

# Rebecca Seawright



Photo Courtesy: NYS Governor Cuomo's Office

Dear Neighbor,

*This week my office hosted our first virtual Townhall Tuesday. The topics we covered were small business issues and housing issues as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a pleasure to hear from our special guests: Joyce Moy, attorney and Executive Director of the Asian American Research Institute and Bob Grimble, housing attorney and longtime friend and volunteer of our district office hosting a bi-weekly pro-bono housing legal clinic for our neighbors. [Watch the full town hall here!](#) Next week, we are having experts on senior and social services Robin Strashun of non-profit Search and Care and Marissa Block, Deputy Chief Program Officer of Lenox Hill Neighborhood House.*

*There is now a presence of positive cases in every New York county for a total of 102,863 cases and every New York City borough for a total of 57,159 cases. Over 21,000 people out-of-state have volunteered to aid NYS in addressing the COVID-19 crisis. Efforts are ongoing to increase the capacity of the state health care system to handle a peak number of cases projected to happen sometime around mid-to-late April. There will likely be enough hospital beds in place to meet this upcoming challenge, but getting more staff and medical supplies remains a challenge. The Governor announced the State Department of*

Health has approved Northwell's protocol allowing BiPAP machines to be converted into ventilators. The State has already taken a number of extraordinary measures to acquire more ventilators and build the State's stockpile, including tracking where all the ventilators are located in New York and shifting their locations to meet the highest need. All elective surgeries have been canceled to support conservation efforts.

Now, more than ever, we must PAUSE. "New York State on PAUSE," directed all non-essential businesses to close their in-person operations and banned all non-essential gatherings of individuals of any size for any reason. To assist local authorities with enforcement of these orders, the Governor established the New York State PAUSE Enforcement Assistance Task Force where individuals can file complaints by calling 1-833-789-0470.

We're seeing just how critical federal resources are for our city and state, and that's why it's so important that everyone takes ten minutes today to fill out the Census. Head to <http://my2020census.gov>

We hope you find the information below to be informative and helpful. If you are in need of information or assistance, please don't hesitate to contact our office. We regretfully have suspended in-person appointments and meetings, due to public health considerations. We are eager to continue assisting constituents by telephone and email. Please leave a message on our voicemail with your name, address and phone number and our staff will return your call:

Phone: 212.288.4607

Email: [SeawrightR@NYAssembly.gov](mailto:SeawrightR@NYAssembly.gov)

Sincerely,

Rebecca



Click to Visit Our Website

**ASSEMBLY MEMBER  
REBECCA SEAWRIGHT**  
**TOWNHALL  
TUESDAYS**



**VIRTUAL TOWN HALL  
CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATES  
TUESDAY NIGHTS @ 7:00PM  
HOSTED BY:  
THE OFFICE OF ASSEMBLY MEMBER  
REBECCA SEAWRIGHT**

**Tuesday, April 7 @ 7:00pm**

## Seniors and Homebound Elders

### **Marissa Block**

Deputy Chief Program Officer  
at Lenox Hill Neighborhood  
House



Marissa Block has been Deputy Chief Program Officer at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House since 2019. Since joining the Neighborhood House in 2013, Marissa has also served as the Director of Geriatric Care Management, Assistant Director of Social Services at the Center @ Lenox Hill Neighborhood House and as a Supervising Social Worker in our Geriatric Care Management program. Previously Marissa worked as the Associate Manhattan Regional Director at the Institute for Family Health. Marissa is a graduate of Clark University and received her MSW from Columbia University School of Social Work. Marissa was trained in Cognitive Behavior Therapy at the Beck Institute in Philadelphia and is certified in Problem Solving Treatment, Motivational Interviewing and as a Suicide Prevention Trainer through LivingWorks.

### **Robin Strashun**

Outreach and Volunteer  
Coordinator at Search and Care



Following two decades in book publishing, Robin got a degree in Geriatric Aging and Mental Health from Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging. She has been at Search and Care, a community social service agency in her own community, since 2005 as Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator. Robin has served on the Community Advisory Board of Metropolitan Hospital, and as a public member of Community Board 11 in East Harlem, currently as Vice Chair of the Health + Human Services, Seniors Committee. Advocating for the many clients her agency serves who own pets, she helped build a support service called Pets + Elders Together (PET) which received the ASPCA's Heroes in Human Services award in 2019.

## RSVP HERE FOR 4/7 TELE-TOWNHALL

The meeting will start at 7, but it is highly suggested that you log on by 6:45 to secure your spot and work through any technical issues.

### Joining Instructions (3 Options)

Join on your computer using the URL: <https://zoom.us/j/131837787>

Join by phone: dial 646-558-8656 and enter Meeting ID: 131 837 787 followed by #, then press # to enter the call.

One tap mobile- +16465588656,,131837787# US (New York)

The meeting will be recorded and posted to our Assembly website for those who are unable to connect or join us at that time.

## Last Week's Tuesday Town Hall: Small Business and Housing



## New York State Budget Update

School districts across the state are also receiving \$1.1 billion in federal funds from the recently passed recovery law to help buffer the impact of the financial crisis.

Total of \$27.9 billion in education funding, an increase of \$93.2 million – or 0.3%– over the previous year Maintains Foundation Aid at last year's level.

**Increases the reimbursable cap for New York City transportation after 4 p.m. by \$500,000**



- Provides \$848 million for pre-K funding
- Provides \$94.1 million in aid to public libraries

All NYC public, nonpublic and charter school students will be provided with additional opportunities to supplement classroom instruction including, but not limited to, visiting educational and cultural sites and institutions such as a Holocaust museum, African American cultural centers and historical landmarks, a Native American museum, Asian American museums and cultural centers, a Latinx American museum, a center for women, LGBTQ historical landmarks, and American historical landmarks and monuments.

#### **Provides \$2.1 million to SUNY and \$1.7 million to CUNY for child care centers**

- Restores \$2.5 million in funding for the CUNY Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP)

#### **Improving our subways and buses**

- Appropriates \$3 billion toward the \$54.8 billion 2020-24 Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Capital Plan, which is a total increase of \$20.9 billion or 62% over the previous plan
- Requires the City of New York and New York State to pay \$3 billion each to the MTA to support the 2020-24 MTA Capital Plan, and requires NYC to fund 50% of the Access-A-Ride (AAR) Paratransit Service, which provides public transportation to residents with disabilities or health conditions that prevent them from using public buses and subways
- To help manage the MTA's recent revenue losses and expenses, the final budget includes a provision allowing the MTA to access funds in its lockbox on a temporary basis to offset costs and obligations related to COVID-19, as well as provides emergency deficit borrowing authorization
- Increases the MTA's statutory bonding capacity from \$55.497 billion to \$90.1 billion
- Establishes a process for the appraisal of certain projects set forth in the 2020-24

#### **MTA Capital Plan, including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility structures such as elevators, relay stations and Penn Station Access projects**

- Provides \$25 million for the MTA School Fare Subsidy to help reduce the financial burden put on students and their families and better ensure they can get to and from school safely
- Rejects plans that were proposed in the executive budget that would authorize the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) and Metro-North Railroad to enter private property abutting their rights of way to remove or trim vegetation

#### **Boosting non-MTA transportation funding**

- Provides \$438 million for the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPs)
- Provides \$236 million for upstate transit systems, which is an increase of \$9.6 million –or 4.2% – over last year
- \$39.7 million for the Marchiselli Program, which helps municipalities complete road and bridge maintenance projects
- Restores \$65 million in CHIPs funding for the Extreme Winter Recovery program, which was cut in the executive budget
- Provides non-MTA mass transit aid of \$393.7 million, an increase of \$55.2 million

- \$20 million for electric buses, which help improve air quality and combat the serious threat of climate change

## Unemployment Insurance, Federal Recovery Checks, Small Business Financial Assistance

### A Message from NYS Department of Labor Commissioner Reardon





# NEW YORK STATE

## Unemployment Insurance COVID-19 adjustments

The Assembly Majority recently passed a law **waiving the seven-day waiting period for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits** for people out of work due to COVID-19. Additionally, the federal **CARES Act provides enhanced UI benefits and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)** for New Yorkers ([labor.ny.gov/ui/cares-act.shtm](http://labor.ny.gov/ui/cares-act.shtm)).

Workers who are filing new claims for UI benefits can call **1-888-209-8124** or visit [labor.ny.gov/unemploymentassistance.shtm](http://labor.ny.gov/unemploymentassistance.shtm). *Please do not call if you already have a UI claim; it will only make it difficult for others to reach an agent.*

With the enormous jump in UI claims, the New York State Department of Labor (DOL) has implemented new guidelines to help streamline the process.

- Workers should file claims based on the first letter of their last name:
  - A-F on Mondays
  - G-N on Tuesdays
  - O-Z on Wednesdays
  - Those who missed their filing day should file Thursday through Saturday
- Please note, filing later in the week does not affect the date of a claim
- Telephone hours have been extended to Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

**We are in unprecedented times so patience is key! Due to the large number of people currently filing for UI, the website may be overloaded at times and those looking to file a claim should try again later in the day if they are unable to get through.**



# Federal COVID-19 Recovery Check Information

The federal CARES Act authorizes recovery checks for U.S. taxpayers in response to the 2019 novel coronavirus. These payments will be automatic and are based on 2019 and 2018 tax returns.

- The payments will be \$1,200 for individual filers and \$2,400 for joint filers
- Individual and joint filers with up to \$75,000 and \$150,000 in adjusted gross income, respectively, will receive the full payment
- For every \$100 a taxpayer earns over the income threshold, the payment will be reduced by \$5 up to \$99,000 for single filers and \$198,000 for joint filers
- Qualifying parents with children under 17 will receive up to \$500 per dependent.

The IRS will use banking information from taxpayers' 2018 or 2019 tax returns to directly deposit the payment. The Treasury plans to open a website for taxpayers to update their direct deposit information if it was not included on their most recent return. Those who have not yet filed 2019 taxes are urged to do so as soon as possible.

**If you have filed a 2018 or 2019 tax return or receive Social Security benefits, you don't need to take any further action to receive your check.**

**Certain groups that don't usually file tax returns, such as low-income individuals, students, retirees, veterans, those who are unemployed and people with disabilities, will need to file a 2019 simple tax return to receive the payment.**

The payments will be available through the end of 2020.  
For more information, including on how to file simple tax returns, visit [IRS.gov/coronavirus](https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus).





## Financial Assistance for Small Businesses Affected by COVID-19

The closure of nonessential businesses has left countless small-business owners and their employees without a reliable source of income. The new federal CARES Act provides access to programs administered by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) that can help support New Yorkers during this difficult time.

### FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

- The **Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)** provides low interest loans of up to \$10 million to help small businesses with 500 employees or less, nonprofits or veterans' organizations cover expenses for payroll costs, interest on mortgages, rent and utilities. Small businesses in the hospitality and food industries with more than one location could also be eligible at the store and location level if the store employs less than 500 workers. Up to 100% of the loan is forgivable. Applicants must apply before June 30, 2020.  
[www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/paycheck-protection-program](http://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/paycheck-protection-program)
- The **Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program** provides small businesses with up to \$2 million in loans to compensate for revenue lost due to COVID-19. Businesses who apply for this program are also eligible for up to \$10,000 in advance loans.  
[www.sba.gov/disaster-assistance/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.sba.gov/disaster-assistance/coronavirus-covid-19)
- The **Small Business Debt Relief Program** covers monthly principal and interest payments for qualifying, existing loans for 6 months.  
[www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources#section-header-4](http://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources#section-header-4)
- The **Express Bridge Loan Pilot Program** enables small businesses who have an existing business relationship with an SBA Express Lender to receive up to \$25,000 with less paperwork. These loans can be used by businesses who are in the process of applying for other support through the SBA.  
[www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources#section-header-4](http://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources#section-header-4)

### SMALL BUSINESS HELP FROM NEW YORK CITY

- The **Small Business Continuity Loan Program** provides zero-interest loans of up to \$75,000 for businesses with less than 100 employees whose sales have decreased by more than 25%.  
[www1.nyc.gov/nycbusiness/article/nyc-small-business-continuity-loan-program](http://www1.nyc.gov/nycbusiness/article/nyc-small-business-continuity-loan-program)
- The **Employee Retention Grant Program** enables businesses with fewer than five employees to access a grant to cover 40% of payroll costs for two months.  
[www1.nyc.gov/nycbusiness/article/nyc-employee-retention-grant-program](http://www1.nyc.gov/nycbusiness/article/nyc-employee-retention-grant-program)

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## New Resources and Guidance

**NYPresbyterian** is working tirelessly to expand capacity in intensive care units, inpatient units, and emergency rooms in response to COVID-19. If you are a physician or nurse interested in working with them during this challenging time, [\*click here to learn more.\*](#)

[\*Department of Buildings released on its website a Real-Time Map of Essential & Emergency Construction Projects.\*](#)

**Former Police Commissioner James O'Neill** will be returning to the City to serve as COVID-19 Senior Advisor. He will be overseeing the supply and distribution of personal protective and medical equipment within NYC hospitals as demand continues to grow. He

will create, operationalize and manage a supply inspection regime within the hospitals to ensure the rapid turnaround of new supplies and verify each hospital is pushing needed equipment to frontline healthcare workers.

**Grab and Go Expanding for All New Yorkers-** In this time of historic high unemployment, more New Yorkers are experiencing food insecurity for the first time. To this end, the City will be expanding grab and go meals for all New Yorkers. No one will be turned away. Participants will be able to pick up three meals. The hours are:

- 7:30am - 11:30am for families and children
- 11:39am - 1:30pm for adults

To find a location, text “NYCFOOD” or “COMIDA” to 877-877

**Small Business Loans-** The application for the Federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) is open for businesses and non-profits under 500 people. Its first come, first serve. More information *here*. These are forgivable loans for: payroll up to \$100,000/employee, interest on mortgages, rent, and utility payments. The City is still providing the Small Business Continuity Fund-- loans for businesses with up to \$75,000 to businesses with up to 99 employees.

**New Mask Guidance-** With new studies that show pre-symptomatic people may be infectious, we’re now advising New Yorkers to wear face coverings when outside and near people to prevent spreading COVID to others. However, people should *not* use N95 or surgical masks, and save them for medical and other frontline people who need them. Instead, people are encouraged to use a scarf or bandana or a piece of clothing, or make their own -- and to continue to adhere to maintaining a social distance of 6 feet from other people.

#### **NYC COVID-19 Engagement Portal**

*[The City of New York is collecting information to better understand and communicate about the impacts of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\). This information will be helpful in enabling the City to share information with you and members of the public about COVID-19, and to help inform the City’s response to areas affected by COVID-19.](#)*

*[Open for Business- Support your local businesses listed on Community Board 8’s listing.](#)*

**Get Food NYC Food Delivery Program** may be able to help. *[Click here](#)* to find out if you are eligible. If you meet the substantial requirements, it will deliver food for 2 days at a time. The website also contains a link to help you find food pantries.

*[GrowNYC Greenmarkets and Farmstands- locations are open and operating on schedule, changes to the schedule are listed on the site.](#)*

**New York City’s list of resources** for those affected by COVID-19 may be found by *[clicking here](#)*.

**Connect older New Yorkers** who are feeling isolated with friendly volunteers to talk with over the phone. The Friendly Visiting Program can be reached at 212-AGING-NYC (212-244-6469).

*[The Service Program for Older People offers comprehensive mental health care for older adults. During this time, SPOP staff are providing mental health treatment through telehealth.](#)*

**All NYC Playgrounds are now closed** and the Parks Department will be working to remove all nets and hoops from NYC parks.

**Streets for Public Use -** We are extending the Safe Streets pilot at the existing locations until Sunday, April 5th in order to allow for more evaluation. We will continue to monitor their use to keep New Yorkers safe and enforce social distancing. Locations:

- Manhattan: Park Ave, between 28th and 34th

**New Yorkers who have recovered from COVID-19** and had a positive test before March 7th should visit *<https://www.mountsinai.org/>* to help save another New Yorker by donating plasma.

**DOH How You Can Help** - <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/get-involved-how-you-can-help>

**The deadline to get a "Real ID" has been extended to October 1, 2021.** For more information on whether the Real ID is right for you, visit the [NY DMV webpage](#).

**Health Insurance** - The NY State of Health Department recently announced a Special Enrollment Period in response to Coronavirus through 4/15. Visit their [website](#) or call 1-855-355-5777 to check eligibility.

**Hotels for healthcare workers** - GHNY is working with NYC & Company to help provide employees of member hospitals and nursing homes with places to stay during the COVID response. Accommodations are available for individuals or groups. Information is available [here](#).

**Support Our Healthcare Staff!** More than \$1.6 million has been donated. Donate here: [nychc.networkforgood.com](http://nychc.networkforgood.com)

**Only call 911 if you need immediate assistance.**

**Tax Day is July 15** - a reminder that this year's tax day has been moved from April 15th to July 15th.

**For pet owners-** the ASPCA has established a pet food distribution center in New York City in partnership with the Petco Foundation, Blue Buffalo, and PetSmart Charities to provide dog and cat owners free access to crucial food and supplies, including kitty litter. To keep in line with social distancing guidelines, food and supplies will be available by appointment only. Pet owners should call the ASPCA Pet Food Distribution Helpline at (800)738-9437 to request an appointment.



LENOX HILL NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE  
SINCE 1894

# The Art of Caring for Yourself

An art-based support group for Caregivers

Presented Remotely via Zoom

Are you a current caregiver for a family member or loved one? Providing care for loved ones can be an overwhelming experience and may lead to stress, fatigue and burnout. Despite this, caretakers often find the last person they are taking care of is themselves.

This group will use artmaking to create a open and supportive environment while discussing the unique challenges caregivers face. This group program will focus on self-care, stress-reduction and self-compassion. Through artmaking, we will explore new ways to practice self-care as a caregiver.

**No previous artmaking experience or specialty materials required.**

**Thursdays 10:00am-11:30am**

[Pre-registration is required.](#)

For register or further information, please contact:  
Laura DiPaola at 929-251-4499 or via email at [ldipaola@lenoxhill.org](mailto:ldipaola@lenoxhill.org)





Congresswoman  
Carolyn  
Maloney

Borough  
President  
Gale Brewer

State Senator  
Liz Krueger

Assembly Member  
Rebecca  
Seawright

Assembly  
Member  
Dan Quart

Council Member  
Ben Kallos

Council Member  
Keith Powers

# UPPER EAST SIDE: COVID-19 VIDEO/TELE-TOWNHALL

Report followed by Questions & Answers with



NYC Department of Health  
**Dr. Jennifer Rosen**  
Director of Epidemiology &  
Surveillance and  
Representatives for  
Mayor Bill de Blasio



**6pm – 7pm, Tuesday, April 7th**

**RSVP REQUIRED** by phone to 212-860-1950 or  
visit [BenKallos.com/Events](http://BenKallos.com/Events)

Questions must be submitted with **RSVP** or by email to [Questions@BenKallos.com](mailto:Questions@BenKallos.com)  
Meeting will be hosted on Zoom, please register for free ahead of the event.  
You can watch online without RSVP at [Facebook.com/BenKallos/live](https://www.facebook.com/BenKallos/live)

## Stay informed about the CORONAVIRUS



### Important Numbers and Links

- Price Gouging hotline: 800-697-1220
- 24-Hour Coronavirus hotline: 1-888-364-3065

- NYS DOH website regarding Coronavirus: <https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/>
- NYS COVID-19 Email Alert Sign Up- <https://now.ny.gov/page/s/coronavirus-updates>
- To file a complaint with the NYS Department of Human Rights- <https://dhr.ny.gov/complaint#file>
- NYS Mental Health Hotline: 1-844-863-9314 (to schedule a free appointment)

DOHMH has added different breakdowns of the available data to their website in an effort to be as transparent as possible. Please note, the numbers are constantly changing, and there is sometimes a lag:

[Big City Emergency Managers Data Tracker](#) (new)

[Case counts \(including age, gender and borough breakdown\)](#)

[Deaths \(including age, gender and borough breakdown along with pre-existing conditions\)](#)

[Hospitalizations](#) (including age, gender, and borough breakdown)

[Emergency Department Surveillance](#) (date by age group)

[Percent of patients testing positive](#) by zip code

## ICYMI: In Case You Missed It

### Previous Editions of Our COVID-19 Special Report

[MARCH 19, 2020 SPECIAL REPORT](#)

[MARCH 25, 2020 SPECIAL REPORT](#)

[MARCH 27, 2020 SPECIAL REPORT](#)

[MARCH 31, 2020 SPECIAL REPORT](#)