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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well, good morning, everybody. Monday morning, and a morning that really feels different in so many ways. First of all, it's a beautiful morning and really feels like spring is here finally, but also there's a little more hope in the air, because we've seen some real progress, and that's a good feeling every day when we think things are getting a little bit better and we see some real evidence of it. And we know that we're focused on not just what we feel but what we know. Proving to you each day that we are making tangible progress so we can get back to that road to something much better. But again, we're always going to focus on the facts, and when the facts are moving the right direction, that's because of you. That's because of the hard work all of you are doing and doing so well. The warmer weather makes us start to think maybe things are even a little better than the facts suggest, and that's why we have to always keep our balance. Be hopeful, be inspired, be diligent, keep doing what we have to do, because what we're feeling that beautiful weather out in that pole of normalcy, let's make it become real by our actions. So, we understand, all of us, that we have a job ahead of us. And we also have to remember that our reality for each and every one of us is New Yorkers, It feels according to what everyone's life is like a little bit different of course, but for most people there going about their lives, seeing something better, however, not so far away, no matter what neighborhood you're in, not so far away is a hospital. In that hospital is a different reality in many cases, in a reality that keeps us grounded and is a reminder that we don't stop fighting this battle. In the hospitals are our healthcare heroes still fighting to really ensure that not only their lives are saved, but that we fight back this disease once and for all.

Our hospitals do not feel normal yet. While we might feel out in the streets is a lot better than what people are experiencing in the hospitals. There's still a huge challenge in our hospitals. It may be better than what it was a few weeks ago, but it's still very, very real. In our public hospitals, we're still around double the capacity in the ICU's that we were a few months ago. There are still every single day people coming in in desperate shape who need the help of our healthcare heroes. There are people who have been in the ICU a long time, still fighting for their lives. So, remember that as we start to feel a little better, we have to have a lot of empathy, a lot of feeling for the doctors and nurses, the frontline healthcare workers who continue that battle, every day go toward that danger. We've all heard the heroic story of Elmhurst Hospital in Queens, but there are many, many others like it. And each day, remember these professionals go into a situation, still fighting an enemy that is not fully understood by the medical community. Still understanding that danger awaits them when they go through those doors and yet they show up every single day. We all want to go as far away from wherever COVID-19 might be. These healthcare heroes go right toward it.

So, we need to keep supporting them. And remember this was a war. The body armor for the health workers is those PPE's, that personal protective equipment that we've talked about so much. That remains such a crucial piece of the picture. And remember for a long time, this has been a week to week, day to day struggle for weeks and weeks to make sure there was enough where we needed them, and so many people have been working so hard to always make sure that our hospitals, our nursing homes had what they needed. I have to tell you it's been very tough and sometimes it got very close to the point where we looked like we were going to run out, became kind of a game of whack-a-mole, trying to get supplies one place and then you hear another place needs him and now you're shifting over there. It was nonstop. We've seen some things move in the right direction. The ventilator situation that looked like the single worst part of the equation at one point, that got a lot better, but just as that was getting better, we had a crisis with the surgical gowns. Another crucial part of protecting our heroes.

So, how did we get to a point now where we're starting to have a little bit of breathing room? A lot of it was good old-fashioned New York City ingenuity. It was those folks at the Brooklyn Navy Yard and other places who built face shields, like the one you're seeing there. That was literally put together by hand in the Brooklyn Navy Yard by New Yorkers who wanted to help our healthcare heroes. That made a huge difference. The folks who came together, you met them a few weeks back who put together the ventilators from scratch, an amazing effort. The surgical gowns that had been both created here in New York City never were produced here, now they are, and sourced from places as far away as Vietnam using relationships that New York City companies had. There's been a lot of good stories here of New York City ingenuity of New Yorkers coming together, but we cannot rest on those laurels, because we know we got to keep protecting our heroes, and we know we're far from done with this disease right now and we also know that this disease later on could have a second wave, and we're not going to be caught looking. We're going to be ready for it.

So, here's where we stand today. For the first time since March, we actually start a week with enough of all of the PPEs we need on that crisis standard, and I'm always going to emphasize that, that basic standard. Not what we'd like to have ideally, but what is workable and usable for a situation like this. We have a little breathing room. We can finally ensure for the whole week ahead that every hospital, every nursing home will get what they need. And that means the N95 mask, the surgical mask, the gloves, the face shields, the surgical gowns, the whole set. It's striking the largest city in the country, the greatest country in the world. And yet this is the first week in a couple of months that we've been able to say we have a solid week ahead of everything. And it's sobering to remember just what a ferocious enemy we're up against, and just how much we did not understand, any of us, that the supplies we depended on, the equipment we depended on was so many cases, not only not made in New York City, not made in the United States of America. This has been a real sobering lesson, and one that we have learned from, and we're going to handle things differently going forward.

So, within this struggle, over these last weeks, what has become clearer and clearer as it's been tough enough for all the arrows and the hospitals? They've been fighting such a tough battle, but we've come to realize that there are also heroes in our nursing homes. The folks who work there don't get as much attention. They need support too. We've come to see very, very painful things happening in our nursing homes and we all need to work together to make that situation better

now, and for the future. So, when I think about a nursing home, I think about the people, the parents, the grandparents, the people who those facilities are there to protect. Now again, many of them are private facilities, and I think there's real questions about if they've all done as best they could do, but that's not the question for today. The question for today is how do we stabilize the situation? How do we help right now? How do we build a stronger future for protecting our elders? Over the last weeks, we've sent 10 million pieces of personal protective equipment to the nursing homes to protect the folks that work there, and the folks who live there. This week we are sending to nursing homes across the five boroughs. 1.9 million surgical masks, 170,000 face shields, 760,000 gloves, 173,000 surgical gowns, 15,000 coveralls and aprons, and 10,000 shoe coverings. So, we're going to keep surging those PPE's into the nursing homes, continue making them stronger so they can protect the precious individuals who are living there and who mean so much to so many families in this city. That's a commitment we're going to keep.

As I said, we've learned a lot of powerful lessons about all of this and the notion that I can tell you we have a whole week supply ahead, and that's big news, that's good news, but it's certainly not the way we can live going forward. We have to do something much better. I never want to see New York City in this situation again. I want New York City to protect itself going forward, because we've come to realize we couldn't rely on the private market, we couldn't rely on the federal government. We need to protect ourselves. There's no place like New York City, and New York City has tremendous ability and capacity, and the most talented people in the world. Going forward, we're going to make sure that we're ready no matter what else is happening around us. So, I told you a few days back about the fact that we're starting a New York City strategic reserve, and this is something that's going to grow, and it's not only going to be about stockpiling, it's going to be about ensuring we have the capacity to build things right here. And whatever we deal with in the future, we're not waiting on factories in another part of the country or another part of the world to the maximum extent possible. We have the plans and the ability right here to build what we need.

So, job-one, of course, is to make sure we can address the immediate needs. So, when we got to the point of having a two-week supply of PPE's for the immediate needs of our hospitals and nursing homes, we are then going to start the process of building up our reserve. We want to have a 90-day stockpile of PPE's and crucial equipment. We want to have that ready and in reserve for whatever happens up ahead. Look, I talked yesterday about the boomerang. We want to fight against that boomerang, but that reserve is there, God forbid we ever saw a resurgence of the disease. There's also more and more talk about a second wave of the disease later in the year at the beginning of next year. We want to be ready for that, so we're going to have our own reserves that we control ready at all times to protect our people. Now the strategy will be one that could simply be summarized as buying and building. We'll buy the supplies from all over the country, all over the world whenever they're available, but we'll increasingly have the ability to build them right here in New York City. We will not be dependent on one source, because we have to protect our people. That means we need more than one place to turn to make sure there's always the supplies and equipment we need. Now, the strategy will be one that could simply be summarized as buying and building. We'll buy the supplies from all over the country, all over the world whenever they're available, but we'll increasingly have the ability to build them right here in New York City. We will not be dependent on one source because we have to protect our

people, that means we need more than one place to turn to make sure there's always the supplies and equipment we need.

Now, an important piece of this larger puzzle, how we protect each other, how we fight back this disease is something that is a more recent part of the strategy, but I think it's been very, very successful overall, and that is face coverings. You know, weeks ago I said we want New Yorkers to now start using face coverings in public, I have to say thank you to the people in this City. Overwhelmingly, even though it wasn't something you were used to doing, overwhelmingly New Yorkers have taken to using face coverings when you go outside it takes some getting used to as we've emphasized, you don't need a fancy surgical mask, you don't need an N95, you just need something to cover your face. And New Yorkers have been creative and resourceful as always, and the vast majority of people are complying, and we want to see a lot more compliance going forward.

So, remember that protecting each other reduces the spread of the disease gets us one step closer to normal. I know putting on a face covering is not necessarily fun, I know as the weather gets warmer, it may feel inconvenient. Sometimes you don't remember it, but think about this to motivate you, when you put on that face covering, you are reducing the spread of this disease and taking one small step towards normalcy. So, it may not always feel fun, but it's going to feel really good when we get out of this. When we can put this crisis behind us, everyone can contribute, just put on that face covering, yes, don't hesitate to put it on, bring it with you, bring some extras with you so you always have one. Now, we know that sometimes people just forget, or they don't have one or they don't have a way to get one, so the City is going to step in. This weekend is the last couple of days we started huge distribution of free face coverings in parts and other locations around the City, great response, people were really grateful to get them, we're going to now build that up to a much higher level. So, we are now going to ramp up a plan and it will take effect starting immediately to distribute 7.5 million face coverings, meaning wherever you turn you're going to be offered in face covering and it's going to be on an ongoing basis for weeks to come to make sure that everyone has what they need. These of course will be distributed for free, as we work together to beat back this disease. 5 million in this, so there's a couple of kinds, I'll hold up this kind first. 5 million are the three-ply nonmedical masks. So again, I want to, when you look at one of these, and I did not really fully understand it first, these are the ones that have the wire at the top that you can kind of shape around your nose. These are the three-ply non-medical masks, these are not the same as what our health care heroes use, but they really do help. They really do reduce the spread of the disease if anyone happens to be infected it helps make sure that others are not, 5 million of these will be given out. Now, these are reusable so long as they stay dry. And I think there's been a lot of questions – I think some people, again we unfortunately live in a little bit of a throwaway culture here in our country, something we need to start getting away from. People might think, oh, you use it once you throw it away. No, you can keep using it so long as it stays dry, if it's dry the integrity of it holds and it performs the protective function. If it gets wet it might be compromised, but so long as it's dry you can use it, certainly a number of times. The other thing we're going to give out is 2.5 million of the— cloth face covering, so cloth face coverings that are reusable, that are washable, you can use them as long as they hold together. We'll be getting a lot of those as well. Now where will we be giving them out? A lot of places in New York City, a whole different, whole different set of places I mentioned our parks, of course, that will be one focal point. In addition, at public

housing developments, at the grab and go food sites being run out of schools, at Mitchell Lama affordable housing buildings, at the Staten Island ferry. Any place that the NYPD and the Parks Department and other agencies are going to enforce social distancing, they'll also be carrying a supply of free face coverings. So, it's going to become more and more given to see it expand this week we're in now. And I think it's going to make things easier and easier for New Yorkers who want to follow these rules and want to keep people safe and that is clearly the vast majority of the people of this City.

Now, let's talk about what we continue to do as we work back towards normalcy. What we continue to do to keep making things happen for our kids. You know, I've said before, our kids have gone through a lot in this crisis. I think in some ways it's been particularly tough for them compared to everyone else, we all feel stir-crazy – I think they feel that many times over. But what has been a real ray of light here is that the remote learning, the online learning that was entirely experimental, trying to build something out for 1.1 million kids in a matter of days. It's really been a good news story, and everyone deserves credit, our educators, our parents, our kids, all the folks who came together from the DOE, the companies, everyone who put this together, they're doing something amazing and it's working. But one of the things that was clear from the very beginning we were honest about is, look, there's a digital divide is something we have to fight against and it's alive and well that means some people have technology and other people don't. Well, in the middle of this crisis, something good happened despite the pain, despite the challenges, and that was something really important for closing that digital divide. Every single public-school student who requested an iPad, got one. I just want you to think about the magnitude of that statement, in a City where for a long time the haves and the have nots have played out in terms of technology and huge numbers of kids just didn't have access to the technology that so many other New Yorkers considered to be absolutely basic to their lives. Every child who asked for an iPad got an iPad for free, that is now total up to 255,000 iPads that have been distributed in a matter of weeks. Extraordinary effort, everyone involved should be very proud of themselves and any public-school child who still doesn't have that iPad, it's totally available on request delivered to the door of the family. But for any reason there's still a child who hasn't gotten one, they can call 3-1-1, the family can call 3-1-1 and get one right away. But the good news is we now want to go further and there's a special group of New York City children we want to help and these are students with disabilities in our non-public schools. We want to make sure since we have some additional iPads available, we want to help them to learn to the maximum during this tough time, take full advantage of online learning. So, we are offering iPads for free to these students as well. Now I've often said kids with disabilities struggle, and they fight so hard and we have to have their back. We have to respect how tough it is for our students and their families dealing with this additional challenge and now a pandemic on top of it, we have to be there for them. So, we will provide a free iPad for any students who have disabilities and are in our non-public schools. We believe that's a university of about 35,000 students and that means students in religious schools, independent schools, any non-public schools, any student needs an iPad and goes to one of those schools and has disability can call 3-1-1, their family can call 3-1-1 or go to schools.nyc.gov, sign up, iPad will be sent to your home for free.

Okay. Now we're going to go to what we look forward to every day, which is our progress report, our daily indicators. And I want to give you an update that we have structured these

indicators we say there's three categories, but the third category has always had two pieces. And there was a reason for that originally there was a citywide and the public health lab numbers. And the reason originally was the public health lab was really the leading edge of so much of what was being done in the way of testing in the beginning of this crisis. Remember, January, February, pleading with the federal government just to let us do tests in New York City to begin with and how long it took. And, in the beginning, that were very, very few tests being taken, public health lab leading the way and they did a great job. We needed, especially when hospitals didn't have a lot of testing capacity up and private companies were just coming into play. Now we have a much better situation when it comes to testing, many, many hospitals have access to their own testing. The public health lab is actually down to a very, very small fraction of citywide testing at this point. So, knowing that the public health labs sample has gotten smaller and smaller all the time, and knowing therefore that makes the results more volatile. We're now going to take that public health lab measure out of our indicators, it served us well to now, but we don't think it is necessary anymore. We're going to use that citywide testing number as the sole measure in the third indicator, especially as more and more testing is coming online, we're getting a truer and truer sense of what's happening, and that number certainly will suffice. So, I am very pleased to say we have three indicators now and all three are down today. So, congratulations New York City, this is the kind of day we have been waiting for and it is a beautiful thing and let's put together some more like it and that's our pathway to something better. Daily number of people indicator one daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19, that is down from 113 to 88. Daily number of people in ICU across our public hospitals for suspected COVID down 645 to 632. Percent of people tested who are positive for COVID-19 citywide down from 20 percent to 17 percent an excellent day. All three down, all moving in the same direction. Let's do it again. Thank you. Well done, New York City.

So, as I close, I want to do a small thought process of empathy, because I think the vast majority of people in the City, you either know a doctor, a nurse, a lab tech, someone, a health care worker, someone who works in a hospital, someone who works in a nursing home. Think of the people in your life, think of your friends, think of your family. Most New Yorkers know someone who works in our extraordinary health care field in this city. Just take a short time to put yourself literally in their shoes, walking through the door of that hospital, that clinic, that nursing home, and as you do that, if you try and empathize, if you try and feel what they're feeling, I don't think you're going to say, oh, I don't feel any fear at all, I don't recognize any danger. I think you would immediately say, no, in fact, you do feel fear. You do feel the danger present, but what's so striking, what's so amazing is not that people somehow make themselves blind to the fear, but that they stare it in the face and they walk through the door anyway; it's absolutely inspiring. It's happening every hour of every day here in this city. Why do people do this? Because they believe in saving lives; they believe they are answering a higher calling than they are. So, let's answer a higher calling and get them what they need. Get them those PPEs, make sure they are protected and then let's protect them with what we can do by sheltering in place to the maximum extent possible, by going and making sure that we always practice social distancing, by putting on those face coverings; all of that is part of protecting our health care heroes and protecting each other and it works and today's indicators prove it. So, we are clearly winning this fight. Let's keep winning and let's protect the heroes who we depend on so much.

Few words in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, let's turn to our colleagues in the media and please let me know the name and outlet of each journalist.

Moderator: Hi, all, just a reminder, we have Police Commissioner Shea, Health Commissioner Barbot, Social Services Commissioner Banks, and Senior Advisor Dr. Varma on the phone. With that, I will start with Ashley from the New York Times.

Question: Good morning to everyone present. I want to ask two questions. First, I would like it if the Police Commissioner can give an update on the investigation of the event on the Lower East Side including the status of the other officers involved in that incident. Whether he plans to release the demographic data requested by the Public Advocate on social distancing enforcement and what appear to be discrepancies between the NYPD account and the videos? For instance, the NYPD account is that these officers stopped these group of individuals for social distancing, but in the video you see just two people standing outside of bodega or a corner store and discrepancies persist from there. And then for the Mayor and both the Police Commissioner you know, the city has spent years and hundreds of millions of dollars on de-escalation, neighborhood policing and such and we still see incidents like this or officers often times and in this case with histories of this conduct allegation involved in incidents where they have appeared to use more force than what is necessary and escalate confrontations. I'm wondering if the Mayor, if you could address whether you're giving any second thought to having the police as the frontline in enforcing social distancing and if there will be any changes going forward?

Mayor: Ashley, I do appreciate the question very much because I think it gets to the heart of what we have all been working on for over six years now in terms of changing the nature of policing in New York City. Remember the entire police force has been retrained constantly in de-escalation and in neighborhood policing – very, very different approaches than what existed in the past. I'm very confident that these approaches are taking hold more and more in the NYPD. The video was very troubling; what I saw was absolutely unacceptable and obviously discipline was swift by the NYPD, but I want to note that, that video is more and more of a rarity. What you saw there is more and more of a rarity. We still have work to do, unquestionably, but the progress is very clear to see; policing is changing and the city has been changing. The leadership of the NYPD over three commissioners now has emphasized much more training focused on de-escalation, focused on close connection to the people the NYPD serves and a neighborhood policing philosophy. And more and more members of the NYPD are coming into service with this being the entire message and lesson and strategy they learned from the very beginning and I think we're seeing the results of that very positively. That doesn't mean there aren't incidents like this that we don't have to fight against all the time and if any individuals don't understand and are not willing to work with those strategies, the NYPD has the capacity to identify them and deal with them because we're not going to have that kind of behavior in our police force. On the other point about the, the nature of social distancing enforcement, again, this one incident is troubling, but there's been thousands and tens of thousands of interactions between police officers and civilians over the last weeks that went very well where the NYPD went and made sure that people were practicing social distancing when

enforcement was necessary. They exercised enforcement in communities all over the city. By and large, we've seen New Yorkers really abiding by social distancing and the rules we're living with; the NYPD has been crucial to that, they will remain crucial to that. So I've said we're bringing other agencies in to augment this effort. More and more civilians will be brought in to augment this effort as well - more and more free face coverings. But you can't do effective enforcement without the NYPD and the NYPD is more than up to the job. Commissioner?

Police Commissioner Dermot Shea: So, I would say a lot of the same. I mean, I spoke yesterday about the end of that video and I was not happy with what I saw. I think we can be better than that, quite frankly. But I think you need to look at it in the context of hundreds and hundreds of thousands of encounters across the city; whether it's through routine encounters, arrests, taking guns off people without firing shots, certainly summoning many people. I think the de-escalation training that was put in place in years past and continues is just yet another tool in the toolbox and I think it's effective. I wish it was 100% effective, but that's not unfortunately the world that we live in. But we'll learn from it as we do from any example, continue to train and try to get better. I would, I would also remind you that de-escalation takes two, unfortunately. There's two people involved in every encounter and what we've seen in the past is, is when people do not comply with the police in the first take down now I'm talking about, sometimes those things are not pretty when they're seen on video. And again, that's something also that we train to, we train to avoid it, [inaudible] we train to take people into custody seeking compliance at all times, but, ultimately, we don't always receive that compliance.

Just very briefly, to tell you what we know about the entire incident. We have three individuals taken into custody, still ongoing. We've recovered several pieces of video beyond the first piece. So, what we can tell you now is that the incident begins with an individual that's sitting on a milk crate in front of the location. He's engaged in conversation with a female. Those two individuals subsequently arrested as well as the third person that the video on the corner takes place. In totality of this incident what was recovered was a taser that does not belong to the NYPD, a small amount of marijuana, and roughly close to \$3,000 in US currency. So exactly what was going on there is still somewhat under investigation, Ashley. But I don't think this takes away from what I said the other day. The end of the video, I think we've got to be better and that's what was most troubling to me.

Mayor: Yeah. And to the point, Ashley, about data – want to make sure that whatever data we do have on enforcement, we get out. Obviously, enforcement takes many forms. We've talked about this for a long time. If it involves a substantial gathering, we are going to, I've been very, very clear, the Commissioner has been clear - that's straight to summons unless people are gone instantly and anyone who lingers is getting a summons. That's easy to get data on. Other cases of course just the appearance of the NYPD causes people to correct their behavior. So you know, where we have an action that is trackable we will get that data out. I want people to see just how clearly enforcement is being practiced all over the city, every kind of neighborhood. But the good news again is in many cases we don't ever get to the point of summons, because the behavior is corrected instantly and that's exactly what we want.

Moderator: Next we have Katie from the Wall Street Journal.

Question: Hey, good morning everyone. I wanted to ask, Mayor, it was on my mind this weekend with the beautiful weather. I wanted to see if there was an update on the city summer plan. I know it seems that the 4th of July fireworks are all set, but what's the plan for making sure that beaches are guarded, maybe working out a plan to monitor social distancing there? I, you know, it was just on my mind because the weather was so nice and the parks were so packed. So, what's the status on that?

Mayor: We're going to be issuing a plan. The – again, traditionally, beaches don't open until Memorial Day. As everyone knows, they will not be opening on Memorial Day and will not be opening anytime soon, but we're going to certainly keep the option open, depending on how well we do for options later on in the year. But as I've said many times, we're going to be publishing a summer plan soon. And we're going to give people a clear sense of how we're going to keep everyone safe, even if we're doing things differently. Beaches that are not open still require enforcement, clearly. So, those parameters will be put out and then we'll watch to see how things evolve to see if we can do something different as we go along as things get better. The 4th of July, I keep saying, the specifics to be determined as we get more information, working closely with Macy's, obviously, the NYPD. The one thing I will guarantee is there will be a celebration of the 4th of July and fireworks will play a role, but how and where and in what fashion, what it means for people's ability to watch it, what the conditions will be, that's still far in the future – literally, it being May 4th, you know, two months ahead. So, that we're going to have a lot more to say when we get much closer.

Moderator: Next we have a Shant from the Daily News.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. I wanted to ask a few questions about homelessness on the subways in light of two apparently homeless men dying on the subways over the weekend. For one, is the City going to do wide-scale medical examinations of homeless people found on the subways? Another thing, can you say how many hotel rooms have been secured for the homeless and how many of those would be accessible to people found on the subways? Just one or two more things would be, if the Bowery residents committee is involved directing homeless people to hotel rooms. And, just in general, what is the overall strategy for preventing more deaths of homeless people on the subways and a potential real tragedy?

Mayor: Thank you, Shant. Look, it's horrible. It's horrible when we lose people whose life – you know, their lives – something went wrong in their lives at some point and they ended up homeless on the streets. And this is what we have talked about over these last months, that this is not a reality we should accept any longer in our city. And, in fact, the specific plan we put out in December, the Journey Home Plan is literally the pathway to ending permanent street homelessness in New York City, and particularly bringing in those folks who have been out there for years. It's an unacceptable reality. It has been this way in this city for decades. We finally believe we have the tools to stop it, to end it once and for all because of the HOME-STAT strategy that's been working, and Commissioner Banks can tell you the exact number as of today of folks who have been brought in over the last three years from the streets, from the subways into Safe Havens, into permanent housing, have stayed there. We have a strategy that's working. We're going to apply that strategy more and more intensely. It's even been working through the pandemic and I know it will work more and more as we come out of the pandemic. So, that's

where we have to go, because this is about human beings whose lives came unglued. We have to find a way to, you know, everybody – something brought them to the street, we have to help them back from the street and to a better life, and we can. In terms of – I'll turn to the Commissioner, but I'll say that the basics are we will always have a hotel room available for anyone who needs it who's in the shelter system. We will always have a bed available for anyone who's coming out of the subway, has been living on the street, who needs a Safe Haven bed or shelter bed. We will always have one available. We're building out that capacity further. We do already send out teams to check on homeless folks that can do and often do include a doctor or a nurse. Whenever needed, they're available. NYPD and homeless services can call in medical support very, very rapidly. And we want to see more and more of that, going forward. But the real goal here is not to live with the reality of homeless on the streets and subways, but do something about it. I think the vision that was I think a very positive one that I worked on with the Governor and his team to ensure that the subways in this crisis would be closed in the early morning hours and cleaned and it'll give us a better chance to engage homeless folks and get them to shelter, I think that's going to be another important piece of the strategy. Commissioner Banks?

Commissioner Steven Banks, Department of Social Services: Thank you. I would just add a few pieces of information, Shant. So, overall, as the Mayor I committed to, we're continuing to move people out of shelters into hotel rooms. Right now, about 7,000 of the 17,000 people in our single-adult shelter system are in hotel rooms. And we've set a goal to continue to move out people each week until we can have widescale testing in place. And we're going to continue to do that this week and into the future. With respect to bringing people in from the streets, we've recently brought on – beginning to bring on 200 Safe Haven stabilization beds, and we'll bring on more to be able to bring people in. It's just a tragedy when we lose people and these two individuals were people that we've been trying to bring in from the streets. It's a difficult process, it can take, you know, dozens if not more encounters to bring somebody in. The BRC is one of the key partners that's been in place for a number of years to bring people in from the streets and they're part of the effort, along with other street providers, [inaudible] subway provider, they've been able to about 2,500 people to come in from the streets and remain off the streets. We do know about these two individuals who passed away, that they were obviously part of people that we've been trying to bring in. And since the beginning of this – the beginning of March, we've had 20,000 encounters with homeless people, attempting to identify whether or not they have any signs of symptoms of COVID. In that process, 12 people were identified with potential symptoms. They were each brought to the hospital and they tested negative. Of these two individuals, we do know that one of them has tested negative and we're waiting on the results from the other. So, we're going to keep doing what we've been doing every night, which is trying to bring people into available beds that we have, making sure that they have services, not just putting them in rooms without appropriate supportive services where we can help people get on the road to remaining off the streets.

Moderator: Next we have Sydney from the Staten Island Advance.

Question: Hey, Mr. Mayor. Borough President Oddo and Congressman Max Rose called you last week to send military medical personnel to Staten Island's private hospitals, saying it's inexplicable that Staten Island has not received any. What's your response to their letter? Are you

ever going to send any military medical personnel to Staten Island? And what's been holding you back from sending, say, even just a handful or a dozen of them to Staten Island. And if you could elaborate a bit on protocol, who makes the call when it comes to where to send military medical staff? Is that you? Is that the State? Is it a mix of both?

Mayor: Sydney, again, I want to be very clear, the military medical personnel have been absolutely outstanding from the Army, from the Air Force, from the Navy. This all emerged from conversations I had with President Trump and Secretary Esper and General Milley about the need to address the situation in Elmhurst Hospital, Lincoln Hospital, Bellevue, the places that we're seeing an absolutely overwhelming number of cases and where the teams there had been through a particular challenge. We have 56 hospitals that have been in this fight all over the city. Our public hospital system bore the brunt and we got a number of military medical personnel, nowhere near the number that we asked for, but still a healthy number, and they have been devoted to those public hospitals and doing important work. But in the meantime, we have been sending additional doctors and nurses from different sources that we have gotten to hospitals all over the city – not just public hospitals, but independent hospitals as well, including in the case of Staten Island, RUMC. We will continue to send additional staff as needed. So, the military medical personnel, one piece of the puzzle, but in terms of additional staffing – I've been in touch with the borough president, I've been in touch with the CEO of RUMC. When they have asked for additional PPEs, we've gotten them to them. When they've asked for additional personnel, we've been working to get them. We'd gotten them some, we'll keep getting them more. We're going to keep working case by case all over the city, but that military piece was a discreet piece of a much bigger effort and those individuals have been outstanding and they've been focused on some of the hospitals that have really borne the brunt in this crisis.

Moderator: Next we have Erin from Politico.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor. I'm wondering if you think that essential City workers who died from coronavirus should be classified as line-of-duty deaths? I know you said the federal government should step up for their families, but, in the meantime, do you have any plans to extent any benefits to them, such as continuing their health insurance? I would love to hear Commissioner Shea's opinion on this question as well.

Mayor: Look, we obviously care deeply for the families of our public servants and we feel for any family that's lost someone. We want to figure out how we can be supportive as they're going through all of this. We're working now to determine first what the federal government can and will do. Obviously, the City is in a very, very tough spot right now in terms of everything we're going through humanly and the fact our resources have been drained down in a way we've never seen in decades. And we need to make sure we help people, we also need to make sure we can keep providing everything that people need in this city. So, I think job-one is the get that federal support. Job-one is to make sure that our heroes and their families are supported by the place that has ample resources, the only place that has ample resources, which is the federal government. But we will keep working as well to figure out all the ways that we can support those families. We'll have more to say on that in the coming days.

Commissioner Shea, do you want to add?

Commissioner Shea: Yeah, there's not too much to add to this, Mr. Mayor. It's certainly a complicated issue. I could tell you that from the Police Department side, we've lost 38 members, six of them are auxiliary, six of them are uniformed, and the remainder are civilians, each with different benefits, some with none quite frankly – some are unpaid employees. And what was said from the beginning with this is we're going to try to weather the storm. The good news is that people have been coming back, we're getting closer to normal strength, and when this is all over we'll sort out this extremely complicated issue, working with the unions, working with labor people to make sure we can do everything to support our people.

Moderator: Next we have Gloria from NY1.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor. First, I just want to get some clarity on why the City is eliminating the public lab indicator from its data? I'm not sure I really followed the difference between the public health lab and the other category. And I wanted to ask if you – why you're distributing – why you made the decision to distribute PPEs to nursing homes this week and why that wasn't done earlier. And that's it, that's what I got.

Mayor: Okay. Well, again – so, the public health lab, right now, it's less than one percent – I think it's 0.1 percent of the testing that's being done all over the city. So, you know, 99 percent-plus of tests are now being done in other types of labs than the Health Department's public health lab. So, the numbers have just changed markedly. Originally, we were talking about a situation where it was one of the only places that was testing. I mean, it's really amazing, Gloria, to think about – go back in time two months when there was very little testing and the public health lab is one of the only things we had, and for that we had to beg the federal government to allow us even to do that. The public health lab test loomed very large as a percentage of what we knew. Now, it's an exceedingly small percentage and it's more volatile because it is such a small percentage, it is such a small sample size. So, we came to the conclusion that the much more pertinent measure was the citywide testing and that it was safe – we obviously have a very cautious approach here – it was safe to use that measure alone. And that's why we made the decision. On the nursing homes, again, I'm going to quote what I said back earlier in my presentation. I went over what we have – what we're sending out this week. But the distribution to the nursing homes began in March, and it increased. And again, we have been working with the State as more and more concerns emerged, we stepped in and provided more and more PPEs directly to nursing homes. So, it's been 10 million pieces so far. And what I gave today was simply an update on what we're doing, going forward. But this has been an aggressive effort since March, and we're going to keep building it as needed.

Moderator: Next we have Steve from Westwood One News.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. Good morning, everybody, on the call. I have a question for the Health Commissioner. I'm wondering – actually two questions. Where do we stand as far as the mortality rate goes for our critically ill patients in hospitals? Our doctors, have they gained a better understanding of best practices for treating critically ill patients today compared to six weeks ago? Has that mortality rate in ICUs, has it gone down? And then, also, doctor, concerning some of the new medical treatments, like Remdesivir, are public hospitals involved

in the expanded use of these experimental drugs? And, if not, why? And then, also I've done a couple of interviews with people who had coronavirus who have some very serious underlying issues and are on immunosuppressant drugs. And this is completely anecdotal, but they all recovered. And considering that a lot of what these critically ill patients are suffering as a result of their immune systems' reactions to the virus, has there been any study or look at immunosuppressant drugs and the role they play, or possible role they could play in the treatment of critically ill patients? Thank you.

Mayor: So, Dr. Barbot, you start, and, Dr. Varma, if you want to add after that, feel free. Dr. Barbot?

Commissioner Barbot: Terrific. So, we, as we've been saying all along, have been learning every day about how this virus behaves, both from a public health point of view as well as from a clinical point of view. And initially, there was very little that could be offered with regards to treatments for individuals diagnosed with COVID-19. And, as a reminder, we still don't have definitive treatment for COVID-19 and, obviously, we still don't have a vaccine. That being said, there were several drugs – there have been several drugs that have been utilized to treat COVID-19 on an experimental basis. We have gone through things like hydroxychloroquine, etcetera. Now, this new drug, Remdesivir, has been demonstrated to shorten the amount of time that individuals need ongoing support, [inaudible] support. And so, I think with time and with more studies we will be able to better ascertain how effective this medication is for COVID-19. Our public hospital system has very much been at the forefront of leveraging medications that have a potential impact on improving individual's health. They are, for example, looking at potential use of antibodies for treating individuals who are severely ill with COVID-19. So, the long and the short of it is that we have a very robust public health care delivery system with H + H being a leader, and they most certainly are leveraging all of the potential therapeutics that are made available in ways that look to minimize the number of people that are on ventilatory support for extended periods of time. That being said, I think we'll have to get back to you on mortality rates of individuals that have been in the intensive care unit. Dr. Varma, you want to add at all?

Senior Advisor Jay Varma: Sure, yeah. I would just try to emphasize that there's absolutely a lot that we're still learning about the role of the immune system in this disease but we also have to be cautious and make sure that different treatments that modify the immune system are, are studied rigorously. We know from the experience in intensive care for a whole range of similar types of diseases like influenza that there's always been a lot of promise to drugs that might modify the immune system, but when they're actually studied rigorously where you compare one group that gets the drug versus another group that doesn't you actually end up finding that you don't have that impact. So, I think we're are going to continue to learn a lot. And one of the real great advances here has been the role of, of our public hospital system in, in piloting this research, as well as collaborations that are occurring all over the world. So I do think the questions that you're raising about the role of the immune system, both in people who are taking these medications before they get the infection and in treating people who then get it – we're going to get answers very soon, but it's most important to keep in mind that they should really be done in the context of research because there's a lot of fog in the middle of a war. And we really

need that clarity for everybody that that's already been infected and everybody that may get infected.

Mayor: Thank you.

Moderator: Next we have Marcia from CBS.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. I have two questions. The first one has to do with the role of social distancing and the reopening of small businesses. I wonder, first of all, if you feel that you're satisfied with the level of compliance you're getting from New Yorkers in terms of social distancing, wearing masks, et cetera, and then if when you reach that point where you are satisfied, will you be able to then let small businesses open with the correct social distancing, keeping people six feet away, wearing masks, wearing gloves, et cetera, because a lot of small businesses are really hurting and I wonder if the social distancing part of it would enable you to, to open these small businesses sooner rather than later so that they don't face economic ruin. And my second question is for you and for the Police Commissioner. I wonder if you can tell us about the attempted rape on that out of town nurse, if she's still working on the front lines and living in New York City while the suspect is on the loose?

Mayor: Thank you, Marcia. I'll have the Commissioner speak to the second question and we're obviously very pained any time anyone is attacked, particularly someone who is doing such noble work for all of us and we will certainly bring the individual involved – the perpetrator to justice. There's no question and we'll support that nurse in every way we can. But I'll have the Commissioner give you that update.

On the question of small business. So, you're questioning a couple of different pieces. I'll put them all together. Am I satisfied by what I'm seeing? I am very impressed by what New Yorkers are doing, Marcia, in terms of staying at home to the maximum extent possible, practicing social distancing, wearing face coverings – people deserve high marks overall. There are some people not getting it and those people need to get it because they're putting everyone else in danger. There are some instances where the rules are not being followed, that requires enforcement. There's more to be done. But if I look at where we are over the course of two months in a great unknown, in the middle of a pandemic, no one could have predicted how have New Yorkers done. They've done very, very well. In terms of what that means for reopening small businesses, well, that's a foundational start to reopening small businesses. If that wasn't true, Marcia, if New Yorkers were not doing such an exceptional job at the social distancing and all the other pieces that we need we wouldn't be able to talk about reopening small business.

So, job-one is going pretty well. The indicators that we're putting out, we've been making real progress. We haven't still turned the corner the way we need to where we see those indicators go steadily, consistently down. We still have too many new cases. Too many people we're losing each day. We're not out of the woods, but we are getting closer for sure when it comes to how social distancing will help in the restart a small business unquestionably, it will be a necessary piece of it for small businesses that will have a tougher time practicing social distance. Those are the kind that will probably open later or with even more stringent rules for those, that can practice social distancing more easily. Those might be the ones that open sooner. We have not

put those final plans together. We'll be speaking about that soon, but I do see some good indicators from other parts of the world. We certainly see in Europe that there's been a very smart effort to open kinds of small business that have the greater ability to practice social distancing. Those tend to be the first wave. I think that's the kind of thing we'll be looking to do here, but details to come shortly. Commissioner Shea.

Commissioner Shea: Yeah. So on this you can plug right into a NYPD Tips, the NYPD 3-0 Precinct Twitter page, my Twitter page, there's a very good video of an individual that we're looking to identify from this incident. I can tell you that the incident occurred about 9:00 PM on Friday up in Upper Manhattan. I won't get into too specific about the victim in this case, but she was a nurse that was working, helping others on the pandemic and I have no doubt that somebody knows who this individual is. If you do, please reach out to our Crimestoppers and let's get this person off the street as quickly as possible. Thankfully the individual was fought off and fled. We have again, some good pictures, so I am sure that in short order he'll be brought to justice.

Moderator: Next, we have Julia from the Post.

Question: Hey, good morning to everyone. Hope you're all doing well. A couple of quick follow-up questions to Shant's questions on the homeless individuals who died in the subway for the Mayor and Commissioner Banks. And then Mr. Mayor, just a separate question for you on the quarantine hotels. Commissioner Banks, you said that one of the individuals tested negative. I wondered if, you know how long ago that was because of course after the negative test he could have caught the virus? And then Mr. Mayor, I'm wondering what you can say about how these deaths within 12 hours of each other – what do they say about how the City is handling the homelessness crisis during the pandemic? And then Mr. Mayor on the quarantine hotels, any update on that City investigation into the men who died in the hotel and have hospitals resumed sending people to the hotel and others? I believe that was pending because of the investigation.

Mayor: Right. We'll get you an update today, Julia, on the investigation at the time, obviously we wanted to make sure it was a very – for us it was an interesting and painful reality. Interesting in the sense that we thought we were receiving people who were fully cured – painful because we lost people that didn't make sense why we were losing them. The fact is that those individuals came out of hospitals, we understood, having fought their way through – something went wrong. We'll get to the update today on that investigation. We need to make sure that everyone is protected. So we'll also you an update on what's going on with the hotels in terms of accepting patients. One of the things we said and are doing is to have medical oversight and all facilities checking regularly on people. Again, it's so strange and troubling that someone would have left the hospital being cleared to leave and then something else still happens. So we're going to constantly have medical oversight to make sure that never happens again.

On the question of what's been happening with our street homeless, again, different reality for people in shelters, but for the street homeless, there's been a constant effort to check in on them. Commissioner Banks can tell you about the number of contacts that the street outreach teams have made. I have to tell you, the street outreach workers never stopped. Even during this pandemic, they kept going out to try and protect the lives of homeless folks. It was an incredibly

noble effort. It continues and in fact, we're able to get a number of homeless people off the streets even during this and get them into a safer location. But in general, we have seen surprisingly few instances of street homeless people appearing to have suffered from this disease. But I think it does put a point on the fact that the reality of homeless people living in subways or most of the time being in subways is just unacceptable. It's unacceptable on every level. It's inhumane. It's not right for the homeless individuals who should have a roof over their head, who should have regular access to medical care. It's not fair to straphangers. It never has been. This is why we're now on the offensive with the Journey Home initiative, which is continuing through this crisis and we'll deepen when it's over. This is why I think it's very good that we teamed up with the State and the MTA to do the closures late at night to disrupt that pattern that's been with us for decades because it's just not safe for anybody to be living on the street or living in the subways. And I want to see that end once and for all. In terms of the specifics around these individuals and the testing and anything else Commissioner Banks wants to add. Go ahead, Commissioner.

Commissioner Banks: To answer your question, Julie, the information that I gave her about the test came from the Medical Examiner's Office. So it's, it's fresh information. Just to reiterate what the Mayor said, you know, before the pentatonic, during the pandemic our teams are out there 24 hours a day, literally bringing people in off the streets. You know, there's nobody who's more impatient than I am about trying to get people to help that they need the reason why, even in the middle of academic, we're beginning to bring on more Safe Haven beds more resources to be able to bring people in. And I think the ability to connect to more people on the subways during the shutdown period will get more pathways off the streets. We were able to bring, for example, last Monday night at the World Trade Center station, we were able to bring in almost 30 people and other 30 people got back on the train. And I saw that as a lost opportunity to try to engage people. And that's why I think the initiative that the Governor and the Mayor have will give us more chances to bring more people in from the streets, which is our goal 24/7 to be able to do that and to link them to the resources that we have to get a roof over their heads and get them the services and support that that they deserve and need.

Moderator: Next, we have Todd from AM New York.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. I have a question actually for Commissioner Shea and it pertains to gatherings in regards to freedom of expression, freedom of speech. of people who have protests. Yesterday there was a protest over by Mount Sinai on First Avenue and most, there was about a dozen protestors that were there and they were gathered. They're very spread out, very spread out. Most and the media was definitely more than six feet away from the speakers and the people. And yet a lot of the cops that came over to us and came over to us were initially threatening to give summonses and arrests even though we were far enough away. Do you have a policy as to how to approach these protests with maintaining freedom of speech, but at the same time maintaining the social distancing?

Commissioner Shea: Yeah. Thank you for the question. It's – I think it's a powerful, and I think it's a great question. You know you're talking about some of the values that we hold in the highest regard in this country and certainly this city, the right to people to gather and the right of free speech and the right of protest. But now and now comes the bad news. We're in a pandemic

and there's been executive orders issued and these are not policies of the Police Department. These are now laws that have been passed down executive – through executive order to maintain people and keep people alive. So while we greatly, greatly respect the right of people to protest, there should not be protests taking place in the middle of a pandemic by gathering outside and putting people at risk. And that's the short answer.

Mayor: Yeah. And look, Todd, people who want to make their voices heard, there's plenty of ways to do it without gathering in person. And just the question is always whoever has whatever, because they want speak to, are they interested in protecting people's lives? If they are, use all the other tools you have to get your point across but avoid anything that might put other people in harm's way.

Moderator: Next we have Henry from Bloomberg.

Question: Hello, Mr. Mayor. My questions have to do with testing. I am curious as to how many people are being tested per day, how that compares with two or three weeks ago. And your data point on people who test positive, wouldn't it be completely unsurprising if the more people you test, the lower the percentage will be? So why would that be an indicator of progress? I mean, if you're testing 10,000 people and 50 people show up positive, that's one thing. But if you're testing 100 people and 50 people show up positive, that's another thing. So I'm curious as to, first of all, like, you know, what's the measure for what kind of progress is being made just in terms of quantity of testing and beyond that, you know, you mentioned the self-testing protocol. Is that moving forward or is it delayed by all kinds of logistical problems getting reagents and other supplies? That's basically the thrust of my question today.

Mayor: Okay, thank you Henry. Okay. First the factual question. So last few days we're at approximately 13,000 tests per day that is definitely progress. You go back three weeks ago we were under 10,000 a day, so we are definitely starting to ramp up. You know, when you add 3000 more per day, you're adding, you know, over 20,000 more per week. So that's a big deal. But that number has to grow a whole lot more. Unquestionably. I would respectfully disagree on the universe question because you know, we have said now for quite a while and our Health Commissioner has said that you could expect easily more than half of New Yorkers to contract this disease. So I don't think at all it is a given that if you test more and more people, your numbers inevitably go down. With every given day there's more spread of the disease and we look, we're fighting it back now that is true. If you say, well, hey, you know, isn't shelter-in-place place social distancing aren't all these things bending the curve. Obviously, they are, but we still see a substantial number of new cases each day. So, I don't think it's right to say, well, if you do more and more testing, you're always inevitably going to get a more favorable result. We want the truth, whatever it is, and the more people we test, the clearer truth we get. If we're testing more and more people and the numbers keep going down, that means something objectively is happening and that's what we're seeing more and more. And that's a really, really good sign. So I think it means that these strategies are working, that we're going to stick to them, that we're only going to let up very carefully and in a very steady fashion to not allow that resurgence or that boomerang.

But no, I think more is more here, Henry. The more we test, the clearer picture we get and if we test more and more people and the numbers keep going down, that is absolutely meaningful information. And then on the self-swab, you know, that's now being used in our health and hospitals clinics, there is some lab capacity go with it, but we need more and more lab capacity to go with it. We need more and more lab capacity in general. So this is a moving target situation. We're working with the labs to get them all to be able to handle or as many as possible of them to handle the self-swab test because they're faster and they're easier. They're better for everyone involved. They're safer. We're making progress on that front. But the big question, you mentioned the reagents, the big question is we need a massive uptick in lab capacity overall, which can only be achieved with the help of the federal government and the ability of the federal government to get the reagents in from around the world. Maximize production here in this country. Maximize production of the machines that actually are used to analyze the tests. We're still seeing a federal government is somehow is at a lower speed than everyone else when it comes to maximizing lab capacity, even though this has been an urgent issue for two months.

So, it's another case of, I don't know why the Defense Production Act is not being used more fully by the President. We're going to be at this a long time, so if he went into full gear today, it would help us for sure in the weeks and months ahead. We still don't see that. It's absolutely, I just can't understand it for the life of me, but that said, we're going to keep working with the labs and I think in general the labs are trying their best to get us the maximum capacity.

Moderator: Next, we have Andrew from NBC.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. Good morning, everyone. Hope you're doing well.

Mayor: Yes, indeed. Andrew, how you doing?

Question: I'm hanging in there. My question is about field hospitals with the closure of Javits and now Central Park. What is the status of the Billy Jean King Center? When do you plan on closing that down? And could you not be using the people currently assigned to that facility right now to do some of contact tracing that you've said is so urgent?

Mayor: Yeah, I think when we were last at the Billy Jean King Center, in fact we said that the goal would be as it was needed less to convert it to an isolation facility and exactly as you say, to use the staffing there for other needs. We'll get you an update today, Andrew, on exactly what's going on. Remember, the Billy Jean King Center is attached to Elmhurst Hospital and Queens Hospital that have really borne the brunt here. So the last I heard they still had plenty to do on the site, but if that has changed and they can start making that transition to being an isolation site, that's great. If some of the medical personnel can be used differently, that's great. We would do that as quickly as we can. So you're definitely right that we've seen a good trend the last a week or so in terms of not needing some of those facilities. But unlike the field hospitals that were only usable for our hospitals, this one was when we projected from the beginning at the right time, would be converted to being yet another place for isolation as part of a test and trace strategy. So we fully expect to see that happening in the coming days.

Moderator: Next is Yoav from The City.

Question: Hi everyone, I wanted to follow up on Ashley's questions about the incident that resulted in the three arrests. First of all, is it confirmed that the encounter started as a social-distancing enforcement? And if so, I wanted to ask more generally speaking, is that the kind of enforcement that the city wants to see, A, should plain clothes officers be involved in that enforcement? And B, do you want enforcement of groups as small as, as two individuals?

Mayor: Yoav, I've all turned to Commissioner Shea, but I appreciate the question, but I also want to call out just the logic here. Look, the NYPD again, overwhelmingly for weeks and weeks and weeks has been focusing on enforcing in communities all over the city. In situations where we needed that presence to make sure that people were safe and obviously, overwhelmingly it's been working and we do not see instances like this. This is a rarity. But clearly there was more going on here as the Commissioner just said, than a typical social-distancing enforcement situation. Commissioner, why don't you go into the details again?

Commissioner Shea: Yep. So, and that's why I was providing some context earlier. When you look at other video cameras, what it shows is before the officers arrived, you see the – I'm talking about the initial encounter now, you see an individual sitting on a milk crate, you see somebody coming up to them, them in the short conversation, the female after a short conversation steps back and is waiting. Then you see a number of other people walking by, milling about. You see a number of people not wearing masks at that scene. And that is the scene that the officers in plain clothes, as you pointed out, initially walked up to investigate. To your question about should officers in plain clothes be participating in these activities. There is no hard and fast rule, but really what it comes down to is all members of the NYPD a very active and in both warning people, educating people, and when it comes to it summoning and arresting people, which is again, very infrequently happening when you look at the totality of our interactions.

But absolutely, there is nothing that says that they should not be engaging in this. And I would just point out again, while all this social distancing is going on, crime is continuing, you know, those same officers throughout the city this weekend, engaging people participating in dice games where we recover firearms. 16 separate incidents just Saturday and Sunday, 16, where officers engaged individuals on the streets of New York City and recovered a firearm. So, you know, most of those incidents you don't hear about because the arrest is made without fanfare, without a use of force, thankfully, without any loss of life. But you know, this is just what's some of what we're seeing on the streets.

Moderator: Last two for today, next we have Jake from Gothamist.

Question: Hi there, Good morning. My first question is about the city's distribution of free masks. I think the number last week was 275,000, and I heard today it's 7.5 million. So I'm curious how that pumped up so dramatically. And then I have a question for Commissioner Shea as well. I think Ashley asked earlier about data on social distancing enforcement. We've asked NYPD as well for this multiple times. Does the NYPD have that data and would you guys commit to releasing it?

Mayor: So, Jake, I'll start and certainly as I turn to Commissioner Shea, I'll say, look, whatever data is kept on enforcement and demographics and locations in terms of neighborhood by neighborhood, we want to get out there. But I remind you again, a lot of what happens, it doesn't reach the level of something that would be formally tracked like a summons. So, the Commissioner will talk about that in a moment. The face coverings, yeah we put out a huge amount this weekend, couple of different initiatives that between them add up to several hundred thousand that we started this weekend. We have been wanting to build a sustainable approach to distributing face coverings for free to New Yorkers. In the last few days that's come together. So we're going to be distributing 7.5 million face coverings in the weeks ahead and just, we want to keep with it. We want it to be ubiquitous. There are parts of the city that were not in the initial wave this weekend. We're going to be expanding to many, many more locations as I indicated on that list. So any part of the city that's so far didn't get a lot of distribution, this weekend will see the distribution increased markedly this coming weekend and throughout the week.

But the goal here is to make it that it's really, really easy if you need a face covering, get one, which said from the beginning, people can make it out anything they have around the house and can use a scarf, a bandana, whatever, but we want it to be something where it's just constant that you're being offered face coverings as a reminder. But also for people legitimately don't have one or forgot one we want to make it ever more easy for people to have a face covering.
Commissioner?

Commissioner Shea: Yeah, we've gotten this question a couple of times in different forms. We are absolutely committed to being as transparent as possible. I would anticipate releasing a quite a bit of information detailed down to the precinct level, possibly as even as different parks. We're just working through the requests that we have received as well as you know, working it through legal. But for the reporters that are on the call listening, I would absolutely anticipate that information being released. Sorry, it's taken so long.

Moderator: Last for today we have Juliet from 1010 Wins.

Question: Oh, hi. Good morning, everyone. So, my question is specifically for Commissioner Shea. You said earlier this morning that you'll be making a lot of adjustments going forward on how to monitor and enforce social-distancing. And I've been seeing photos of the weekend of the West Village and Orchard Beach with people very close together. And I know the police department has plenty of experience with crowd control at big events and even limiting people and location. So, what are your concerns and what adjustments do you think you need to make?

Commissioner Shea: Juliet, I think we all went into this weekend with our eyes wide open that this weekend would be a particularly challenging. I think that's why we had the number of offices deployed that we did, as well as – I can tell you that behind the scenes there was an awful lot of coordination with other city agencies stood up our joint operation center as we do for large scale events such as New Year's Eve to the field the complaints that were coming in, whether it's from 3-1-1 or other sources and make sure that we were operating as efficiently and in a streamlined manner to get resources to where issues might be popping up across the city and to deal with it as quickly as possible. I went into this weekend as well, thinking that every week that we move forward, of course we're going to be making adjustments to see what areas we're seeing

increased use in parks. I don't think there's any two parks exactly alike when you look at the landscape of them, the ability to social-distance in them. So that's what I'm referring to. I expect that coming out of this weekend we'll look at what went well, what areas did we see a crowding that was a little too close and we'll make adjustments both in deployment as well as the messaging too. I think the messaging is very critical here in terms of getting the word out as early as possible by the police department in particular areas. But it should be, as always, we'll take a look at what we do with the after action reporting, try to learn from this weekend, and we'll go forward to make sure that we do everything possible to keep people safe.

Mayor: And, Juliet, let me just add, I think you know the really want to commend the NYPD, the Parks Department, all the agencies they days and days before the weekend recognized to be warmer weather, they put a whole lot of personnel out. Obviously, the face covering distribution was a very good thing. A lot of things were done right and there were a lot of places where the consistency around the social-distancing, the percentage of people wearing face coverings were very high. There clearly are some places that we experienced challenges, we have to do better, we will do better, but the Commissioners right, this is a work in progress cause we're all learning a whole new reality here. What I can guarantee you is every week we'll get better in terms of the ability to enforce more and more personnel or coming back from being sick. That's going to help us. We're learning important lessons about what works. We're going to use those lessons to figure out a template and that template will be used everywhere consistently, and I want New Yorkers to have that assurance. We are going to make sure that social-distancing works and all the other rules work so we can – that's our pathway back to normal. It has to work. We have to make it work, but it requires enforcement to do that.

Let me conclude today with a point that's really, really crucial to the future of this city and so many of the things we talked about today are about our ability to move forward, and that means getting back on our feet. That means not only thanking in so many ways our heroes from this struggle, but making sure that their jobs will be secure for the long haul, for the crucial work they do. It means providing the services we need as part of a restart and a recovery. All the things we want to do. We want to thank people, give them security, give everyone a way back. All of that hangs in the balance in the discussions happening right now in Washington DC. I want people to feel this very personally. It really comes down to what happens in these next weeks in Washington with the fourth stimulus bill will determine a lot of the future of New York City and many other cities and states all over the country.

Our nation has a simple choice. Either help cities and states back on our feet, help us move forward, or turn their back on us and leave us in a situation where we cannot even provide the most basic services to our people. This is the same discussion that's happening in cities and states all over the country, red states and blue states. Everyone's going through the same crisis. Everyone has the same question and we're not getting answers certainly from the White House. In fact, the indicators we've gotten from the White House in the last 48 hours are dangerous. And I want to quote again, I want everyone to understand. I want you to take this personally because it's aimed at you, each and every New Yorker, and it's true again for people in cities and states all over the country. Take personally when the White House Chief Economic Advisor, Larry Kudlow says, we're taking quote, this is a quote, “we're taking a pause on additional coronavirus relief.” The Chief Economic Advisor in the White House saying, you don't need any more help,

so they can afford to take a pause, like everything's just perfect right now. Or Kevin Hassett, the White House Economic Advisor, who said the President, this is a quote again, "the President is absolutely opposed to bailouts." So, if he's so absolutely opposed to bailouts, why did he give \$58 billion to the airline industry? Why did he create all sorts of giveaways to corporate America if he's so opposed to bailouts? How about a bailout for the first responders, the health care workers, the essential workers who right now are at the frontline protecting lives? Is he opposed to that? Does he want to look them in the face and say, you don't deserve help? I don't think he has the guts to do that. So why doesn't he take a stand and tell his advisors to shut up and actually come out and say, we need a stimulus four that will take care of New York and cities and states all over the country so we can get back on our feet. I mean, just think about it. It's common sense. You can't go through something like this and then snap your fingers and come out of it. You have to get some help to able to move forward and that's what our federal government's supposed to do for us.

So, I'm very frustrated what I'm hearing from the White House and I'm very frustrated the President doesn't speak up and say, nope, he should say I fully support stimulus four, I want to see our city's and states come back together, I'll be there for them. Instead, stony silence from the President and very dangerous statements from his advisors. That said, array of light here in the Congress, something much better. Over the weekend I spoke with Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who has been an extraordinary leader in this crisis. I spoke with the leading Democrat in the House from this State, Congressman Hakeem Jeffries, both of them 100 percent committed to making New York City whole and moving us forward now and in the future. And that is leadership, understanding that people are put back on our heels, you come to their defense, this heroic city that has done so much in this crisis. We only need that helping hand so we can come back and then we can help lead America's recovery because we have always led all the recoveries in the past and we're ready to do it again. So, I see different things coming out of Washington and I just hope the White House is paying attention because here's a chance to do the right thing, but what some of these people are saying is absolutely the wrong thing, and I hope when you hear it, you're as angry as I am. We're not going to – we're not going to allow this to happen. I want to be really, really clear. They are not going to do this to New York City. We're going to stand up and fight and when we fight, it counts for a whole lot.

So, everyone, thank you. Thank you for all you are doing. Thank you for the way every one of you is participating in fighting back this disease. Let's keep fighting and we can move forward together. Thanks so much.

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