

THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

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**CONTACT:** [pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov), (212) 788-2958

**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Good morning, everybody. You know, we're going to look back on these times and we're going to remember them very, very deeply. And I think there's going to be a story written, a story told of what happened here in New York City and how the people of New York City responded to this unprecedented crisis. And I think it's going to be a story that is filled with a lot of heroism, a lot of selflessness, a lot of compassion, a lot of teamwork and certainly it's going to be a story of people adapting in ways we never could have imagined and with lightning speed, because remember 8.6 million people, all of us together here in one place – and not that big a place, meaning there's not a lot of room, but there's a whole lot of people. We had only days to change our lifestyle, to adapt to a whole set of new realities and New Yorkers did amazing things in those days and continue to.

Now, we have a reputation as New Yorkers that were tough, we're resolute, we want what we want. Maybe you could call that stubborn sometimes, but New Yorkers have shown incredible ability to create, to make sense of a new reality, to work together. And I've got to remind you, this happened almost instantly in the scheme of human life. We're talking about people at a matter of days to make these changes. And they did. You did, and you saved lives in the process. There's no doubt about it. We're going to go over our daily indicators, and it's Friday, so we're going to go over the indicators for the whole week and you're going to see once again the fruits of your labor. And this took immense change and immense hard work and it will continue to. But we also know that a lot of that happened when it was a little bit cooler. And as this morning is already indicating, it's getting hotter. We're about to get into the warm weather in a serious way, starting today and this weekend. And that means summer's around the corner and that's a whole new reality. So, we have been planning intensely over the last few weeks how we're going to address the summer and the warmer weather. I'm going to give you some major pieces of that plan today. There'll be more coming, but we know it's a new reality. And look, the tough part of this is it's going to take more adaptation, more strength, more discipline to get through this next phase. But the good part is we've now proven the progress we can make and how quickly we can change our reality. And everyone wants to see some opening up, everyone wants to see a restart. We're all invested in this. This will be a reminder that we have to lean in and fight hard for the weeks ahead to get us to that next phase. And it will be harder in some ways with summer, but we've also learned how to do it. That's the other great advantage. We know what works, we've already gotten used to it, we just have to stick to it now.

Now, this is going to be a different summer than any summer we've experienced in the history of New York City. And a lot of the things that we love about summer – we love barbecues, picnics, ballgames, going to the beach, all sorts of things. Those things are going to be different for the

foreseeable future and there's a lot of things that we would look forward to doing that we can't yet do. Doesn't mean that's a judgment on the whole summer yet, we're going to take this day by day, week by week, but we know right now the lot of the things that we would look forward to doing, starting right away, we're just not ready for. But what we can guarantee is the heat is coming no matter what. And last year we saw some very sobering reality around the heat. It was the 10th hottest July in recorded history in New York City, and you remember those particularly hot days. It's not only uncomfortable, it's not only going to be a challenge in terms of social distancing and everything else we're dealing with, it can be dangerous unto itself. The heat itself, we've learned more and more of the hard way, can be dangerous. We're seeing this all over the country, all over the world. Obviously, because of global warming, things are changing and we're seeing a kind of heat we haven't seen before so much and we take it seriously. We understand the lives on the line. So, we're putting forward today the beginning of a plan to protect New Yorkers – these are the first steps, more to come – and this is all about protecting New Yorkers and helping them through the summer as comfortably as possible and as safe as possible.

So, we have three goals for our summer heat plan. First, protect the health and safety of the most vulnerable. Second, give New Yorkers safe, positive cooling options, different in many cases than what we've known in the past. Third, prevent power outages and, God forbid, they happen, be able to respond to them quickly. I'll go through each of them now. Protecting the most vulnerable – okay, so in every crisis we work to save everyone, protect everyone, protect the health, protect their safety, but we know some people bear the brunt in the heat. It is those who have the least ability to provide options for themselves who are the most vulnerable. Who is that? Many times that's our seniors, many times that's lower-income New Yorkers who don't have air conditioning. It's people who can't leave their home even if they wanted to because of disability or other challenges. It's folks who have chronic health conditions, certainly mirrors a lot of what we're seeing in terms of the impact of the coronavirus, but the heat has elements that allow us to hone in on those who need help the most and literally know person by person, department by department, who are some of the people that need the most help, and that's guiding us in our strategy to proactively get help to people and protect them against any heat wave that might be ahead. So, I'm going to go over some of the key elements of how we will protect the most vulnerable New Yorkers. First, we're going to be providing more and more a growing initiative to provide free air conditioners to low-income seniors who need them. Again, remember, senior citizens often with the fewest options, sometimes limited mobility, a lot of times lower income. These are the folks who are in the most dangerous situation. Many have major preexisting health conditions. Knowing that low-income seniors are the most vulnerable, we're going to start initiative right away to get them air conditioners. We're going to have 74,000 air conditioners in the first wave of this initiative, 22,000 of which will go to residents of public housing. We're going to identify the individuals need the most working with our colleagues at NYCHA public housing, at the Department for the Aging, our housing department, HPD and the Human resources administration, so we'll identify those who need help the most, we'll reach out to them, confirm that an air conditioner makes sense for them, and then we'll begin installations. Those installations will start next week. This is a \$55 million investment and \$20 million of it will come from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority – NYSERDA. And we are very, very appreciative to everyone at NYSERDA, everyone at the State government for their participation in this effort. It's absolutely going to protect our seniors and help save

lives no matter what mother nature throws at us. The remainder of the cost is – it's an area of a public investment that is eligible for federal reimbursement. We want to make sure that we get those federal grants to offset the cost.

Second, we want to help lower income New Yorkers with summer utility bills. Now, look, first of all, summer utility bills go up in general. This summer, they could go up a lot more because more and more people are staying home sheltering in place. On top of that, you have so many people who have lost their livelihood. So, we want to focus on people who are struggling to pay the bills and we want to make sure that it can stay safe and stay cool and have the air conditioning they need. So, right now, there are almost half a million New Yorkers who get a subsidy for their air conditioning needs from the New York State public service commission – that's fantastic and we appreciate that. We are petitioning the public service commission to double its current commitment and that would mean for the average customer \$160 more typically to help them defray the costs and help them have the air conditioning they need. So, for so many working people, lower-income people, particularly people who've lost their paycheck, this could be a lot of what helps them get through the summer both safely and in a way that helps them pay the bills. Now, again, some of this involves partnership with the State and we are very, very appreciative for all the things that we're doing together to protect lives. New York State gets a home energy funding from the cares act. We're going to reach out to the State and see if this is another area we can team up to magnify the amount of people we can reach.

Okay. Now, that's some of the ways that we focus on those who are most vulnerable, those who both in terms of health and safety and, obviously, economically as well need the most help. Let me go to a second goal, which is to have a variety of safe cooling options in the summer for those who need them. Now, look, again, many people have a place where they can stay cool, but there are too many New Yorkers who don't. And we've always had cooling centers and they've been very, very much appreciated by people who needed a place to go, but there are going to have to be different now because of the realities of the coronavirus. So, we've got to keep people cool to protect their lives and their safety, but we also have to have cooling centers that work for this moment in history. So, we're going to be looking at a number of locations, particularly locations that are larger and allow for social distancing and we're going to be making sure they are places where seniors and folks who are vulnerable can go and be comfortable and have some things to do during those hot days. Again, lots of space will be needed. So, some of the traditional cooling centers will work, but some won't. So, we're going to be looking at libraries, we're going to looking at large community centers gyms, sports venues, auditoriums, arenas, you name it – places that will afford us some bigger open spaces that we can turn into cooling centers, of course, with social distancing, with the right use of PPEs and face coverings. And we want to make sure that there's something to do. If people going to be there all day, especially if it's days in a row, we want to make sure there's programming and things for people that do, particularly if it's families coming in with kids, we want good things to keep those kids entertained, but that are also safe. So, that's the cooling centers.

Second, we're going to be focusing on a variety of ways to cool people and keep people hydrated, this is so much, so much a crucial piece of protecting health and safety in a heatwave is hydration. So, first of all, we know that some of the things that people traditionally do, the beaches and the public pools, that's not in the cards right now. Again, we'll see what the future

brings, but not right now. But what our Parks Department will do is create misting oasis – I think that's a beautiful phrase – that misting oasis and spray showers. So, new opportunities just to get people some cooling water on them and keep them cool kids in particular in the middle of summer. And there's a plan coming up in the coming days to take a classic New York City option and use it the right way, which is opening up hydrants. There's a way to do that that can provide cooling for a lot of people, a lot of kids in particular on their blocks, but can be done the right way, the safe way and the way that doesn't undermine the work of the FDNY. So, we'll have more to say on that in the next few days. And we're going to help New Yorkers hydrate in addition to the other types of food we're providing and beverages that we're providing, either by delivery or pickup, we're going to include a lot more of the hydrating kinds of liquids, the Gatorades and the Pedialyte that will help people during this kind of crisis.

Now, I mentioned that we have a real concern as we always do, but we certainly saw it last summer in terms of preventing power outages and being raised respond no matter what. So, this is a crucial piece of the plan and we know that the more people are using electricity, the more strain it puts on the electrical grid and that's a real challenge. Now, this is going to be a strange summer. By every measure, we're going to see a lot less commercial activity. There's obviously not traditional tourism now, which is a big part of what happens in summer the City, there's not a lot of the big events, you know, there's no big events. And so, the things that often took up a lot of energy won't be there, the whole larger commercial reality, even though it may come back in small pieces, nothing like we would normally see in the summer. But on the other hand, a lot more people home, a lot more people using air conditioning. So, we have to be ready and we've been dealing with ConEd on this early to get ready and we've put new protocols in place with ConEd to see the warning signs earlier to predict problems earlier and take appropriate steps. There are a number of steps that can be taken if there is a danger of a blackout, a looming or an outage looming. And we're going to make sure there's tight coordination with ConEd and a lot more communication between ConEd and all of its partners and government, but also with the people. So, we can address these issues early has been a regular series of meetings with ConEd, a new approach to a situation room jointly between ConEd and our emergency management leadership. Our mandate to ConEd is to alert us even the slightest sign of a problem so we can all act together, and we can inform the public. And the public always plays a role here because the public can make adjustments in the way people are using energy and that makes a big, big impact.

Now, one of the things that happened last summer we saw some particular problems in Brooklyn and what's called the Flatbush network of ConEd. ConEd has replaced a lot of the equipment in that network, 70 power line sections replaced, updated the relay switches on 15 sections that supply the grid. Replaced more than half the rubber cable so far with the rest being done by the end of May. So, we insisted and contacted a credit is acting aggressively that this was the place we saw last summer that needed real structural work and that work has been done and is being done. But again, we will be ready for anything and so in terms of response, God forbid we see a problem. We right now have 60 portable generators ready for emergency deployment, we are going to add 22 more large generators that will be available to us for the summer months. We're going to preset pre-stage those around the City so they can be moved quickly to places that need them.

Also, we want to focus on our seniors, we want to focus on nursing homes and adult care facilities. We need to make sure, and this is something we'll work closely with the State on, that every facility has a plan in place and is ready if there's ever an outage. And we're going to work with the State and certainly encourage the State to mandate that every one of these adult facilities and nursing homes has generator capacity ready to go in the event of a crisis. So, we'll be working on this every day as we get into the summer to prepare to protect everyone, but particular focus again on our seniors. So, this is the beginning of the plan more to come, it's as usual going to require all of us to think a little differently, do some things differently, watch out for each other, something New Yorkers do really, really well. Watch out for their fellow New Yorkers. If the results of the last weeks are any indication, people are going to make these adjustments to help each other out and help us move forward the same way we have already.

Okay. Now I want to come to a very sober topic and it's one we've been talking about now over the last week or more and it is one that has continuing to cause tremendous concern to all of us, which is pediatric multi-system inflammatory syndrome, P.M.I.S. This is about protecting our kids from something that we are seeing differently than we've seen before. And again, a huge amount of energy is being expended in the medical field, not just here in New York City but all over to understand what's happening here and address it as quickly as possible. So, the numbers continue to concern us, we now have 110 confirmed cases, 54 percent of those cases either the child tested positive for COVID-19 or a tested positive for antibodies. And as I've said, we lost one child and I want us all to work together and parents to do everything you possibly can to make sure we don't lose another child in this crisis.

So, we are continuing to build out a citywide ad campaign and information campaign to make sure parents are aware. Health Department is reaching out and holding meetings and webinars with providers to make sure they're aware to get the maximum information back to them to make sure they are vigilant. We have preliminary data on the demographic breakout of the kids affected, but I want to emphasize very preliminary cause it's only 110 cases, that's way too many. But in the sense of trying to understand this challenge, 110 cases is obviously a small number in the scheme of things and that the data is inherently incomplete as you'll see on the ethnic breakout. But we want to give people what we have as we have it. So here you see the age breakout, the number one category has been the youngest kids zero to four. The next category in terms of percentage effected five years old to nine years old. The next category 10 years old to 14 years old. And the category we've seen it the least end is 15 years old and up. So, this is initial information, but we want people to see and be particularly vigilant with our youngest kids. We see as we have seen with the coronavirus itself, more impact on males than females, and that is something that's still obviously being studied. The borough breakout here, the number one impact has been in the Bronx, followed by Queens and then Brooklyn with much less in Manhattan and Staten Island. And then the ethnic racial breakout, which again is incomplete because almost 40 percent of this is still not classified, meaning kids that we're still not getting the details but so far again, sobering – 24 percent African American, 14 percent Latino, 10 percent Asian, 9 percent white. Until we know more about the kids that are not yet identified, we can't give you a fuller picture, but again, very much concerned that this looks like it's tracking the same disparities we've seen throughout this crisis. And that is something have to address very, very aggressively with everything we've got. Now, we are going to go at this with everything we have, but again, this case that we know so far, and this is always based on changing information,

but we know early detection matters. We know if it's identified quickly, if a health care provider is alerted quickly, it can make all the difference in the world. And that is why in so many cases, children have been saved and they can recover. But every family member out there, every parent, please you see those warning signs that we've been over. Please, please immediately reach out to a healthcare provider. And again, if you don't have one, call 3-1-1 and we'll connect you to a Health + Hospitals clinician.

Okay. We are spending a lot of time these last weeks preparing for what comes next. And it begins of course, with continuing to move forward on this City becoming safer, healthier because we knocked back this disease. I'll go over the indicators in a moment, but everything we're doing, when we think about a restart, when we think about any lessening of restrictions, start with a health and safety prism. That's where we begin every conversation, that's where we end every conversation. Whatever we do is going to be based on health and safety. Of course, we all want to get back to normal, of course we all want to get people's livelihoods back. It's absolutely crucial and we want to get our lives back. We want to get the spirit of this place, the life of this place, the vitality of this place back. Last night, I was reminded that I met with our arts, culture and tourism advisory council, these are folks who do such amazing work, who have such a big impact on the life of the City who give us so much of what we identify as being great in our City. Also employ a huge number of New Yorkers. So, we want them to come back for every reason and this is going to take real work and real time. This is a sector of our City, of our economy that we're going to have to be inherently careful and slow with some pieces of what make up the sector can come back faster, others slower. But we're going to work together to find solutions and I got to tell you, every time I listened to people talk about what it's going to take to come back, we had a lot of practical suggestions. I get a lot of ideas, I get a lot of cautions about what will work, what won't work. This is exactly what we want from these advisory councils and the folks who are putting all this time and energy and they're doing it to help all of us. I want to thank everyone who was on this advisory council and all the others because it's really helping us to sort these things out and make decisions, but what—I would love you to feel the way I felt last night was the can-do spirit. I talked to folks from all different parts of the arts and culture and tourism sectors and they all said the same thing. Not if, but when we're coming back, we're coming back strong. We're going to find new ways of doing things. We're going to revive the arts and culture community of this city. It's going to be in some ways different, but it's going to be as good or better. We're going to really focus on our own communities and our own audiences here in New York City because so much of this of course was not just for New Yorkers, but people who would come from all over the world to experience our artistic and cultural institutions and that's going to be different for a while. It will come back eventually, but it's going to be different for a while. But you know what also is going to happen is more and more New Yorkers are going to discover what's right under our noses and a lot of things that maybe we haven't focused on enough, or enjoyed, or experienced enough, we're going to come back to. And that was something that these arts and culture leaders felt very deeply, that a whole new wave of New Yorkers are going to experience all that's here in a new and special manner. So, a hopeful, positive meeting, a lot to be done, but real, real devotion to coming back and coming back strong.

Now, there's been a lot we've talked about in recent days about how to make sure as we continue toward that better situation that we hold on tight to what we've achieved with shelter in place

with social distancing, with face coverings, the things that have been working, the things that have been driving down and driving back this disease. A lot of talk about how to do it, how to sustain it, and the role that enforcement plays in that equation – the role of the NYPD. So, we've been talking a lot here and had numerous conversations with Commissioner Shea and his team and a whole lot of conversation with elected officials and community leaders who have offered a lot of insight, a lot of concern, but a lot of insight as well - a lot of suggestions, a lot of ideas. And I think what's become clear in recent days is we're balancing a very complex equation here. Health and safety come first – unquestionably. We're dealing with a pandemic; we're dealing with the biggest healthcare crisis in a century. We have to get it right. Enforcement is always a part of protecting people's safety for time immemorial. But at the same time, we have something very precious that we have achieved here in this city in changing relationship between police and community, in reinventing our approach to policing, in reducing crime because there's more of a bond between police and community. And that's also about protecting people's safety and we need to protect that. So, we do not in any way, shape or form want to slide backwards and undermine that precious bond that's been growing and improving between police and community. As we've talked it through and thought about how to apply a neighborhood policing approach – the strategy that's been working – how to apply it in the middle of a pandemic, it became clear that everyone deserves more clarity. And I said, you know, yesterday that Commissioner Shea and I are responsible to inform the people of the city and our officers, what's expected of everyone and we needed to do that in a way that made sort of clearer, sharper sense to people. And so, I want to talk about a reset in our approach today, which I think will clear things up and make it work better. And as I mentioned, talking to a lot of community leaders, I want to give a special credit to three elected officials in particular offered ideas and insights that really informed a lot of my thinking as we went into this new approach. I want to give a special thanks to Congressmember Yvette Clarke, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, and Assemblymember Tremaine Wright. All of them really gave very constructive ideas and referenced the, the deep trauma that communities have felt over the years and the problems and the history that we have to fight our way out of and why we need to protect the progress we've made in relationship between police and community and come up with a clearer set of instructions. So, the reset will be this, we start with the fundamental notion – the NYPD is here to protect lives, to save lives, and where we see the greatest danger to lives in terms of the Coronavirus and the area where we can enforce is around gatherings, particularly large gatherings. So, that's where we're going to focus, wanting to give people this clarity. And it's literally the bigger the gathering, the more that needs to be done by the NYPD to make sure that gathering either never get started to begin with or is quickly broken up. And again, if we never need to take any additional enforcement action other than the NYPD showing up and people leaving, that's the ideal by far. Summonses are an available tool and they will be given if people do not disperse, but the goal is to not even get to the point of summons, just to make sure that large gatherings don't happen. Large gatherings inherently come with a breakdown in social distancing and the danger of spreading the disease to a lot of people quickly and that's what we have to guard against. That will be the focus of the NYPD. What we will do in other areas is focus all of our energies on educating, on encouraging, on providing free face coverings; that will be done by civilian agencies, that will be done by houses of worship, that be done by community groups and the NYPD will be out there as well, but it's role will be focused again on the positives, giving out those face coverings, giving out reminders to people, helping people to understand what good social distancing looks like. We want to make this a positive approach.

We do not want to revive the mistakes of the past. We think we can strike a balance when someone says, I don't have a face covering with me; we want NYPD officers and all these other civilian ambassadors and everyone else to be there with a solution. I think that is the right way to move us forward and strike the balance, but it's also comes with a reminder to all of you that it is a responsibility of all of us to keep doing what we're doing; we have been doing on social distancing and to do it even more. You see a lot of people doing social distancing, right; you see some who are not. Let's all work together to remind people to do it right, especially the people we're closest to in our lives. It's the vast majority of people have face coverings, some don't; sometimes someone just forgets it. That's why we're going to have free distribution, but we got to keep reminding people how important it is and every one of us is responsible and we can create more balance the more responsibility everyone shows in this situation.

Okay, some other important updates in a similar vein of how we're going to maintain proper social distancing, especially as we have a warm weekend coming up. So, in the parks, we've definitely seen some places where overcrowding started to happen. We don't want that to happen. So, in the places where we know we can put physical limitations, we will. So, we'll be limiting access to the Sheep Meadow in Central Park, to areas of Hudson River Park, and Piers 45 & 46, and Domino Park in Williamsburg. We're going to create a monitoring approach; NYPD officers, civilian ambassadors, they'll be there, they'll be there early. They'll set parameters on how many people should go into these areas and always be providing guidance, be providing free face coverings. We want to just get ahead of the problem by limiting the number of people in these areas that become crowded and if our approach continues to work, we'll apply it to any place else we need to. And then our social distancing ambassadors, that number is now gone up to 2,260 – that's a lot of City employees who will be out there educating, giving out face coverings. You'll see a lot of presence this weekend. You'll also see in the beaches, which of course are not open; enhanced patrols to keep people safe and to remind people that beaches are not open and to protect against any danger that people will go in the water. You'll see that in the Rockaways, Coney Island, Orchard Beach, and we're going to make sure in terms of addressing those large gatherings, there'll be a dedicated NYPD car in every police precinct that will focus always on being able to get to wherever a large gathering might be to make sure that situation is addressed.

Okay, now we go to the daily indicators and again. On Fridays, we look at the big picture and we see some tremendous progress overall. Today's report, not everything we want it to be for just today, but the overall progress – again, I'm going to keep saying so impressive, so consistent and so much because of all that you are doing. So, the turnaround, you look at this chart, it's breathtaking. We've been consistently below in daily indicator number one, number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19, consistently below 100 now for a meaningful amount of time. And again, that's 800 fewer people per day being admitted compared to the end of March – that's just breathtaking. So, that's the good news. The less good news is today's update. Unfortunately, we have a situation where things have gone up from a 59 to 78. So, that is not what we're looking for – still a low number overall, but wrong direction. Daily indicator number two, this is the toughest one to move because it is about folks who are the most sick and fighting for their lives. Again, progress unquestionably – you look at that chart over 300 people, fewer in ICUs than at the peak, that's a very good thing, but still a lot of people fighting for their lives. The good news today, the numbers down from 517 to 506. And then percentage of people



citywide testing positive for COVID-19 – amazing progress – again, we've seen consistent improvement, but not everything we need. We still have to keep going. And again, today, wrong direction, only by one point, but wrong direction from 11 percent to 12 percent.

So, concluding that – not the day we wanted today. We've had some very, very good days lately and we've also had some days that were imperfect. Overall direction, absolutely right, but to get to that restart, we need to go further. So, take it personally. That means every time you practice social distancing, every time you put on the face covering, every time you help make sure there are not large gatherings. And if you see or hear anything about a large gathering, please call it into 3-1-1 immediately. We need to do more. We're clearly making progress, but we need to do more to get to that next step. Okay, few words in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

Okay. With that, we will turn to our colleagues in the media and, as always, please remind me of the name and outlet of each journalist.

**Moderator:** Good morning, everyone. We'll now begin our Q&A. As a reminder, we have Deputy Mayor Perea-Henze, OEM Commissioner Criswell, Social Services Commissioner Steve Banks, and Dr. Eric Wei, Vice President and Chief Quality Officer of New York City Health + Hospitals also on the line. First question today goes to Julia from the New York Post.

**Question:** Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor. And a happy belated birthday and anniversary to you and the First Lady. I would have extended the well wishes yesterday and Friday, but I wasn't called on. So, I'd like to get to my two questions now about the Health Commissioner. One, you said yesterday you had no idea about the exchange between Dr. Barbot and Chief Monahan, but Chief Monahan said yesterday he told City Hall immediately after the incident and Barbot called him 30 minutes later to apologize. So, who at City Hall knew about this and why weren't you informed? And then, you also said yesterday you would speak to Barbot and Monahan to determine next steps. Have you had those conversations? If so, what were the results? If not, when will you be speaking with them?

**Mayor:** On the first part, Julia, I don't know why I wasn't informed, but I wasn't informed. On the second part, I've talked to Chief Monaghan and I will be speaking to Commissioner Barbot this weekend.

**Moderator:** Next we have David Evans from ABC.

**Question:** Good morning, Mayor. I wanted to ask you about two different things. First of all, the reset with the police enforcement that you talked about on social distancing and the expansion at least into Sheep Meadow. I take it [inaudible] what you're saying is that police are no longer going to be doing the one-on-one enforcement, telling people you need to wear a mask, you can't go into the subway, etc. The second question that I have is about the Governor overnight extending the stay at home order, the emergency declaration until June 13th. When did you first hear about it? How did you hear about it and what does that mean? I mean, if you on June 7th

say we have all seven categories, we meet those numbers, can you go ahead and open or are you going to have to wait down until 13th?

**Mayor:** So, Dave, thank you. On the second one, again, we've been closely coordinated with the Governor's team throughout. There's been tremendous agreement on the strategic approach. And I know the Governor takes a cautious approach, as do I. I've said that our indicators consistently both the State and the City ones are pointing us towards the first half of June. But we're – that's when we get to the point where we can even think about relaxing restrictions. Anything we do would be in close coordination with the State. And look, if conditions suddenly became more favorable, we'd have that conversation with the State and obviously we and they could make adjustments. But, right now, I think we're all aligned that the first half of June is the earliest opportunity for even some lessening of restrictions and we'll work together on that. On the police department – yes, I think you have it right, Dave. We are going to focus the police consistently on gatherings, particularly the largest gatherings. We want to make sure that people understand when you gather, you create a danger for the people around you and for the whole city and that's where the police can have the biggest health and safety impact, that's where the focus will be. There's actually been a lot of good work done in recent weeks, stopping gatherings before they start, getting them to clear out quickly – that's where we're going to focus. But the more individual work, we're going to, again, have a lot of ambassadors out there, a lot of community-based organizations. And a lot of the elected officials made this point – it was a very fair point, that there's a positive approach that can work, and the NYPD can play an obvious role in that too, reminding people, giving out the face coverings. But it's a better way to approach things to focus on where the biggest health and safety problems are and continue the positive collaborative relationship between the NYPD and the community on so many other fronts.

**Moderator:** The next is Yoav from The City.

**Question:** Hi, Mr. Mayor. I just wanted to ask when the last time you spoke to Commissioner Barbot was? And, if it was a relatively long time ago, why haven't you spoken to her? We're in the middle of a pandemic, one would think you would need to speak to your health commissioner certainly daily, if not more often.

**Mayor:** Yeah. Yoav, I've been speaking with the Commissioner constantly throughout this. And I'll remind you, we have a team of health care leaders and I am speaking to an any number of them each and every day. A couple of days ago was the last time I talked to the Commissioner. And again, we're going to have a more detailed discussion this weekend. And this has been going on for months now, we've all been communicating constantly.

**Moderator:** Next is Al Jones from 1010 WINS.

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Mayor. A two-parter – New Jersey is set to open its beaches here in about a week. You mentioned though that beaches in the city are not in the card at this time for the summer – why? And then the other one is, estimates as many as 80, 85, 87 percent of restaurants have been unable to pay their full or partial rent this past month. Is there a real danger that when New York City opens or reopens or a lot of restaurants won't?

**Mayor:** Al, having now talked to a number of restaurant bar owners over the last few days, this is a distinct danger. And, you know, they are realistic about the fact that they don't want to see anything happen that is not about the health and safety of the people of this city, or their customers, or their workers. So, they have been super realistic about job-one is health and safety. And, in fact, I think I mentioned a number of them said they don't feel they can come back effectively until they can get to higher capacity and have fewer restrictions to create the right atmosphere. So, this is an ongoing conversation, but I certainly don't hear people saying, hey, let us rush back prematurely and do anything that might undermine health and safety just for our bottom line. In fact, I think restaurant and bar owners have been very, very responsible. But, unquestionably, some of them are in real danger. And, you know, we're just going to do our best to get them back the first available opportunity and help them in every way we can, but it's all going to be health and safety first. On the beaches, we're just not ready. We're just not ready. We are – as you saw today, you know, great overall progress, not enough progress to meet our goals or the State's goals for when we can reopen. And it's painful, because we would all love to be able to go to the beach with the hot weather, but it's not safe yet. Beaches come with a whole lot of people getting together. We saw what happened in California, in Florida – people started just immediately doing what they had always done. It's very hard to create distancing. It takes traveling to the beach, which means there goes the notion of only keeping to essential travel. That's something that we're just not ready for. We're going to look at it constantly, we're going to be in close touch with the State, and the day may come, but we're not there yet.

**Moderator:** Next is Andrew Siff from NBC.

**Question:** Good morning, Mayor. Good morning, everyone on the call.

**Mayor:** Hey, Andrew. How you doing?

**Question:** Good. Hanging in there. Happy it's Friday. Two questions – first of all, sort of following up on what Al just asked you, do you think Governor Murphy is making a mistake in New Jersey to open up the New Jersey beaches? Why is it safe for them but not safe in New York? And the second question is, Dr. Katz wrote an email on March 10th, which said the city is better off staying open, schools open, people keep taking the subway. That email and judgment has now proven to be incorrect. Given that, what do you make of what he recommended then when California officials at that same time were already telling people to lock it down and not go out?

**Mayor:** Yeah, Andrew, look, first of all, I want to remind people what Dr. Katz and his whole team at health and hospitals did – they have been among the heroes of this crisis, holding the line in our public health care system that bore the brunt and held no matter what. So, this disease we all now know probably was deep seated in New York City before any of our health officials knew it, federal or local, and it was coming on like a freight train no matter what, but the one thing we knew is we had to protect our hospitals and make sure they function and make sure they save lives. And I think Dr. Katz and his team at health and hospitals did an absolutely extraordinary job in achieving that goal. I think everyone's going to look back in the medical community and say they understood some things and they didn't understand some things. I think there's a whole host of medical professionals who were basing their judgements on what they

knew at the time, but it's been an ever-changing reality with this disease. So, I have seen in the work he has done – and I judge people by their deeds – he's done so much to save lives in the city, I have a lot of confidence in him. And we're all learning – our health care team and everyone's been learning about this disease all the time and adjusting as we get new information.

**Moderator:** Next –

**Mayor:** I'm sorry, the beaches. I'm sorry, Andrew, I owe you with the other piece. Andrew on – look, I think the world of Phil Murphy, he's an extraordinary leader, and he has a very different state. New Jersey's certainly been hit hard by this disease, but New York State and particularly New York City has been the epicenter. We are the biggest city in the country, one of the most densely populated places in the United States of America. Our people don't get around by car. I think it's fair to say about New Jersey – the vast majority of people in New Jersey travel by car, that's not true in New Yorkers. For people to start going to beaches it means getting on buses and subways. You know, our beaches, they have a huge long coastline, arguably ways that could spread people out. You can't spread people out in places like Coney Island that get jammed packed. So, it's just a different reality. We have different realities even in our own state. But New York City is New York City, and we're going to be slow and careful and cautious to get this right and to protect lives.

**Moderator:** Next is Emily from NY1.

**Question:** Mayor de Blasio, how are you? How is everyone on the call?

**Mayor:** How are you doing?

**Question:** I have a question please for Commissioner Banks on behalf of my colleague Courtney Gross. I hope was hoping he could speak to the photos we saw via The City of the presumably homeless men sleeping in the stairwell of the 30th Street intake center, maskless, close together, and not distancing at all.

**Mayor:** Yeah. And Emily, I'll lead into Steve and say, I have not seen the photos, but I've heard it summarize. It sounds absolutely unacceptable and that's not something we're going to do allow. We're all trying to deal with an unprecedented situation, but that is clearly not acceptable, and the people who work there have to do better, and if they need help we have to get them help. Commissioner Banks?

**Commissioner Steven Banks, Department of Social Services:** I would just echo what the Mayor said, Emily. This is unacceptable. I have spent my entire career making sure that the City provides beds for anyone who needs a safe and secure setting, and that's our commitment. Those photos don't represent our work. It doesn't matter that eventually those individuals got shelter. The fact that they had to wait under those circumstances is absolutely unacceptable. And we've refined our intake process to make it more streamlined, efficient, ensuring that the staff have what they need. I would say at Bellevue, just to remind everyone, that we've cut the number of beds at Bellevue in half and we'll do more so that we can make sure that when clients come to us we can promote social distancing. And, of course, as you know, we've been seeing thousands of

people out of single-adult [inaudible] shelters into hotels and we've been connecting clients directly off the streets into commercial hotels who have been able to set up stabilization and Safe Haven beds, and we're going to keep doing that. But those photographs, to me, are heartbreaking, they don't represent our work, and we have to do better and we will do better.

**Moderator:** The next is Joe Anuta from Politico.

**Question:** Hi Mr. Mayor.

**Mayor:** Hey Joe, how are you doing?

**Question:** Not too bad. I had a quick follow up on the beach as well. At the – there was a council hearing yesterday and Mark Treyger who represents Coney Island said he was petrified about this summer and he seemed to say that he was still a little unclear about what he should be telling constituents and sort of what the city's policy is. Can you go into a little more detail about beaches being closed means, maybe there's no lifeguard, but what happens with people just show up? And then my second question is on a NYPD. Most of the videos that I think you and the Commissioner has said – has been, you know, problematic had to do with social distancing enforcing and not mask wearing, but could see that one video subway. So, is the NYPD taking any other I guess, are they undergoing any more changes about how they enforce social distancing specifically?

**Mayor:** Yeah, Joe, I – the fact is that some of the specific encounters involved, that had been on video, some of them actually weren't first and foremost about social distancing. They were about other kinds of issues and offenses and this is all I think being kind of a little confused and that's why it was really important for us to set the record straight. You know the NYPD has a huge job to do keeping this place safe. A crime has been down overall, but there's still plenty unfortunately that has to be addressed as well as all sorts of quality of life issues. NYPD will continue to do that as they always have, and again, they've driven down crime now consistently over the last six plus years and that will continue.

But in terms of addressing the pandemic, first of all New Yorkers overwhelming have done the right thing themselves and we are asking people to take responsibility themselves. We're asking people to work within their families, among their friends to really be reminders to each other of what we have to do right. But we're going to send out all these civilians and all these community-based folks to do a lot of the education and a lot of the exhortation and the giving out of the free face coverings and all that. Also, NYPD will give people reminders and give people face coverings, but NYPD's best efforts would be dealing with the things that are real danger, which is the larger gatherings.

So, what you're going to see is that's going to be the focus for enforcement, and again, the perfect enforcement is if anyone tries a gathering, NYPD shows up and people immediately disperse. That's what we're looking for. Worst case, we're giving a summonses if people won't disperse, but we're not going to have the NYPD focused on, you know, two people together or three people together. We're going to focus on when it starts to be more than a handful of people and we're not going to be having the NYPD enforcing on face coverings. That will be a positive

approach where just you're going to constantly see free face coverings given out. So hopefully that will clarify everyone's relationship to each other and help us get the best result while also really protecting the progress we've made in the relationship between police and community.

**Moderator:** Next is Mark Morales –

**Mayor:** I'm sorry, I'd also have got the beaches one there. I'm having a beach issue today. Joe, so to the Councilman's point. Here we are today and obviously normally beaches would not be open until Memorial Day and we're still not there yet. So, right now, we're in the reality that we would be any time we're at this point in the year pre-Memorial Day. We will come out with further guidance because we need to keep people safe first and foremost. So, we have two safety issues. Now first and foremost, addressing the pandemic. We can't have crowds, we can't have gatherings, we can't have people going to the beach, we can't have the boardwalk get crowded, we've got to protect against the problems that come with people being in too close proximity in this pandemic.

Second, we know there's a danger in terms of people trying to go into the water, particularly young people trying to go in the water, so we have a lot of patrols out to deal with that now. But the way we're going to sustain that in the next weeks and months, we're going to have more to say on that in the next few days about the measures we will take initially to keep people safe and to create a clear set of boundaries and rules, and then that can evolve over time if the situation with the disease improves and we get to a point of reevaluating the beaches. So, we're going to have a way we start the summer that may not be the same way we end the summer, but a more specific guidance coming to the people in the city on the beaches shortly.

**Moderator:** The next is Mark Morales from CNN.

**Question:** Hey everyone, how are you doing today?

**Mayor:** Good, Mark, how are you doing?

**Question:** Good. Good. So, I have two questions. The first was for the OEM Commissioner, I wanted to ask about those refrigerated trucks. What's the status of them? Are they still in town? Have they left? You know, where are they at, at the moment? The other I had was about contact tracing. And where does that stand right now and the build-up of that program is sort of a joint operation with Health + Hospitals and the Department of Health or is this – where does that stand?

**Mayor:** Thank you, Mark, I'll answer your second question and then turn to Deanne Criswell on your first question. So the contact tracing effort again is bigger, more complex, a much greater operational challenge than anything we've seen in the history of contact tracing in this city. So the way we structured is to say we need a massive citywide apparatus testing, tracing, for those who need a hotel room and all the support systems, the ability to get them to that and support them in that. This is unlike anything we've seen before. Previously, and we saw at the beginning of this pandemic, you had a small number of Health Department folks who went out and did very good work on the tracing and the follow-up, but we did not have a massive testing apparatus. It

was quite limited. We did not have a massive test tracing apparatus. We did not have an apparatus for giving people hotels and food and laundry and everything. This is an entirely different reality than we've ever experienced.

So, it's led by Health + Hospitals because they are a huge operational entity with all of the strengths that go with being a huge operational entity. They are also an independent agency, which allows them to do a lot of things, contracts and other things much faster than a Mayoral Agency. Department of Health is bringing its extraordinary expertise to the equation. A number of key people from Department of Health have gone into this effort working with Health + Hospitals. So, all that expertise is being brought to the table for maximum impact and as I've said, a number of other agencies, Department of Buildings, Design and Construction, DoITT, our IT agency, all of them working together as one team to set this up. In terms of status, we now have hundreds of people who have been trained and they're going to start their work in the coming days. We'll hit the thousand mark of people ready to go by certainly the end of this month. By the beginning of June, we're going to get up to about 2,500 and then build as needed to there potentially as high as five or 10,000. Deanne on the refrigerated trucks?

**Commissioner Deanne Criswell, Emergency Management:** Hi, good morning, Mark. So, we're still working very closely with the Medical Examiners' Office and we have refrigerated trucks located at each of the hospitals throughout the city. We also have refrigerated trucks supporting our operations at the Brooklyn Marine Terminal. We will continue to have these here in the city to support operations for as long as we need them. But we are looking – and we do have some still in staging if we have a need for additional trucks in the future. But, right now, again, working very closely with the Medical Examiners' Office and our hospitals to make sure we have the right amount of resources available to support these operations.

**Moderator:** Next is James Ford from PIX11.

**Question:** Happy Friday, Mayor. We've made it.

**Mayor:** Happy Friday. It's a - even in the pandemic, we still love Fridays.

**Question:** Oh, that's for sure. We're adding more days, which is related to my – to this question, which is kind of a follow-up to a Dave Evans question. With this stay at home order in place through June 13th, can you give us a sense of what that means for New Yorkers? Like what, what will our lives look like for the next four weeks compared to the last two months? And is it possible that the city could maybe reopen, start be reopening before then? Also, do you want to share about the stimulus bill vote today in the House?

**Mayor:** On the stimulus, very quickly. I mean, the House did exactly the right thing and I want to commend Speaker Pelosi, Chair Nita Lowey, Hakeem Jeffries who is one of the key members of the House Democratic Leadership, Congressman from Brooklyn and all the House delegation from the city. They did outstanding work. I talked to all of them constantly. They did an amazing job putting together a package that actually represents what New York City and New York State need to get back on our feet, and we're talking about a two-year package, you know, the years after that will matter as well. But for something that clearly talks about dealing with our lost

revenue and getting us back to a whole place where we can move forward. This is a great step forward. So I want to see them vote today, move it to the Senate and I'd like to see the Senate act quickly and really recognize what is going to take for us to recover.

On the executive order and the timeline, again, I've been saying this for days now, our trajectory both in terms of the indicators we go over daily and what we're seeing from the state indicators clearly it was putting us into the first half of June no matter what. The minute you get to that moment where you hit all your indicators, that's when you can start to make decisions on lessening restrictions. Governor and I have been very united in a cautious, careful approach and we both believe fundamentally in avoiding that boomerang. That's the thing that would set us back for a much longer period of time if that were to happen. It has happened elsewhere. We're not going to let it happen here. So that timeline fits what we're thinking. I do not foresee changes before that. But if anything, if we had a sudden movement in the right direction and we thought it was sustainable again, the Governor and I, our teams would talk, we could always reevaluate. We're always looking at the numbers, but nothing moves until these numbers all hit together in the right direction, hit the right goals and then you have to hold it. Remember, it's natural we think in sort of like a perfect straight line and you know, we get better and we reduce restrictions and we get better, we reduce more restrictions, we get better – that's what we want. If you do that the wrong way, then the disease starts to reassert in a real major way and then you are clamping back down. Some places, James actually went to tighter restrictions later than where they even started meaning they thought they had beat the disease, they loosened up too quickly. They not only went back to the previous restrictions, they added on many more. We just can't let that happen. So slow, steady, cautious, smart, and the first half of June is when we'll make these decisions in close coordination with the state.

**Moderator:** We have time for two more today. Next is Matt Chayes from Newsday.

**Question:** Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor.

**Mayor:** How are you doing man?

**Question:** You hear me, okay.

**Mayor:** Yeah. How you doing?

**Question:** Good, good. I'm wondering, is your administration investigating any potential rule breaking or violations of the law connected with the NYPD, apparently trying to commandeer for itself, PPE intended for health care workers?

**Mayor:** Matt, I have no indication that happened. Every time there was a concern it was raised up the chain of command. As I said, I intervened to make sure that NYPD officers had the PPEs they needed because we needed to make sure our first responders and our health care workers were served and at various points there were substantial reserves available, and the real issue was putting together an extraordinary operation to get more PPEs and get them quickly, and that's what happened, and I want to commend to everyone in Emergency Management the team that Emma Wolfe has put together that did outstanding work finding PPEs one way or another,



everywhere, looking all over the world. But it was not acceptable to me that our police officers and other first responders wouldn't have the PPEs they needed when they needed them. So anything that was done was done through chain of command and specific decisions and directions as far as I know.

**Moderator:** Last question for today goes to Gersh from Streetsblog.

**Question:** Hello Mr. Mayor, how are you?

**Mayor:** Good Gersh. But I miss your recipe updates.

**Question:** Oh, I'm having – my bread is having a dough-saster right now, but that's just a bad pun and it's a terrible situation.

**Mayor:** Gersh, you coined a new phrase for us.

**Question:** My tabloid background, I guess. I do want to say Mr. Mayor, thank you because I did test positive for coronavirus antibodies yesterday because of one of your tests, so I appreciate that.

**Mayor:** All right, and I guess do you say congratulations in that case? I don't know, but I'm glad you have clarity.

**Question:** My kids are treating me like Typhoid Mary, but nonetheless yesterday several members of the City Council questioned the NYPD budget in a time when you have cut the budgets to other agencies including funding for some of DOT's Vision Zero work, which I know is important to you. So, this question gets into transportation in this way: the NYPD has been accused of poorly enforcing public space and also has a huge role even under normal circumstances in managing traffic in this city, which are jobs that are done by Departments of Transportation in many other major cities. So, I wonder if you've considered transferring these current police functions to other agencies that could do it more efficiently and even maybe with less controversy?

**Mayor:** I believe you are leading the witness, Gersh, but I just disagree with the construct respectfully. I look at what's happened in the last six years of Vision Zero and I remind everyone, with deepest respect to all my predecessors, this administration decided to do something absolutely radical and put Vision Zero in place, and I remember the first months, I remember the naysayers, I remember the people said it would be politically unpopular, it would be impossible, it wouldn't work, it would be too controversial and I'm very proud to say we forged ahead anyway and in fact built it bigger each year and overwhelmingly Vision Zero has worked and Gersh I think you will remember even before he became our first Police Commissioner in this administration, Bill Bratton talked about the importance of the NYPD playing on a more directed energetic focus role in stopping these fatal crashes and protecting lives in terms of traffic and he, along with Polly Trottenberg and her team at DOT, folks at TLC, folks at City Hall, we all built this vision together and there has been consistent success with Vision Zero in large measure because NYPD has been at the table and an active full participant throughout. So that's not

changing. In fact, I'm a big believer, you've heard me say it in more and as we get back to normal, we're going to go right back to this. You know more and more and more NYPD enforcement on speeding, on failure to yield, more speed cameras, which have proven to be so effective, and we've been building them out around schools. No, we've got a strategy that's overwhelmingly been working, we're going to stick to it. We're going to build upon it. The only reasons for delays lately have been because of work that wasn't happening, couldn't happen under these conditions. But once we get a little bit better, we're going right back to all the Vision Zero physical work, and on the PD budget.

Now we still have real issues to address in terms of crime. We're not veering away from a strategy that's worked, we're the safest big city in America for a reason. We're not going to move away from strategies that have been effective. What we will have to do is make very, very different decisions if we have the kind of stimulus that's coming out of the House of Representatives, if that actually gets passed by the Senate, the city can be whole, the city can move forward. We can fund a lot of crucial things and necessary services. But if we do not get that stimulus or if they cut it to ribbons as some things that you've heard of Mitch McConnell say would suggest, then the NYPD budget, the FDNY budget, the DOE budget, the health agencies budgets, everything is threatened. All agencies are threatened. The kinds of – I think sometimes people hear something like, we're in the hole \$7.4 billion and it's some kind of pure abstraction. I don't blame anyone for that. \$7.4 billion in lost revenue, and counting and growing means every single agency will suffer and suffer big and therefore the people will suffer, and that's what we have to stop, and that's where I'm going to put a lot of energy in these coming days into working to get the US Senate to actually pass the stimulus we need.

Okay. As we conclude, so it's perfect segue actually off of that question because the reality we have to deal with is the pandemic came out of nowhere, became the dominant reality in our lives, but the rest of our lives didn't stop. And striking that balance has been a supreme challenge, but it's something we'll work on every day. Getting it right – we still have to protect people on our streets. Vision Zero is just as important today as it was before the pandemic. Quality policing, effective policing, precision policing, neighborhood policing, just as effective as they were and just as important as they were before, and the world to come as we get back to normal, all of these strategies need to come back strong.

What I announced today in terms of a reset of our approach to the NYPD's role in enforcement in light of this pandemic comes from the fact that we have to strike a balance – remembering the things that have worked. Neighborhood policing has worked, deepening the bond between police and community has worked. Helping to overcome that horribly divided past, helping to overcome the structural racism that pervaded this city and every city moving forward reinventing policing so it would be more effective and more grounded in our neighborhoods. These are things that work and these are the things we're going to continue with. So, this reset allows us to ensure that that fundamental approach will continue while also recognizing that there are new dangers from the pandemic that must be addressed, and that particularly comes with the gatherings, especially the larger gatherings. That's where NYPD's focus will be. But we can do both. We can strike that balance, and in fact I have particular confidence because it all comes back to you. Everything we do comes back to what you do as an individual, what you do as a family. No time in our history I think has that been clearer than this pandemic where we see your

efforts making the city safer and better and you have a lot more to do. We all have a lot more to do to get to where we want to go. But it's also because of you that we became safer over these years and became the safest big city in America. You working with our police, our police working with you. We need that to deepen and continue and that's what we will do in this city. So, the one thing I always have confidence in is the people in New York City, and I hope you feel confidence in yourselves after what you've achieved when you saw those charts earlier. I hope everyone felt something warm inside, that was because of you. Now, let's take it the next step, together.

Thank you.

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