health Resources**
- **NYS Mental Health Hotline**: 1-844-863-9314
- **NYC Well**: 1-888-NYC-WELL or text WELL to 65173 or **click here**
- **Thrive NYC Resources**
- **NYS Headspace Partnership**

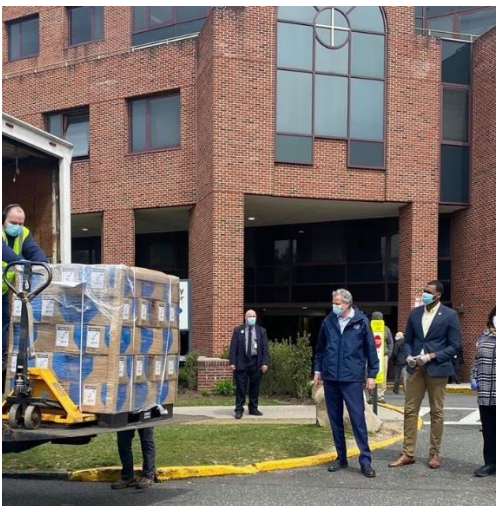
District 61 News

Delivering Personal Protective Equipment to Richmond University Medical Center

I joined Mayor de Blasio and my government colleagues at RUMC on Monday to deliver much needed personal protective equipment for the hospital's medical staff. The delivery included roughly: sixteen thousand N95 Masks, sixteen thousand face masks, three thousand eyewear, twenty-six thousand gloves and much more essential PPE.

During the visit, we also received a commitment from the Mayor that the City will send more staff to assist RUMC. This commitment of additional personnel is crucial for our medical professionals who are in much need of relief. A special thank you to all the healthcare professionals and RUMC leadership doing all they can to maintain the health of our community. Another thank you to my Staten Island colleagues who have collectively advocated for more supplies and staffing needs in our Island hospitals. My colleagues and I are committed to ensuring RUMC and our nursing homes receive the equipment, testing supplies and personnel that they need.

I am grateful I could speak directly to the RUMC medical professionals to share my appreciation for their dedication.





Positive Community Contributions

Community members, business owners and organizations across the Island have been actively doing their part to navigate COVID-19. Each week I will be highlighting a community member, organization, or business that is using creativity to provide acts of good and remind the community that we are in this together.

This week, I want to highlight constituent Maria Abeja. Maria immigrated to Staten Island from Mexico 17 years ago. After losing employment as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Maria and a friend Maribel Torres began making and selling reusable cloth face masks. With the assistance of a local community job center in Port Richmond, La Colmena, and Stapleton-based nonprofit MakerSpace NYC, the women have been producing these much-needed face masks at the cost of 3 for \$15. The two entrepreneurs are among the hundreds of thousands of undocumented New Yorkers who were hurt by large layoffs and are unable to receive federal aid through the stimulus bill or NYS unemployment insurance.

Maria and Maribel have since received hundreds of orders and provided job opportunities for four additional workers. Furthermore, each week, a portion of the masks produced are donated to frontline workers. They have already delivered masks to several groups including the NYPD. **Read more on the story behind their hand-sewn cloth masks here.** Maria and the woman of “Mujeres Liderando” were recently featured in an article published by The City.

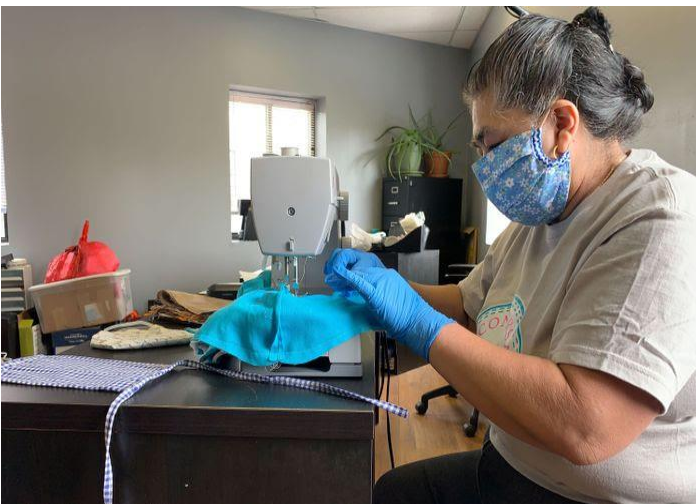


Photo: Clifford Michel/ THE CITY

If you or someone you know is doing positive work on the North Shore to uplift spirits or provide an essential resource in our community, please send an email to Agosas@nyassembly.gov with details and photos of their efforts to have them highlighted in a future newsletter.

Critical Updates, New Policies, and Recommendations to Protect You and Your Community From Contracting and Spreading COVID-19

1. **NYS on PAUSE has been extended through to May 15.** All non-essential gatherings remain prohibited, and non-essential businesses should remain closed; continue to practice social distancing and limit all outdoor activity.
2. **The City administration has established a new plan to combat COVID-19 in NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA) buildings.** The new plan will provide the following services to residents:
 - Access to free testing; personal protective equipment; food delivery for seniors; expanding NYCHA's wellness call program to all seniors and vulnerable residents; free tablets and internet service for seniors; and an aggressive building cleaning schedule: common areas will be sanitized three-times a week at family developments and five-times a week at senior developments. The cleaning schedules will be posted on NYCHA website this week.
3. **Click here for more information about coronavirus and to find a guide on how to stay safe. You can also text COVID to 692-692** to receive regular SMS texts with the latest news and developments from Notify NYC.
4. If you have mild to moderate symptoms of COVID-19, you should immediately isolate yourself at home. After three to four days, if you still feel sick, contact your health care provider.

Ways to get tested:

- I. To make an appointment at the **South Beach** drive-thru facility located at 777 Seaview Ave., call the **NYS Health Hotline at 888-364-3065**. Only those with an appointment can be tested at this site. Results are provided via phone, fax, or the **online patient portal**.
- II. To make an appointment at **NYC Health + Hospitals/Gotham Health Vanderbilt, located at 165 Vanderbilt Ave., call 844-692-4692**.
- III. **Beacon Christian Community Health Center** is also offering offer services to patients and evaluating people who may have been exposed to COVID-19. **Call 718-815-6560 to speak with a professional.**
- IV. **If you have any of the following symptoms, go to an emergency room or call 911:**
 - Trouble breathing
 - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
 - New confusion or inability to stay awake
 - Blue lips or face

Crucial Resources to Support and Aid Your Everyday Needs During the COVID-19 Outbreak

1. **NYS extends state-debt collection until May 17.** The halt on state-owed student and medical debt collection has been extended from March 17 to May 17. This policy aims to help ease the financial burden of struggling New Yorkers. Interest and fees on the outstanding debt are also suspended during this 30-day extension. **Eligible debts include:**
 - Debt owed to any of the state's five hospitals and the state's five veterans' homes.
 - Students with owed debt to any State University of New York (SUNY) campus.
 - Individual debtors, sole-proprietors, small business owners, and certain homeowners who owe debt relating to oil spill cleanup and removal costs, property damage, and breach of contract, as well as other fees owed to state agencies.
 - **Individuals seeking to apply for this temporary relief can fill out an application online or visit the Office of the Attorney General's coronavirus website to learn more about the suspension of payments.** If an individual is unable to fill out the online form, they can also call the OAG hotline at 1-800-771-7755 to learn more.

2. NYCHA has instituted a **State of Emergency Rent Hardship Program for tenants in need of economic support**. Residents can file through their MyNYCHA app or go to their property management office to request a paper copy. NYCHA has also suspended all resident evictions while the City is under a state of emergency.

• NYCHA has suspended all resident evictions for as long as the City is under a state of emergency to keep our families healthy and housed during these uncertain times.

• Residents can file an Interim Recertification to decrease their rent due to decreased income. Residents can file on NYCHA's Self-Service Portal or call their property management office to request a paper copy be mailed to them.

Rent Hardship Program Details

A household may qualify for a rent reduction based on rent hardship if all the following conditions are met:

- There is at least a 5% reduction to gross income
- Current rent is more than 30% of net household income

Residents can initiate an Interim Recertification via the NYCHA Self-Service Portal or by requesting a paper form to be mailed to their residence by calling respective Management Offices.

3. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act creates a new temporary federal program called **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)**. PUA offers temporary unemployment assistance to those who are unemployed, partially employed, or unable to work because of COVID-19 and are not currently eligible for regular unemployment benefits.

- For more information, please refer to the NYS Department of Labor's **PUA Fact Sheet here**.
- **To apply for PUA or Regular Unemployment Benefits, click here and follow the instructions.**

4. **Job Opportunities: NYCHA is hiring temporary per diem workers to assist with building maintenance. To apply and get more info about the role, contact your local NYCHA Property Management Office.** While residents are encouraged to apply, the positions are open to non-residents as well and that NYCHA still has unfilled positions for this opportunity.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY
2020 SPRING SEASON
Update as of 04.01.2020

NYCHA is hiring **TEMPORARY PER DIEM WORKERS** to assist with general maintenance at NYCHA properties throughout the city. **Please call** your local NYCHA Property Management Office for more information and **to schedule an appointment** to complete the required forms.

Required documents:

Two forms of identification (originals only) to verify your identity and eligibility to work in the United States. Examples of acceptable documents include, but are not limited to:

- Driver license
- U.S. Passport
- Social Security card
- U.S. Citizen ID Card (Form I-197)
- Employment authorization document issued by the Department of Homeland Security
- Original or certified copy of birth certificate



- You must be:**
- At least 18 years of age
 - Able to perform heavy physical labor



Duration of employment:

- Candidates would be eligible to obtain up to 40 hours of work per week
- You will be called as needed during the spring season

Wage: \$19.33 per hour

Update as of 04.01.2020

5. **Click here to find an FAQ page on guidance for funerals and burials in NYC.** This website goes over services, religious traditions, and how to apply for a death certificate during COVID-19.
- **The NYC Human Resources Administration is offering burial assistance** for individuals in need of aid to meet funeral expenses. New York City residents may be eligible to receive up to \$900 in financial assistance to help pay for funeral expenses.
6. **NYS Department of Labor has been alerted of several scam attempts targeting individuals that are filing for unemployment benefits.** Claimants are being contacted by blocked or unknown numbers and being asked to provide information such as their full Social Security number, or other forms of information that NYS DOL agents would not request if this information was already documented when the claimant completed their online application.

- If you have filed for unemployment and are waiting for a call from the state Dept. of Labor, please know that because most staff are working from home, their caller IDs may show private or restricted. First confirm your claim number with the agent.
- If your application was filed in full online, the only forms of information that an NYS Department of Labor agent will ask for are:
 - Claimant's Full Name
 - The Date of Filing their Claim
 - The Method Used to File the Claim (Online/Web vs. Telephone)

7. NYS Domestic Violence Hotline: It is 1-800-942-6906

- During this time of isolation at home it's important for people to know that if they're faced with a domestic violence situation, **they don't have to stay in those situations.** The state will help those in need to relocate and help find safe shelter.
- If there is an issue where someone is in immediate danger, call 911 immediately. Otherwise, call the hotline for help at **1-800-942-6906.**

8. Free Groceries: The Department of Probation, Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON) Nutrition Kitchens, in partnership with the Food Bank of NYC and the NYC Young Men's Initiative (YMI) have opened a Nutrition Kitchen (food pantry) to **distribute free food, available to any New Yorker who needs it.**

- The Staten Island Kitchen located at **340 Bay Street operates Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9am-noon. Call 718-876-8660 for more information.**

9. Grab and Go for All New Yorkers: Community members of all ages may pick up three meals a day at specific DOE schools. To find a location, text "NYCFOOD" or "COMIDA" to 877-877. Hours of operation:

- 7:30am - 11:30am for families and children
- 11:40am - 1:30pm for adults
- Vegetarian and halal options available at all sites. Kosher meals can be found at P.S. 54, 1060 Willowbrook Rd, Staten Island 10314

Useful Virtual Events

1. My office is collaborating with Staten Island Therapeutic Garden, H.E.A.L.T.H for Youths, Staten Island Child Wellness Initiative and TYSA to offer **free virtual family Yoga courses every Thursday at 7pm and Saturday at 10am.** Yoga is a practice that aids with improving physical and mental health, healing body aches and pains, and helps to improve focus. **Email Sarah.Blasgarden@gmail.com to get the link to join!**



2. **The NYC Department of Small Business Services is offering a webinar on 'Building an Operational Plan' on Wednesday, April 29 from 1pm to 4pm.** The goal of this course is to help you translate your business concept into an efficient operation that continuously improves and raises your bottom line. **[Click here to register!](#)**

3. The Comptroller's Office has just launched **M/WBE University Webinars: Resources for Small Businesses and M/WBEs Impacted by COVID-19 every Tuesday and Thursday from 11 am to 12pm until Thursday, May 14.** These presentations on Zoom will cover a range of topics including financial resources from the federal, state, and City government as well as the private sector, and current business opportunities within City and State procurement.
 - Interpretation services will be available in 12 different languages
 - **[Click here for more information](#) and to RSVP or email any questions to diversity@comptroller.nyc.gov.**

NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER SCOTT M. STRINGER

COMPTROLLER'S
M/WBE UNIVERSITY
MINORITY AND WOMEN OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

Comptroller's M/WBE University is a series of workshops designed to increase access to the Comptroller's Office and citywide opportunities for M/WBEs.

WEBINARS: RESOURCES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AND M/WBEs IMPACTED BY COVID-19
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Via Zoom

The Comptroller's Office will be providing presentations via Zoom on resources from the federal, state, and City government and the private sector available to small businesses and M/WBEs impacted by COVID-19.

Webinar Sessions:

Tuesdays	Thursdays
• April 21, 2020	• April 16, 2020
• April 28, 2020	• April 23, 2020
• May 05, 2020	• April 30, 2020
• May 12, 2020	• May 07, 2020
	• May 14, 2020

To RSVP, visit <http://ComptrollerEvents.eventbrite.com> or email diversity@comptroller.nyc.gov. Interpretation will be available in American Sign Language, Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Mandarin, Polish, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu. Please request interpretation services upon RSVP at least two days before each session. Information provided during these sessions might change as emergency laws, resources and other factors evolve during the COVID-19 pandemic. We cannot advise you on such developments. Please consult US, NY, and NYC COVID-19 websites for the latest information.

GET HELP NAVIGATING THE CITY

If you are a business owner and need help navigating City procurement opportunities and resources, make an appointment with the Comptroller's Office by emailing direct@comptroller.nyc.gov.

If you are a constituent and need assistance with complaints or inquiries about government services, please email the Comptroller's Community Action Center at action@comptroller.nyc.gov.

How To Help

1. The Staten Island Chamber of Commerce, Borough President Oddo and UFT are coordinating the **'Feeding Our Frontline' campaign** to provide grab and go meals to Staten Island hospital staff. **[Click here for more information and to donate.](#)**
2. All New Yorkers who have recovered from COVID-19 are asked to contact the state and donate blood.
 - **Individuals who have recovered from the virus may have convalescent plasma in their blood, which has antibodies against the virus and could help with the development of a treatment for the virus.**
 - **[Find more information about how to donate blood here](#)**
3. **The First Responders Fund is a state initiative to assist COVID-19 health care workers and first responders with expenses and costs, including childcare.** The State Department of Health is accepting donations for the fund, and Blackstone is making an anchor \$10 million contributions to the fund. **Donations can be made electronically here.**
4. Individuals, organizations, or companies offering to donate Personal Protective Equipment **[click here](#) or [click here.](#)**
5. **[Fill out your US Census today, it is quick and easy and will determine how more than \\$675 billion of federal funding is distributed to states and communities.](#)**



Assemblyman Charles D. Fall

#CensusCompletedChallenge

Three Methods to Respond:

- **Online:** <https://my2020census.gov/>
- **Mail:** Mail back the paper questionnaire sent to your home.
- **Call:** 844-330-2020 to complete via phone.

Challenge 5 family members and friends!

Everyone counts. Infants, the elderly and everyone in-between.



Wishing you all health and safety,



Charles D. Fall
Member of Assembly

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