

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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** April 23, 2020  
**CONTACT:** [pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov), (212) 788-2958

**CITY SEES PROGRESS WITH SOCIAL DISTANCING AS MAYOR DE BLASIO  
UPDATES NEW YORKERS ON FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19**

**NEW YORK**—Mayor de Blasio announced today that social distancing measures are helping the City fight COVID-19, according to three indicators tracking hospital admissions for suspected COVID-19 cases, ICU occupants in NYC Health + Hospitals facilities, and percent of city residents testing positive for the virus.

“We can’t let the natural desire to go back to normal life interfere with our efforts to defeat the virus,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “This is not a battle we can fight alone; the choices ordinary New Yorkers are making at every hour of each day hold the key to fighting COVID-19.”

Admissions for suspected COVID-19 cases at hospitals citywide continue to decline. Yesterday, on April 22, there were only 227 admissions citywide. Comparatively, on March 31, there were 850 admissions for suspected COVID-19 cases citywide

The daily number of people in ICUs across NYC Health + Hospitals with suspected cases of COVID-19 continues to decline. On April 14, Health + Hospitals was at double its ICU capacity system wide, with approximately 887 individuals being treated in ICUs. That number is now 796. To alleviate the burden on NYC Health + Hospitals, the City has added ICU beds at facilities citywide, and surged military and volunteer personnel across the system.

As the City continues to expand its testing capacity, the number of individuals testing positive for the virus at the City’s public health lab increased to 57% percent. The number of individuals being tested citywide in private labs decreased, however, to 33%.

You can find these metrics [here](#).

Additionally, in keeping with the commitment to feed all New Yorkers in need during the COVID-19 public health crisis, the Mayor and NYC COVID-19 Food Czar Kathryn Garcia announced plans to significantly increase the City’s supply and distribution of halal meals during Ramadan, the Muslim holy month, which begins today, Thursday, April 23. The City is prepared to serve over 500,000 meals during Ramadan via [DOE grab-and-go meals](#) and partnerships with community based organizations (CBOs).

As part of this effort, the City will:

- Increase supply of halal meals at 32 DOE Grab & Go sites across all five boroughs with large Muslim populations by 25%
  - This amounts to 400,000 meals

- In addition to the 32 receiving this increase, all 400+ sites will continue to have halal meals available
- Distribute an additional 150,000 meals in multi-meal pantry boxes to nine community-based organizations serving Muslim New Yorkers. These CBOs will then arrange bulk pick-up or delivery for the communities they serve.

The community based organizations partnering in this effort are:

- ICNA Relief
- Apna/ICNA Relief
- Al-Madinah Incorporated
- Muslims Giving Back
- Muslim Women's Institute for Research and Development (MWIRD)
- American Council of Minority Women
- Arab American Association of New York
- Council of People's Organization
- Yemeni American Merchants Association (YAMA)

The full list of school sites with increased Halal meals are listed at [schools.nyc.gov/ramadanmeals](https://schools.nyc.gov/ramadanmeals).

To date, the City's effort to feed all New Yorkers has distributed nearly 7 million meals across multiple programs.

###