



## Weekly Report from Assemblyman Charles D. Fall

May 23, 2020

Happy Memorial Day weekend! Memorial Day is an American tradition that dates as far back as 1868. This Memorial Day weekend marks another holiday we must spend apart from our non-immediate family members. While we cannot celebrate as usual, it is still crucial to remember what Memorial Day is about – honoring the courageous men and women who gave their lives to defend our nation and the freedoms we enjoy. Thank you to those soldiers who gave their lives on the battlefield to keep us safe. Join the office of Borough President Oddo on Monday, at 9 am, for a live- streaming video pay homage to those who sacrificed their lives.



**[Click here to watch the stream on Memorial Day and to view the Staten Island Military History Trail, a map of memorials and monuments around Staten Island that captures the courage, sacrifice, and diversity of Staten Island's military heritage.](#)**

Have a safe, blessed, and healthy holiday weekend and take a moment

to pay tribute to the lost soldiers from our communities.



I want to wish my fellow Muslim brothers and sisters a blessed conclusion to the Holy month of Ramadan and a joyful Eid al-Fitr. Eid Mubarak!

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### **District 61 News**

#### **Healthy Living Virtual Cook-Along**

I participated in a virtual cooking class with several of my colleagues in city and state government. Hosted by Senator Jamaal Bailey from the Bronx, this virtual cooking event was meant to be a demonstration of how to make a nutritious, tasty and affordable meal. The simple spaghetti aglio e olio meal that we prepared using 8 common ingredients- dry spaghetti, extra-virgin olive oil, shallots, garlic, red pepper flakes, parsley, salt, and pepper-, took under 30 minutes to prepare and could feed a family of four. Many people believe eating healthy and making healthy meals is complex and expensive, however, this event helped to show us that a few ingredients can go a long way and that cooking can be fun with a little guidance. Thank you to Chef Ashely Gibson for her wonderful instruction, Senator Bailey for this great program and my daughter Maimouna for being an excellent sous-chef!



## Delivering Dinner for North Shore First Responders

Keeping with the theme of serving hot meals in the spirit of Ramadan, this week I partnered with Congressman Max Rose, Miss Staten Island Outstanding Teen, Angelica Santos Mroczek and the Yemen Cafe to deliver hot meals to first responders. We delivered these meals to the NYPD 120th and 121st precincts as well as FDNY Engine 155, Ladder 781; Engine 156; Engine 157 and Engine 158, as a thank you for their dedication to keeping our community safe, particularly during the coronavirus outbreak. The least we could do as a community is to say thank you with a hot meal and to distribute essential PPE to keep our first responders safe. Thank you to the Yemen Cafe for their partnership.



[NYPD 120th Precinct]



[NYPD 121st Precinct]



[FDNY Engine 158]



[FDNY Engine 156]



[FDNY Engine 157]



[FDNY Engine 155/Ladder 78]



[Angelica Santos Mroczek, Miss Staten Island Outstanding Teen]

### **Positive Community Contributions**

This week in positive community contributions, I want to highlight the Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden. When the COVID-19 pandemic began, leadership and staff at Snug Harbor used creative methods to ensure Snug Harbor's grounds would remain an accessible oasis for the health and wellness of our community. The Cultural Center has proudly kept its main

outdoor grounds and gardens open for socially distant strolling throughout the lockdown. Snug Harbor is the ONLY major botanical garden in NYC to have remained open in this capacity! Snug is also offering a variety of hands-on educational activities, virtual tours, and a host of digital content that brings the best of Snug Harbor right into our homes. Snug Harbor has also made it a priority to continue supporting the dozens of small businesses and artists who depend on the center for space and facilities to create, teach, and run their services.

Beyond being a cultural hub, Snug Harbor worked with the city to establish a COVID-19 drive-through test site on their grounds that serves frontline workers and community members in need of testing. Thank you to Aileen Chumard Fuchs, president and CEO of Snug Harbor for her continued leadership and the entire Snug Harbor team for orchestrating one of a kind experiences and resources for constituents.

Check out the several virtual initiatives Snug Harbor has launched to keep you and your family entertained during the quarantine.

- [Snug Harbor at Home](#), is a new series of virtual tours and explorations, hands-on educational activities, and live-streamed art workshops bringing the best of Snug Harbor right into the homes of Staten Island residents.

If you are able to take a stroll through Snug Harbor, please continue to abide by social distancing guidelines.



[2019 Snug Harbor Big Picnic]



[Aileen Fuchs, President and CEO of Snug Harbor ]

## Updates From Albany

**What Measures did the State Legislature Include in the 2020-21 State Budget to promote public health?**

**Student Mental Health Programing: The budget provides \$10 million in funding for grants to school districts to address student mental health in light of recent school closures.**

- These grants are intended to improve student access to mental health resources and assist students who have experienced trauma that negatively affects their educational experience.
- This program will be administered by the NYS Office of Mental Health and developed in consultation with the State Education Department.

**Medical Transparency Website Increasing Transparency in Healthcare Costs to Empower Patients: To enable consumers to search for healthcare services more easily, the enacted budget supported the creation of a consumer-friendly, one-stop website, called NYHealthcareCompare.**

- New Yorkers can easily compare the cost and quality of healthcare procedures at hospitals around the state.
- The website will be created by the Department of Health, the Department of Financial Services and the New York State Digital and Media Services Center.

As we progress through this pandemic together, healthcare has been at the forefront of public attention, however, discussions on mental health are often left out of the conversation. The additional funding for student mental health is a uniquely important addition to this year's budget to support and protect the emotional well-being of our youth as this public health crisis unfolds.

As a member of the Consumer Affairs and Protection and Chair of the Subcommittee on Consumer Fraud Protection, passing the medical transparency for healthcare costs is one step forward in promoting consumer confidence and transparency especially on this important matter of healthcare services.

I will certainly provide updates on the development and implementation of NYHealthcareCompare.

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

### **1. New York State vs New York City Beach Updates:**

- NYC beaches will remain closed for swimming but are open for walking, jogging and sitting. Please keep in mind that there are no lifeguards on duty, stay

out of the water! Three people have already drowned at a city beach and sadly one individual lost their life. Please be safe and avoid unattended waters.

**If you visit the beach, please observe the following service changes:**

- Please limit the length of your visit
  - Please practice social distancing and wear a face covering
  - Barbecuing & grilling, gatherings and organized sports are prohibited
  - Drinking fountains are closed
- NYS Parks will open 16 beaches across the state for swimming at 50% capacity or less and with heightened precautions beginning Friday, May 22 with lifeguards staffed at normal levels to ensure public safety. Beach-goers are reminded to practice social distancing, respect the rules, and do their part to keep parks, beaches and public lands open and safe for everyone. Beach capacity is expected to fill quickly and New Yorkers are urged to plan ahead by having alternate destinations ready. **[Click here for a list of beaches and swimming hours](#)**
- 2. Transportation Updates:**
- **Staten Island Ferry Updates:** On weekdays, excluding holidays, the Staten Island Ferry is now **operating every 30 minutes on the hour and half hour from 5:30am-9am and 3:30pm-7pm from both terminals**. The ferry runs hourly at all other times, on the hour from St George and on the half-hour from Whitehall. The Staten Island Railroad has been aligned with the updated S.I. Ferry schedule during the peak rush periods. Lastly, all passengers must wear face coverings at all times within Staten Island Ferry terminals and aboard the ferry.
  - The Metropolitan Transportation Authority is **urging customers to plan alternative travel through Memorial Day weekend** as the agency will continue to run its limited Essential Service Plan implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This means **commuter trains, subways and buses continue to be reserved for essential workers only**. All passengers riding trains or buses are required to wear a mask or face covering and engage in appropriate social distancing.
- 3. NYC public schools will now conduct summer school through distance learning this year to help reduce the risk of spread. In June, the state will decide on the status of the fall semester so schools and colleges can begin planning for a number of scenarios. [Click here for the updated NYC DOE summer calendar.](#)**
- 4. NYC has released a four-point plan to help our seniors** including 1) Expanding Testing for Nursing Home Residents 2) Providing More Staff in Nursing Homes 3) Creating Outbreak Response Teams 4) Shifting to Home-Based Care. **[Click here for more resources and guidance from the NYC Department for the Aging.](#)**

5. **NYS is extending sales tax interest and penalty relief through to June 22.** The state previously provided relief through May 19 for returns due March 20. This extension could provide interest and penalty relief for up to 89,000 vendors who had returns due in March.
6. Governor Cuomo has extended the **NY PAUSE order through May 28** for New York City and four other regions. New York City currently meets four of the seven coronavirus metrics required to reopen. **Click here to review the NYS Regional Monitoring Dashboard. Click here to review the "NY Forward Reopening" plan, a guide to reopening and building back.**
7. 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.
8. **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.**
9. 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.** 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

10. **Antibody Testing for New Yorkers:** Complete this survey to schedule an appointment: **Antibody Testing Appointment Survey** or call 888- 279-0967. Please utilize the website, to keep the hotline free for those without internet access.

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

11. 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.

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

1. The **NYC Green Relief & Recovery Fund** supports nonprofits and community groups of all sizes with grants that support essential maintenance, stewardship, public programming, and management of parks and open spaces across the five boroughs of New York City. **Community groups are eligible for grants up to \$1,500.**
  - Nonprofit organizations with operating budgets over \$10,000 must apply by **June 1** and community groups with budgets typically \$10,000 or less must apply by **June 12**. **Click here to find the application.**
  
2. 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.**
  
3. **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.
  
4. **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.
  
5. **Small Business Resources:**
  - i. The New York Forward Loan Fund is a \$100 million provision by the state to provide flexible and affordable loans to help small businesses, focusing on minority and women-owned small businesses, that did not receive federal COVID-19 assistance. The state will focus on businesses with 20 or fewer

employees and less than \$3 million in gross revenues. **Businesses interested in receiving a loan should click here.**

- ii. USA Small Business Administration has established **a Coronavirus (COVID-19): Small Business Guidance & Loan Resources webpage.**
  - iii. Moving New York Forward: Business Reopening Plan. NYS will allow non-essential businesses to reopen on a **regional and industry-specific basis**, as each region meets the criteria necessary to protect public health. Essential businesses can continue operating – to check if your business is designated as essential, **visit the guidance page here.**
6. **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.** Virtual consultations on SBA loans are available for non-profit organizations only. **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.**
7. 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.**
8. **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.**
9. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic or gender-based violence, help is available. **The Staten Island NYC Family Justice Centers is still operating virtually.** Victims and survivors in NYC can get help directly by **calling 718-697-4300 Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.**

#### 10. 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.**

11. **NYC Open Streets:** 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.** We will continue our efforts to open streets across Staten Island. 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](mailto:openstreets@dot.nyc.gov) if you have any questions.

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#### **Useful Virtual Events and Opportunities**

1. My office has joined a host of community partners to provide a giveaway of food and supplies on **Wednesday, May 27 from 11am- 2pm** at **the Gerard Carter Community Center, 230 Broad Street**. Community members will be provided with food, PPE, children's books, sanitary supplies, and much.



2. Staten Island Business Outreach Center is collaborating with small business organizations and agencies to provide free webinars focused on **'How to Write a Business Plan' on Wednesday, May 27 at 10:30am** and **'How to Start a Business' on Wednesday, June 3 at 10:30am**. RSVP required. SIBOC is also working with small businesses in need of any assistance. Small business owners can call their office at (718) 816-4775 or email [info@siboc.org](mailto:info@siboc.org) to schedule a virtual one to one business meeting.





Join us for a **FREE Small Business Webinar**

## How to Write a Business Plan

May 27, 2020  
10:30am to 12pm

Why do you need a business plan? You need a business plan the same way you need a GPS! It get you from Point A to Point B without deviation! It is what keeps you on the path to success! It is also what you take to a lender when applying for a loan. Join the Staten Island Business Outreach Center's (SIBOC) Women's Business Center to learn all the reasons why an effective business plan is essential to your business success!

**RSVP REQUIRED!**  
Register on Eventbrite  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/how-to-write-a-business-plan-tickets-106245059834>



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Presents a **Free Small Business Webinar**

## How to Start a Business

June 3, 2020  
10:30am—12pm

Ever thought of starting your own business? Tired of working for someone else? Do you know where to go to get started? The Staten Island Business Outreach Center/Women's Business Center knows what you need to and will help you plan your first steps. Join us!

**RSVP REQUIRED!**  
Register on Eventbrite  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/how-to-start-a-business-tickets-106254632466>



Funded in Part By   BOC funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. It is made possible in part through the generous support of our sponsors and donors. Contact SIBOC Director at (718) 816-4775.

3. NeON Summer is a six-week (July 6 through August 14) remote-learning summer immersion program connecting NYC youth between the ages of 14 and 24 with a paid

learning opportunities designed to build skills to succeed in the workplace, strengthen community, and support young people and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. **The deadline for the application is June, 15. Click here to apply.**



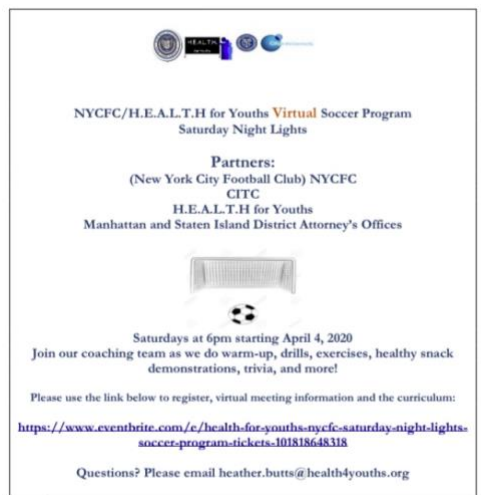
4. On May 30, 2002, the last steel column was removed from Ground Zero marking the end of recovery operations at the World Trade Center following the attacks on 9/11. Join the National September 11 Memorial and Museum on **Saturday, May 30, at 11am** for this special online ceremony of this anniversary, which can be viewed on their website or viewed on their YouTube.



5. My office has collaborated 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!**



6. 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!**



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## 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. As regions across NYS prepare to reopen, the need for blood has rebounded to pre-COVID-19 levels, but blood supply is dangerously low. Donors can call 800-933-2566 or **schedule an appointment online now.**
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