



**Weekly Report from Assemblyman Charles D. Fall
May 16, 2020**

District 61 News

Richmond University Medical Center (RUMC) Mother's Day Food Delivery
Our first responders work day and night and even on holidays. This Mother's Day, I teamed up with One Hundred Black Men, Congressman Max Rose and Senator Diane Savino to deliver 100 meals, hand sanitizer, and roses to the dedicated hospital staff and medical professionals at RUMC. This small token of our appreciation was for the RUMC medical staff that could not be with their children, mothers, or grandmothers this holiday and for their commitment to keeping Staten Islanders healthy. Thank you to the partners for helping to uplift our first responders.





North Shore Hot Meal Giveaways

I worked in partnership with my North Shore colleagues, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams and a host of community groups, to host two hot meal giveaways for the residents of Park Hill and West Brighton. Community members received free face masks, hand sanitizer, census information, and over 700 meals were served in total. Thank you to the various community groups, including NYPD Muslim Officer Society, Muslims Giving Back, Pakistani American Youth Society, Gyro King, Brothers Care Inc., Expressway Collision, and Staten Island Hurricanes Youth Football, for stepping up to help the community when people need it most.



NYS Legislators 2nd Annual Ramadan Fasting Challenge and Virtual Iftar

In 2018, I became the first Muslim elected to the NYS Assembly. In 2019, I teamed up with my colleagues for the inaugural Ramadan fasting challenge with the intent to better inform all New Yorkers about the symbolism of the holy month

of Ramadan and to highlight the importance of this holiday for the more than 1 million Muslim New Yorkers. For the second year in a row, more than two dozen state legislators across New York- from Buffalo to Long Island- participated in this annual event as an act of solidarity.

[Click here to view a compilation video of my NYS legislative colleagues wishing the NY Muslim community a Ramadan Mubarak.](#) I want to give a special thank you to all my NYS colleagues that were able to participate in this video including, Assembly Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes, Assemblymember Joe Lentol, Assemblymember Tremaine Wright, Senator Jamaal T. Bailey, Assemblymember Michael Cusick, Senator Kevin Parker, Assemblymember Harvey Epstein, Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte, Assemblymember Brian Barnwell, Assemblymember Nily Rozic, Assemblymember Al Taylor, Assemblymember Alicia L. Hyndman, Assemblymember Nader Sayegh, Assemblymember David Weprin, Assemblymember Nathalia Fernandez, Assemblymember Victor Pichardo, Assemblymember Cathy Nolan, Assemblymember Clyde Vanel, Assemblymember Michael Reilly, Assemblymember Michael Blake, Assemblymember Michaelle Solages, Assemblymember Simcha Eichenstein, Assemblymember Mike Miller and Assemblymember Taylor Darling. Many of my colleagues who are not featured in this video sent their support and well wishes to the entire Muslim community as we enter the final days of Ramadan.



Several of my colleagues and leaders in the Muslim community on Staten Island joined me for a virtual pre-Iftar event to conclude the day-long fast with one

another. Together we discussed our fasting experiences and community service efforts. This was a fulfilling conversation about the values of Ramadan and the various ways the city and state are supporting Muslims during this time, including free halal meals provided by the DOE. I want to thank all the NYS representatives and community leaders who participated in this unifying event.



[Click here to watch a recording of the pre-Iftar event I hosted and hear about the experiences my colleagues had during their fast.](#)

Positive Community Contributions

This week in positive community contributions, I want to highlight Dr. Reverend Terry Troia, President, and CEO of Project Hospitality as well as the dozens of staff and volunteers who are working tirelessly to get healthy and nutritious meals to food-insecure residents and the homeless across Staten Island. Food insecurity has surged since the beginning of the COVID pandemic and every day hundreds of people rely on the collection, packaging, and distribution of groceries and meals Project Hospitality provides. Project Hospitality was recently featured in an ABC TV special, Rise Up New York, a Robinhood relief benefit where their extraordinary efforts to meet Staten Island’s growing needs were highlighted.

It was my pleasure to join Reverend Troia and her staff in welcoming Mayor de Blasio to the Project Hospitality soup kitchen on Bay Street to help serve up grab and go lunches for residents in need and to discuss the city's commitment to 25 million in emergency funding to emergency food providers across New York City. Reverend Troia was one of several Staten Islanders chosen to serve on a sector-based advisory council, that will be tasked with getting NYC businesses, schools and other organizations across the five boroughs ready to reopen. Reverend Troia will serve as the Staten Island representative on the Non-Profit and Social Services Sector Advisory Council. Thank you to Mayor de Blasio for securing this essential funding that will greatly benefit organizations like Project Hospitality during this pandemic. Thank you to the entire Project Hospitality team for their vital efforts.

[Click here to view a clip of Project Hospitality featured during the ABC Robinhood Special.](#)



Project Hospitality's Mobile Pantry services offer free groceries, fresh fruit and vegetables across Staten Island. View the schedule below to for the food pantries hours and locations.

Date	Time	Location
Every Monday	12:00pm-1:00pm	382 Jersey St. • Caspary House
Every Tuesday	9:30am-11:00am	44 Dongan Hills Ave. • Dongan Hill Head Start
Every Tuesday	11:00am-12:15pm	475 Seaview Ave. • St. University Hospital Health
Every Tuesday	12:00pm-1:00pm	242 Masson Ave. • St. Michael's Ark Parkton
Every Tuesday	2:15pm-3:00pm	7533 Ambury Rd. • Bethel Methodist Church
Every Wednesday	12:45pm-1:15pm	180 Park Hill Ave. • African Refugee Center
Every Thursday	12:00pm-1:00pm	385 Vanderbilt Ave. • Vanderbilt Memorial Church
Every Friday	9:15am-9:45am	20 Bondury St. • Mother's Harbor Houses
Every Friday	10:00am-11:00am	Tahsean Ave. • Tahsean and Academy Ave.
Every Friday	11:30am-12:00pm	Cedar Grove Ave. • Cedar Grove and Topping St.
Every Friday	1:00pm-1:30pm	511 Midland Ave. • Midland and Nugent Ave.
Every Friday	14:00-2:45pm	153 Terrace Ave. • South Beach House
1st Sunday	1:00pm-1:30pm	779 Hendrigan Ave. • St. John's Church
4th Sunday	1:00pm-1:30pm	397 Harbor Hill • St. Michael's Church

Project Hospitality Food Pantry

514 Bay St. Staten Island, NY 10304

Food Pantry:
Tuesdays and Thursdays
9am-11am

Grab and Go Soup Kitchen:
Tuesdays and Thursdays
11:30am-1pm

Updates From Albany

What Measures did the State Legislature Include in the 2020-21 State Budget to Improve NYS Higher Education Opportunities and to Protect Student Borrowers?

Higher Education



This year's budget includes programs that do more to assist students pursuing higher education. The NYS Legislature and the Governor supported and created additional programs to address the cost of attendance and help students with unique educational challenges.

- This includes a significant increase in opportunity programs in Open Educational Resources to reduce or eliminate some of the costs of textbooks and expands the food pantries at SUNY and CUNY.
- The 2021 Enacted Budget will make \$213 million available for higher education opportunity programs and training centers, a 57% increase since 2012.

Requiring Transparency and Accountability for For-Profit Colleges:

The enacted budget also includes a for-profit college accountability initiative that is focused on transparency and outcomes to ensure that our students are well served in these schools.

- Numerous studies have found that for-profit colleges correlate to negative outcomes for students, especially low-income, minority, and female students.
- A higher level of accountability and transparency is needed to ensure the \$45 million in taxpayer funds going to these institutions are well managed and distributed to support student development
- The budget requires for-profit schools to demonstrate positive outcomes for their students and include basic disclosure of funding and financing,

including compensation packages of senior leadership and ownership, including any relevant bonuses and incentives.

- To further protect New York's veterans from dishonest schools that target them for their education benefits, the Department of Veteran Services will bring more transparency to for-profit schools, identify opportunities to clarify state and federal commitments to education and ensure New York State's veterans will be protected in the for-profit education space.

Expanding College Student Enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits:

The enacted budget has a measure to reduce food insecurity among college students, so they are better able to focus on their studies and successfully graduate.

- Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance will establish a policy to make more community college students eligible for essential SNAP benefits by establishing a state policy that community college students engaged at least half-time in career and technical education courses of study are exempt from the requirement to work 20-hours weekly to qualify for SNAP.
- This policy change will increase the participation of low-income college students in SNAP, providing them with essential nutritional benefits so they are more likely to obtain their college certification or degree.

Stopping Abusive and Deceptive Practices from Student Loan Debt Relief Companies:

The enacted state budget establishes the “Get on Your Feet” Loan Forgiveness Program.

- The nation's only state-sponsored need-based loan forgiveness program establishes regulations recommending standards of conduct for student loan servicing companies.
- Many student loan companies typically charge student loan borrowers substantial upfront fees and promise to assist them with consolidating multiple student loans into a single loan or alternative repayment

arrangements. However, borrowers can often achieve the same results through free government programs.

I am determined to continue implementing better opportunities for our youth and young adults to succeed and for every student to feel supported along their academic journey, regardless of their age. More importantly, my colleagues in government and I have to ensure that such opportunities are protected by law for our students. Education is the most powerful tool we can use to shape our world. This investment in our students' knowledge and achievement is advantageous for our entire state.

Critical Updates, New Policies, and Testing Locations to Protect You and Your Community During COVID-19

1. Governor Cuomo has extended the NY PAUSE order through May 28 for New York City and four other regions. **Click here to review the "NY Forward Reopening" plan, a guide to reopening and building back.**
2. Mayor de Blasio provided updates on the uptick in cases of **Pediatric Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome (PMIS)**. There are 100 cases of PMIS detected in NYC, with 55 who tested positive for COVID-19 or for antibodies. If your child has symptoms including persistent fever, rash, abdominal pain, vomiting **call your doctor immediately**. The city is ensuring that medical professionals are monitoring the uptick in cases very closely.
3. **NYC BOE Absentee Ballot**: Registered NYC voters can request an absentee ballot for the June 23 elections. **Click here to request an NYC absentee ballot.** Registered voters should request their ballot by June 16.
4. The City's Open Streets initiative is designed to provide more active space for New Yorkers without compromising social distancing. Two Staten Island streets, Silver Lake Park Drive and Front Street from Canal Street to Edgewater Street are **open exclusively to pedestrians and cyclists**

every day from 8 am to 8 pm.

5. Locations to get tested for COVID-19:

- 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**. 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 COVID testing to Staten Island residents who may have been exposed to COVID-19. **Call 718-815-6560 to speak with a professional**.
- iv. **CityMD** is providing COVID-19 testing; antibody blood tests; and exams to help patients who once had COVID, demonstrate they are currently negative and are able to return to work. **Call 718-571-9196 to make an appointment** at their West Brighton location, 812 Forest Ave.
- v. The coronavirus test site located at Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden is open to the public. The facility will now test all residents, both those showing coronavirus symptoms as well as those who are asymptomatic, to get tested. The facility is operated by One Medical and is open Monday - Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. **Appointments can be made by calling 888-ONE-MED1. Check that your insurance provider covers any costs associated with exams at this location.**
- vi. **NYS is offering diagnostic and antibody testing at two North Shore sites this week and next. Mt. Sinai United Christian Church in New Brighton will serve as a testing site until Sunday,**

May 17. First Central Baptist Church will offer testing next week, May 20-24. Call to 833-422-7369 must make an appointment first.



vii. **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

6. **Antibody Testing for New Yorkers:** Phase one of the city's antibody testing survey for 70,000 New Yorkers, in partnership with BioReference Labs, is underway and will run through late May. They'll repeat the survey for another 70,000 New Yorkers in June. Antibody testing is by appointment only. Complete this survey to schedule an appointment: **Antibody Testing Appointment Survey or call 888- 279-0967.** Please utilize the website, in order to keep the hotline free for those without internet access.

- Staten Island Location: St. John's Villa, 57 Cleveland Place

7. In order to expand access to healthcare and reduce the need for New Yorkers to leave their homes, the NYC administration has launched a **Phone-a-Clinician program with Health + Hospitals, available at (844) NYC-4NYC.** New Yorkers who have symptoms or questions about

Coronavirus (COVID-19) can call 1-844-NYC-4NYC to connect to a medical provider free of charge seven days a week from 9 am - 9 pm.

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

1. Are You a New Yorker who has COVID-19 or lives with someone who has COVID-19? If so, you may be eligible for a temporary hotel stay. The City of NY is providing 14-day temporary hotel rooms for COVID-19 patients and families that do not have a place to isolate. This service is FREE and will not affect your health insurance or other benefits that you currently receive. **Click here to learn more, or call 1-844-692-4692.**

2. **The NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs is working to provide New Yorkers with emergency expense aid.** Individuals may apply for emergency financial help to prevent eviction, pay their energy or utility bills, or buy health-related items. They can apply to the NYC Human Resources Administration for a one-time emergency grant, also called the "One Shot Deal." **Call (718) 557-1399 for more information.** Eligibility includes all New Yorkers, regardless of immigration status.

3. **NYC Burial Allowance Application.** Human Resources Administration (HRA), Office of Burial Services (OBS) assists individuals in need of financial assistance to meet funeral expenses for a deceased low-income New York City resident. Payment may be authorized to reimburse funeral expenses that have already been paid or pre-approval for payment may be authorized for the cost of a planned funeral.
 - **View the application for Burial Allowance and find out more about what HRA will cover.**
 - Contact a city agent as 929-252-7731. Callers are encouraged to leave a message and an OBS staff member will return their call.

4. **Small Business Resources**

- i. The Small Business Association has resumed accepting **Paycheck Protection Program applications** from participating lenders.
 - All impacted small businesses are urged to consider applying as soon as possible **as funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and demand is extremely high. [Click here to start your application.](#)**
 - Email sbasupport@edc.nyc if you need a referral to a banking partner or other assistance in the application process. You can also call 311 for help with the application.
 - ii. NYS is offering \$3 million in grants to businesses to manufacture emergency medical supplies and equipment. Companies interested in growing or starting a medical supply business should **[click here for more information.](#)**
5. **Free Legal Help:** Available on things like notary services, labor laws, SBA loans and grants, estate planning, leases, immigration, and more. Providers below:
 - **City Bar Justice Center. [Learn more here.](#)**
 - **Lawyers Alliance.** For non-profit organizations only. Virtual consultations on SBA loans. **[Click here to register.](#)**
 - **The New York State Bar Association** helps jobless New Yorkers secure unemployment benefits if their claim has been denied. **[Click here to find out more information and request support.](#)**
6. The **NYC Problem Gambling Resource Center** continues to offer free and confidential treatment and services for individuals and families impacted by problem gambling. If you know somebody who is personally impacted by problem gambling and looking for help in Staten Island, **[click here for more information](#), call (929) 955-3062, or e-mail newyorkcitypgrc@nyproblemgambling.org.**
7. **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)** is a federal program that 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.](#)**
- **[Click here to apply for PUA or Regular Unemployment Benefits and follow the instructions.](#)**

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

- 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**.

9. **Groceries and Meals:**

- 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.**
- **[Click here to find a location](#)** near your home distributing meals for free. Hours and locations on this map are subject to change.
- NYC is seeking assistance from nonprofits to increase the city's food delivery capacity, with a focus on culturally sensitive meals. **[Click here for the Request for Information](#)**, and visit **[NYC.gov/nonprofits](https://nyc.gov/nonprofits)** for more information. **Submissions are due by 05/29.**

10. **NYC Open Streets:** We will continue our efforts to open streets across the City. If you know of streets in your community that could be safely closed with the staffing of community partners, please submit suggestions **[here](#)**. Applying does not guarantee acceptance. Please submit separate applications for each corridor you are proposing to pedestrianize in your community. Email **openstreets@dot.nyc.gov** if you have any questions.

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. Join The Child Wellness Initiative and Staten Island Arts **today, Saturday, May 16 at 8pm** for a film screening of FED UP and a virtual post-screening, panel discussion. FED UP explores why--despite media attention and government policies to combat childhood obesity--generations of kids will now live shorter lives than their parents. **Click here to stream the movie and to register for the digital panel.**



3. Staten Island Business Outreach Center is collaborating with small business organizations and agencies to provide free webinars focused on **'How to Become NYC MWBE Certified' on Wednesday, May 20 at 10:30am** and **'Navigating the NYC Vendor System as an M/WBE' on Thursday, May 21 at 10:30am**. RSVP required.






Presents a **FREE Small Business Webinar**

How to Become NYC MWBE Certified
May 20, 2020
10:30am to 12pm

Are you a Minority or Woman business owner? If you've ever thought about selling to the government, now is the time! Come learn about the resources and benefits as well as what it takes to become certified.

Beyond gaining valuable access to city contracting opportunities, certified MWBEs are provided with the tools and training to advance their potential:





- Invitations to exclusive networking events
- Free advertising in a searchable online directory
- Free one-on-one guidance on selling to the government

RSVP Required
Register on Eventbrite
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/104347506200>

This event was made possible by the New York City Council
 For more information on SBS M/WBE program, please visit www.nyc.gov/buycertified



BIOC NYC funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. Contact BIOC Director: biod@biocnyc.org, 718-424-9115

Presents a **FREE Small Business Webinar**


Navigating the NYC Vendor System as an M/WBE
Thursday, May 21, 2020
10:30am—12pm

The Online Directory of Certified Businesses is a searchable list of M/WBE certified businesses across the New York City area.

Your Vendor profile is a snapshot of all your business has to offer. Keeping an up to date profile allows agencies to link the right opportunities to your business. In this workshop, review the functions of PIP (payee information portal) and PassPort so you can shine.

RSVP Required
Register on Eventbrite
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/104350617506>

This event was made possible by the New York City Council
 For more information on SBS M/WBE program, please visit www.nyc.gov/buycertified



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4. H.E.A.L.T.H for Youths continues to offer their virtual **"Saturday Night Lights" Soccer Program each Saturday at 6pm!** This is an opportunity for youth to get active, practice soccer drills, participate in healthy snack demonstrations, and much more. **Click here to register!**



How To Help

1. 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.**
2. All New Yorkers who have recovered from COVID-19 are asked to contact the state and donate blood. **Find more information about how to donate blood here.**
3. Individuals, organizations, or companies offering to donate Personal Protective Equipment **click here or click here.**
4. **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