

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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** March 4, 2021, 10:15 AM  
**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. Well, we have good news to start off the morning – Johnson & Johnson vaccine arriving in New York City today. We're very happy to say, doses have already arrived. And this is really important for our fight against the coronavirus. Here's the first vaccine to require only one dose to be effective – one and done. This is going to revolutionize our approach to getting people vaccinated. We have a goal of 5 million New Yorkers fully vaccinated by June. This new development is going to help us do that a lot better. So, the vaccine is here – as our health care team has said, safe, effective. As always, the vaccine is fast, it's free. I look forward myself to getting the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. And I love, love, love what Dr. Chokshi said yesterday – the best vaccine is the one you can get now – the best vaccine is the one that is available to protect you and your family.

Now, we're going to be using the Johnson & Johnson vaccine immediately to help homebound seniors. And I want to thank everyone at the FDNY. Thank you, Commissioner Nigro, and everyone at FDNY for stepping up immediately to help us vaccinate homebound seniors. FDNY has a fantastic medical capacity. They're bringing that into play, starting today at Co-Op City in the Bronx, and, starting tomorrow, Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, going to naturally occurring retirement communities, places where a lot of seniors live and some of them, sadly, are homebound and need that help, literally, house by house, apartment by apartment. That's what we're going to be doing. So, right now, outreach is being made, doors are being knocked on. Seniors who need this vaccination in their home are being identified and they're going to be reached, starting today. And that effort will grow as supply increases.

We'll get all the details out shortly, but as I mentioned the other day, and our Health Commissioner mentioned, the initial supply of Johnson & Johnson vaccine is very limited, but we expect a large supply later in the month. But this is still a big step forward and it is a good time to talk about where we stand on the overall vaccination effort. As of today, we have provided 2,104,004 vaccinations from day-one. This rate will increase, so long as we have supply. So, we've heard some really good news the last few days on supply, but the key thing is we need the supply in hand. I'm very happy to hear the projections coming out of Washington. I really appreciate what the Biden Administration is doing, but I need it in-hand as quickly as possible with as few strings attached. Again, we need our fair share of the vaccine, which we have been not been getting from the State of New York. We need less bureaucracy, more freedom vaccinate, and we need the supply in-hand. We haven't had a single week where we could hit the number that we're able to hit, which is at least half-a-million vaccinations a week. We haven't had a single week we could do it, because we didn't have the supply. Every week where we get at least half-a-million doses, we will vaccinate at least half-a-million New Yorkers.

And I think we can go farther than that in a week, but we need the supply to show up. Again today, a step in the right direction and an important moment.

Okay, now let's go to the big picture – the recovery. So, I've been talking about a recovery for all of us. A recovery for all of us means a city that works for everyone. A recovery for all of us means every neighborhood is safe, every neighborhood is a place where people can fulfill their hopes, where everyone has an opportunity. That's what we need to create. That spans all the issues – of course, health care, education, and, of course, public safety, and so many other issues. Let's talk today about public safety. Let's talk about the role it will play in our comeback. And public safety will be one of the foundations of our comeback. For six years, we had tremendous success in the city, driving down crime while working more closely with community. Police and community working together, the neighborhood policing model was proven time and time again to work – fewer arrests, less incarceration, better experiences between police and community, more training, more community involvement, was always leading us in the right direction. We had a perfect storm year last year, a very tough year, because of the pandemic. But we already see real progress being made. And so, we're going to talk about what we have learned already just in the first two months of 2021. But with that being said, it's important to set a foundation here that even though we experienced some real challenges in 2020, particularly with gun violence, in fact, if you look at all of the numbers, overall crime decreased in 2020. And the fact is, the responses that are being made right now are working more and more. The responses now are about deepening the tie between police and community, deepening neighborhood policing. You've heard a lot of different pieces that we've talked about in recent days to deepen that trust and that connection between police and community. Obviously, the discipline matrix, the effort to bring communities into the selection of precinct commanders, so many things that are going to help us move forward, but also the extraordinary efforts of the men and women of the NYPD to get guns off the street, and that has been actually at record levels – some of the most impressive efforts to get guns off the streets we've seen in the entire CompStat era, going back to 1994. So, a lot is happening. We are the safest, big city in America. We will continue to be. And it's important to see how that progress is developing, how we're using new technology as part of that effort, how we're focused on whatever new challenges we face, such as the horrible spate of crimes we've seen lately directed at Asian-American New Yorkers, which we will not tolerate. We will fight back. We will ensure all Asian-American New Yorkers are safe. Keep adjusting, that is what neighborhood policing is about, precision policing is about, and that's what we will keep doing.

I want you to hear an update from our Commissioner. I want to thank Commissioner Shea, because, as been the tradition since CompStat began to keep making the adjustments, keep refining the strategies, keep listening to communities, doing better all the time. The Commissioner will speak to you about the latest update on the battle to improve public safety in this city. And then, he'll introduce new colleagues to talk about special efforts the NYPD is making. Commissioner Shea?

**Police Commissioner Dermot Shea:** That's right. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. So, the Mayor set the stage on a number of topics. When you talk about overall crime, that I'll talk about this morning – when you talk about where we are on overall crime from the 60,000 foot-view – some struggles that we continue to have and working diligently on, such as the gun violence, that

continues to be a stubborn thing to stamp out here. Hate crimes, technology – and I'm going to be introduced in a couple of key members of our team as we go forward. So, two months into the year where we sit is, we have citywide index crimes, a decrease of over 20 percent in New York City. It's a 23 percent decrease. The one category of major index crime that we have an increase in through the first two months is a slight increase in stolen vehicles.

When you look at gun violence, gun violence coming out of last year and into this year continues to be something that we're working very hard at. I can tell you that before I came over this morning, I've reviewed the gun arrests in New York City yesterday – and over 20 just overnight, last night and yesterday in New York City by members of the NYPD out there, engaging individuals with illegal firearms, and taking them off the streets safely. So, I thank all the members of the NYPD, doing that very important and dangerous work day-in and day-out. When you look at the gun arrest that we've made in New York City, for the first two months of this year, Mr. Mayor, over a 60 percent increase over 2020, and that's pretty remarkable. So, they continue to get illegal firearms off the street and we're working extremely closely with our prosecutors to make sure that these consequences when those individuals have their day in court.

When you look at transit crime – and transit crime has come up in the news quite a bit lately – we've surged over 500 officers into the transit system each and every day of late. When you look at the major index crime in transit, it's down 59 percent for the year-to-date. We know there's a lot of factors into that, the ridership is down, etcetera, but we're seeing a lot of positive things come out of that deployment already. And I'm going to finish up and it's going to segue into some of the topics and people here with us on hate crimes. Mr. Mayor, you mentioned the hate crimes to the people of New York City that are looking, whether it's anti-Asian hate crimes, anti-LGBTQ, anti-Black, anti-Semitism, there's nothing that we take more serious than hate crimes. I'm going to introduce in a moment Deputy Inspector, Jessica Corey, the new Commanding Officer of our hate crimes unit – the largest in the country that we have here in the NYPD. But we have extremely dedicated detectives throughout the NYPD, as well as the entire NYPD membership, the most diverse police department in the world that takes this topic extremely seriously. And we work very close with all five prosecutors in New York City to make sure there's consequences when somebody is apprehended for this crime. So, overall, hate crimes in New York City are down 42 percent this year. Again, it's a year, as we know, with the COVID reality that we're in, that's a little different. But when you look at the anti-Asian hate crimes, we have six versus zero, and we're paying very special attention to that, and Jessica can get into that in a moment.

I'm going to finish, just talking about – you heard the Mayor mention technology. When you think back a year or so ago, we had a different topic going on about hate crimes and we had a rise in anti-Semitic hate crimes, particularly in Brooklyn. And at that time, we talked about strategies to combat it. And we worked very closely with the community, we did a lot of work on the investigative side, the outreach side. And we also talked about, how can technology help us? And we had a pledge at the time to install more cameras throughout New York City to help in that endeavor. I want to thank the City Council and the New York State assembly, because, as we sit here today – and the second person immediately to the left of the Mayor, is the Information Technology Bureau Deputy Commissioner Matt Fraser, and Matt has been

instrumental in the behind the scenes, helping the men and women of the NYPD, giving them the tools and the resources to use on the technology side. And I can report today that we've now installed over 200 cameras on the Mayor's action plan regarding hate crimes with more to come. And we have more to come, but I won't steal all of Matt's thunder, regarding the ShotSpotter expansion, what we think is going to help us incredibly as we combat the gun violence in New York City.

So, without further ado, let me introduce two people that are to the Mayor's left. First, Matt Fraser, the Deputy Commissioner of Information Technology Bureau in the NYPD. I'm going to let Matt speak for himself, but I can tell you that he does an incredible job day-in and day-out since joining the team. And to his left, Deputy Inspector Jessica Corey, and Jessica, again, will speak for herself, but she has recently taken over as the Commanding Officer of our Hate Crimes Unit. And again, that is the largest hate crimes unit of any police department in the country and I know that Jessica is going to do a phenomenal job. Jessica is coming from the crime-prevention work that she's done over the last couple of years, and she's a 28-year veteran of the NYPD. So, Matt, I'm going to turn it to you first, and if you could take it away.

**Deputy Commissioner Matthew Fraser, Information Technology Bureau, NYPD:** Thank you. Thank you, Commissioner. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. As the Commissioner mentioned, I'm Matt Fraser. I'm the Deputy Commissioner for Information Technology. Now, I have the honor and privilege of leading the bureau, but for all those that are watching, this is not just the job for me. I lived in – I was born and raised in New York City, born in Brooklyn. I live in Queens, today. And what – what an opportunity it is to be here to help a city that I love, a city that my family lives in become more safe and help with chronic conditions. If you go back to the past summer, I mean, we've seen an uptick in crime – we've seen a little bit of an uptick in crime. We've seen an uptake in gun violence, which is a problem that plagued the entire country. In my personal life, I had a family member that was subject to – or was a victim of violent crime, hit by a stray bullet in a park. So, I've seen firsthand the difference between having technology in the right area, what that can do in terms of getting people that are perpetrators of violent crime, versus not having technology and the level of effort that it takes to get those people within custody.

So, what we've done over the past year is we've taken – we've taken a lot of input from community, both Council Members and State Assembly, and also with members within the community itself to target both hate crime and the uptake in shooting violence. So, in particular, what we've done is, as the Commissioner mentioned, we deployed over 200 cameras, focused on the Mayor's Action Plan, dealing with the hate crime conditions within the city. And then, in addition to that, we deployed an additional 12 square miles of ShotSpotter coverage within the city.

Now, this isn't just a scattershot approach to technology, or just throwing technology at an issue. What we did is we looked at best proven technology to deal with the conditions that we had at hand. So, with ShotSpotter what we've seen historically, since its inception over the last couple of years, we look at results. So, there've been many incidents where we get a ShotSpotter alert, there's been no associated 9-1-1 phone call, there's been there's been no report, and that alert is the only thing that we have to go on. We respond to the scene. We are able to collect ballistics.

In some cases, we get into a lobby. When in the lobby, we pull surveillance video and we're able to identify the perpetrator of the crime who pulled that firearm. In addition to that, we also have in areas where we have ShotSpotter coverage, a 12 percent faster response time. So, it's more than just knowing that something happened, but it's getting there quicker so that we can react and collect and get the people that are the perpetrators of that crime.

So, when we looked at ShotSpotter, we also looked at hate crime conditions, and we looked at technology as a whole, we took a look at how we could use both the [inaudible] cameras that we deployed for the action plan, and also the ShotSpotter technology, so that we could have more informed response, or precision policing, in the event that we got an alert. So, when you look at how that materializes today, in the event that a ShotSpotter alert gets triggered, an officer that's responding will get an alert saying that that happened. They'd also have the ability to look at a surveillance camera in the area to see who may have – who may have who may have fired that weapon and the perpetrators that are involved in that. And that leads to more recoveries. And also, it leads to keeping those types of people that are perpetrators of those crimes off the street. In addition to that, if you look at what the cameras – what the Argus cameras provide as a whole is a deterrent. So, for folks that know that those cameras are present, they're less likely to commit those types of crimes. And, in addition to that, it gives us those that are seeking to get those people off of the street, the ability to see who's actually perpetrating that. So, as a whole, we have 200 cameras that we've deployed today. We have a plan to deploy 200 additional cameras. ShotSpotter's been expanded by 12 square miles. And, by the end of this month, we are going to expand by additional four square miles. Thank you.

**Mayor:** Thank you, Deputy Commissioner. Inspector?

**Deputy Inspector Jessica Corey, Hate Crimes Task Force, NYPD:** Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I want to thank Police Commissioner Shea and Chief Rodney Harrison for giving me the opportunity to serve the people of New York City in this new role. I want to ensure every New Yorker that you have the right to walk down our streets, ride our transit system, and live your every-day lives unmolested and not targeted in unprovoked attacks for the way you speak, look, or what you believe. Our team of investigators will relentlessly investigate any crimes motivated by hate and seek to bring the perpetrators to justice. For those that believe your voices are not heard, I hear you, members of our hate crimes team hear you, and the entire New York City Police Department hears you. In the coming days, weeks and months, I, along with members of my team, will be participating in a series of meetings throughout the five boroughs. And we're going to build relationships and trust with various communities and listen to your concerns. I look forward to being at your service.

**Mayor:** Thank you very much. I want thank both our colleagues, both taking have taken on important new roles. And this is how we address issues as they emerge quickly, developing new strategies, putting them into play. Deputy Commissioner, thank you – the report you've put forward on how we're going to use ShotSpotter even more, I think, it gives us a very clear picture of the impact it will make in helping to reduce shootings. And thank you for putting it in very personal perspective, and that's so important for people to understand, that everyone who serves – we're New Yorkers who are living the life of the city. We serve because we care for everyone in this city. We also experienced the realities and act on them for the good of all. And, Inspector,

thank you for all you are doing. And I can hear in your voice your commitment. And when you say we, we hear and we see the people of this city who are going through the challenge, who are experiencing the hate, especially lately the horrible hatred directed against Asian-Americans, which is thoroughly unacceptable. And I ask everyone to continue in the effort to stop Asian hate. Join us in that effort. And most especially, to report anybody who sees a hate crime or has been a victim of a hate crime. The report allows the NYPD to get to work and find who did it and ensure they don't do it again. So, we always urge people please come forward and we will support you.

Now, as we wrap all this together, important to go back to what the Commissioner said – a recovery for all of us means building that strong foundation for public safety. And again, in the month of February 2021, a substantial decrease in crime compared to February 2020, pre-pandemic. This is very important to recognize – a lot of work went into this, the hard work of the men and women of the NYPD, working with community members. That's what neighborhood policing is all about. Doubling down on neighborhood policing, and we see already the impact, because February 2021, has proven to be safer than February 2020. We're going to keep deepening this effort throughout the year. This is a big piece of how we come back this year. We're going to write a comeback story for the ages here in New York City in 2021. And the good work of the men and women of the NYPD, working with communities is going to be essential to this effort.

Okay. Let's do our indicators for today. And I'll just comment on this first one, because again, it is notable. Number one, daily number of people admitted to New York City hospitals for suspected COVID-19. Now this number again, will go up and down each day, but this is now the second day this week where we've gotten close to our threshold again, and to the possibility of going below our threshold, that's a good sign. We are not out of the woods, but that's a good sign. Today's report, 212 patients, confirmed positivity, 63.35 percent. Hospitalization rate 4.24 per 100,000. Number two, new reported cases on a seven-day average today's report, 3,270 cases. Number three, percentage of people testing positive citywide for COVID-19, seven-day rolling average, today's report 6.4 percent. I'll say a few words in Spanish. And this is going back to the original topic of vaccines.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

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

**Moderator:** Hi, all. We'll now begin our Q and A. With us today is Police Commissioner Dermot Shea, Deputy Commissioner Matt Fraser, Deputy Inspector Jessica Corey. On WebEx we have FDNY Commissioner Dan Nigro, DFTA Commissioner Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez, CEO of Health + Hospitals Dr. Mitchell Katz, DOH Commissioner Dave Chokshi – Dr. Dave Chokshi, and Senior Advisor Dr. Jay Varma. With that, we'll go to Hazel from WCBS.

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Mayor. Thanks so much for taking my question.

**Mayor:** How are you doing, Hazel?

**Question:** Good. Good. So, we're working on a story about the homeless problem in the subway system, which has clearly gotten worse. Now we've heard from commuters who have seen blatant drug abuse and many others in the homeless population who are mentally ill. Now, one of the issues contributing to the problem is the lack of services, or more on point the lack of access to services. Many, if not, most of the counseling services to address substance abuse and mental illness were in-person before the pandemic, but are now remote. So, most of the homeless, they don't have access to technology, no phones, no iPads, internet. And a lot of them are afraid to go into the shelter system to gain access to any kind of technology. So, so far we've reached out to Thrive. They've declined to comment for our story. We also reached out to HRA, DSS, multiple times over the last week, asking to speak with Commissioner Banks, but no one will even respond to our emails. So, I'm hoping you can help us out? What will the City do to respond to these issues with the homeless and the access to services?

**Mayor:** Hazel, look, let me start just on the point about – I, obviously we want everyone to respond to these issues and it's not typical that folks at Social Services and folks at Thrive wouldn't be responding. So, whatever that was, we got to fix that. We'll make sure our press team connects you with people today, including Commissioner Banks. And please if you ever have that problem, I very much want all agencies to respond because we have a lot to say. So anytime that's not happening, please let the City Hall Press Office know, and we will fix that immediately. Let me say this, I want to turn in this instance to Dr. Mitch Katz in a moment, because he's been very, very involved in the issue. And in fact, I respect your question Hazel, but I disagree with one part of it, which is that there are not places for people to turn in-person. There are many places for people to turn in-person, including Health + Hospitals' hospitals and clinics. They have been doing a lot to help homeless folks with substance abuse issues and mental health issues and especially the Safe Havens. And in fact, Hazel, I would say to you honestly, everyone's deeply concerned about homelessness in the subways. We're feeling it, but I don't agree with the characterization because there are so many hundreds of outreach workers out there all the time, who during the pandemic kept going out and succeeded in bringing hundreds of hundreds of people off the street. And we'd reported this many times Hazel, and we'll go back and show you the data. When the beginning of the shutdown of the subways for the overnight cleaning, a huge number of homeless folks actually accepted services, went into Safe Havens, stayed into – stayed in Safe Havens. Got help, did not go back to the street. Daily News did a really important editorial on this a couple of weeks ago. So, that has been working better than we experienced before the pandemic in truth. We have more Safe Havens. We just announced another Safe Haven, a thousand more Safe Haven beds. That strategy has been working to get folks off the street. And Safe Havens work because there's mental health support and substance misuse support in the facilities. So, no, in fact, there's a lot of help available in-person. And I want Dr. Katz to talk about the work that the extraordinary health care heroes at Health + Hospitals do, if someone homeless is brought to them, because there's a problem they provide that kind of support. Dr. Katz, could you speak to that?

**President and CEO Mitchell Katz, NYC Health + Hospitals:** Yes. Thank you, sir. And Health + Hospitals considers taking care of people who are homeless, the very top of our agenda and mission. And all of our facilities will connect patients who are homeless to Safe Haven beds. We have a great relationship with the Department of Homeless Services. We do a warm handoff,

where we call them. We tell them about the person. They actually will come to our facilities and, with transportation to bring the person there. Meanwhile, we connect them to substance treatment programs, if that's their issue. All of our emergency rooms are – will start emergency treatment for people who have opioid addictions. All of our emergency rooms have mental health support. We will see people short term. We will connect them, long term. I've been on the streets myself with outreach workers, and I think New York City, you know, having come from San Francisco and Los Angeles, I think New York City has a much more robust and meaningful effort to help people from the streets, to get the help they need. Thank you, sir.

**Mayor:** Thank you. Go ahead. Hazel

**Question:** We've spoken to the family of a woman by the name of Gladys Leddy in Washington Heights. She's 87 years old, has Alzheimer's, Diabetes. She's non-communicative and homebound. Now, her family is so desperate to get her vaccinated because leaving home for her is not an option. They've really struggled to even get an appointment. So, if you are a homebound senior now, or a family member of a homebound senior, how do you get that senior on the list for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine?

**Mayor:** So, we're just starting the effort now. I'm going to, we have with us our Fire Commissioner Dan Nigro, and our Commissioner for the Aging Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez. Everyone is coordinating to set up a specific path to get as many homebound seniors vaccinated as possible. Now, again, we're getting a small number of doses to begin, but a lot more later in the month. But what we're going to be do – is moving, do – is to move area by area. So, we're starting with Co-Op City, which is an area, obviously 40,000 or more people in one place. We can get a lot done there. As I mentioned, Brighton Beach will be next. We're going to moving around to different areas. Commissioner Nigro or Commissioner Cortés-Vázquez, you want to add anything about the next steps or how people can get information? And again, Hazel, we will be announcing further details shortly on the sign-up process. But Commissioner Nigro or Commissioner Cortés-Vázquez, you want to add? Okay. So, may be muted.

**Commissioner Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez, Department for the Aging:** Yes. I'd be more than happy to. Thank you very much. And thank you for the question. We have about 20,000 homebound older adults. And we are just planning a rollout with the support of the Fire Department, which we're really grateful for this partnership. How we are identifying them through either home care agencies, home delivered meals programs, and we're calling those families and making arrangements for them to schedule an appointment and get the vaccine delivery by the police – I mean, by the Fire Department, I'm sorry about that. And we're also working through our senior adult providers. There are about [inaudible] 28 of them throughout the city and who are all identifying individuals who have difficulty leaving their homes. And who, what we call, are unable to be transported out. So, that is how we're doing it. If you need further information, please feel free to contact me. And I will make sure that we get your mother connected to – or get that family's mother connected to a local agency so that we can schedule an appointment as immediately as possible. What we do is, and Commissioner Nigro, you can take it from here, is the Fire Department gets a list of individuals and then they go out and actually vaccinate those individuals placed on the roster. I leave it to you, Commissioner Nigro.



**Fire Commissioner Daniel Nigro:** Lorraine, I think you explained it quite well. We will get the list from your folks. So, there's actually two, two separate ways here. The one that the Mayor explained, which is a location in Co-Op City. And then there will be mobile units in which a nurse will arrive at locations where people cannot leave their home or their apartment and we will do the vaccinations in that manner. So, as we move forward, we'll certainly advertise more and more how any of these homebound folks can get in touch with us and ensure that they get vaccinated as they should.

**Mayor:** That's great. Thank you, both Commissioners and Hazel, thank you for raising the concern on behalf of that family. And we'll make sure our team follows up with you today so we can make sure that she gets vaccinated quickly. And I appreciate you advocating for that family. Okay.

**Moderator:** Next we'll go to Dave from WABC.

**Question:** Hi Mayor, can you hear me?

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

**Question:** I'm doing fine. Hey, I just wanted to ask you, I don't know if you had a – I'm sure you were busy yesterday, but I wanted to see if you had a chance to watch the Governor yesterday, what you thought of his apology? And also, I was a little bit surprised, I didn't know if you were that he seemed to take you know, given his circumstances, he still took a shot at the City and how it's doing. What'd you think?

**Mayor:** I think he was disrespectful to the people of New York City. Look, this city has been heroic. The people of this city have been heroic. This city fought through being the epicenter of this crisis, came back, you know, we created the biggest Test and Trace Corps in America. We brought back our public schools, the men and women of the NYPD have been out there doing extraordinary work getting guns off the street. People in this city are fighting back and we are recovering quickly, strongly. And you would think any governor would support that and celebrate that, not denigrate it. But, clearly, he's trying to distract attention from his own problems. He's got three women who have brought forward allegations of inappropriate activity and sexual harassment. He has a nursing home scandal and a coverup related to that scandal. He's trying to distract attention away from that. And people are smarter than that. They understand that everyone in this city is moving heaven and Earth to come back strong. He should address his own problems, not try and put down the people of New York City. Go ahead, Dave.

**Question:** Mayor, just as a follow up, I know the last time that we asked you about his previous apology, you said, come on, that's not an apology. Did you think that this overall apology was more sincere, more believable? Give it a grade?

**Mayor:** I don't do grades. I'll just answer no. No, I don't think it changes anything. Go ahead.

**Moderator:** Next we'll go to Dana from the New York Times.

**Question:** Mayor, I, you know, I was wondering, you've talked a lot about the Governor being a bully. And I was wondering if you could share specific details about an incident where you personally felt particularly bullied by him? An incident that you think sort of illustrates the point?

**Mayor:** Look, thank you for the question, Dana. I'm not going to be able to throw out a vignette on a moment's notice. I can certainly say that reports, for example, demanding that people be fired, absolutely that's happened, which is absolutely inappropriate. You know, the whole concept of using power in that fashion rather than trying to solve problems. This has been my concern from the beginning. And I've talked about this back in 2015. He doesn't say, how do we work together to solve the issues of homelessness? That's never the conversation. It's always something about what he needs. And this should be about the people. This should be about what the people need. That's the sad part of the reality here. It's not just to think about this, is this bad behavior. It's what does it lead to? What happens in the end? The people lose is what's happening. The people lose because we don't get the help we need. Back in 2015 I talked about the fact that, you know, a lot of the issues revolved around our kids, our schools, and not getting the help we needed. So, when we think about this kind of bullying attitude or approach, don't just dwell on the personality feature. Let's talk about what it leads to. A lot of times it leads to working people being left out of the equation. And that's what troubles me the most. Go ahead, Dana.

**Question:** Thanks. And on another topic, it's been several weeks since the federal appeals court upheld the replication of 50-a. Do you have a timeline yet for releasing police disciplinary records?

**Mayor:** Yes, absolutely. In fact, your timing is impeccable Dana. The court made a judgment and then our Corporation Counsel said we're ready to release. Can we confirm that everything has been adjudicated and we can release? And the court wanted us to hold while they gave us a formal judgment. We got that formal judgment last night around I think, 6:00 PM. And so the release of the 50-a data will begin by the NYPD next week. And I believe the CCRB will be acting literally today, tomorrow. So, that release is now finally going forward. This is a day we've all been working for, for a long time. Not only this Commissioner, but the two commissioners before him, all said that the 50-a law, the way it was written, was not helping us build public trust. Thank God, that law was changed last year. We would have released a long time ago, but for the court case brought by some of the unions, but now the court has been clear. We are absolutely authorized to release and that release will begin immediately. Go ahead.

**Moderator:** Next is Kristen from the Staten Island Advance.

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Mayor, how are you?

**Mayor:** Good, Kristen. How you been?

**Question:** I'm good. I'm good. So, on the vaccine front. Now that we've gotten Johnson & Johnson vaccines, I know you said it was a small amount, can you tell me the total number of

vaccine doses – that’s Johnson & Johnson, Moderna and Pfizer that the City is now getting weekly?

**Mayor:** Yes, I'll turn to Dr. Chokshi, but let me just give you an update because I've gotten a further detail in the last minutes. We have now 16,300 doses of Johnson & Johnson in hand, 8,000 more in transit. I don't have the exact arrival date. For the first two weeks, we expect it to be something like 71,000. But again, that's very helpful, but much less than we expect to see later toward the end of the month. We hope that will be a much, much bigger number. But that's going to be helpful. Even 71,000 moves us forward. It doesn't get us where we need to be, which is a total of, you know, half a million or more doses per week that we can fully utilize, all different vaccines together. But Dr. Chokshi, can you talk about what this puts us on a rate for how many doses we'll have available this week?

**Commissioner Dave Chokshi, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene:** Yes, sir. I'll be happy to. And as you said, Johnson & Johnson is a bit of a different situation than the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines with respect to supply. So, Johnson & Johnson for the first two weeks, that's this week and next week, we expect about 71,000 doses, total, as the Mayor mentioned. We think that through the middle of March it will be a relatively low number with respect to Johnson & Johnson doses before picking up in terms of supply by the end of March. And then moving to Pfizer and Moderna, we're getting about 190,000 first doses for New York City, between those two vaccines. It's split between them and we're getting slightly more Pfizer than Moderna overall. So, we hope those numbers will also pick up over the weeks in March and then really have a more significant uptick in April.

**Mayor:** Dave, could you give us roughly what you think your grand total for the week will be for this week?

**Commissioner Chokshi:** Yes, sir. So, that would be about 190,000 first doses of Pfizer and Moderna. And we expect about 30,000 doses of Johnson & Johnson through the weekend. So, that would be a total of about 220,000 first doses acknowledging that Johnson & Johnson is only a one-dose vaccine. And then there are some additional second doses as well for people who are slated to receive them this week.

**Mayor:** Thank you. Go ahead, Kristin.

**Question:** Great. Thank you so much. And a few weeks ago, the City Department – you know the parks and wildlife unit released a report titled Managing Deer Impacts on Staten Island, with the four years of data from the deer vasectomy program. It says there's been a sizable decrease in the total deer population on Staten Island, but it's still too soon to tell if the program is a success. So far, it's caused double the estimated amount at about \$6.6 million. And while the population has been reduced, you know, the deer is still killing the ecosystem within the borough's parks and without continued maintenance of this program, the deer population will eventually come back. So, have you seen this report, and do you still stand by the decision for the vasectomy program instead of a controlled [inaudible] which may have taken care of all of those problems created by the deer?

**Mayor:** Yeah. Thank you, Kristin. Look very quick and simple, I have not seen the report in detail. I'm certainly familiar with what we've seen over the years though, and it's the right approach. It's not a perfect approach. It's just the best approach we have. And other approaches, we've looked at a variety of things. We find a lot of unintended consequences, a lot of problems. This is the single best approach, and it will have more and more impact over time, and we will keep funding it. We have to, we have to keep that continuity. I very much appreciate your point. We can't let up on it for it to work. But in a world of imperfect choices, this is the best choice and the best approach. And I think it will yield more and more results each year. Go ahead.

**Moderator:** Next is Reuven from The City.

**Question:** Yeah. Firstly, thanks for allowing us to do two questions. I really appreciate the setup.

**Mayor:** Absolutely.

**Question:** My first question is just pretty technical. I was wondering if you can tell me when the last time you visited Rikers Island or a City jail.

**Mayor:** I was at Rikers Island, I think it was 2019, but let me get folks to confirm that to you. I've been out there, I think three or four times in the time I've been mayor, but we'll get to the update on that. Go ahead.

**Question:** Appreciate that. My follow-up is on a similar vein, the Department of Correction is defying the city's jail watchdog, you know, the Board of Correction, by insisting on punishing young adults and locking them in solitary cells for up to 17 hours a day and shackling some of them to desks during the brief time out. Last summer, you promised a working group that would give recommendations on how to end solitary in the fall. But those proposed changes, which have not been made public, have been stuck in review by the Law Department for weeks. How do you kind of explain, you know, that you decided to end solitary, you made – you know, make a big pronouncement and now you're actually, you know, using emergency powers to extend it for young adults in Rikers?

**Mayor:** Well, I wouldn't agree with – I respect the question, but I wouldn't agree with that characterization at all. It was a major, major announcement for the City of New York, the largest city in the country, to say we are ending solitary confinement. We are, in fact, ending solitary confinement that will happen this year. That will happen soon, but there was a lot to work out, a lot of legal issues, a lot of issues about how to keep everyone safe. And that means officers and those who are incarcerated alike. The big news here is that solitary confinement will no longer be used in New York City. And the last steps in that process are going to be coming very soon. And then what I would say to everyone is when you see the biggest city in a country that has consistently reduced incarceration overall and proven that we could be safe with less and less incarceration, that we've provided more training and education to those who are incarcerated than ever before, transitional jobs to help people get back on their feet, and then on top of that, we proved that you can end solitary confinement. That's the story. And I hope it will be emulated around the country. Go ahead.

**Moderator:** Next is Andrew from WNBC.

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Mayor, and everyone on the call. If I can just circle back to what Dave asked about your impression of the Governor's remarks. I watched the remarks, and it didn't seem like he was denigrating the people of New York City. If we're being clear, wasn't he denigrating you? Wasn't this a comment about your leadership by mentioning the conditions of the city or did you take it a different way?

**Mayor:** Oh, I definitely take it a different way. As leaders, it's our responsibility to support our people, to respect our people. You have to have empathy. You have to have feelings for the people. You can't be just obsessed with yourself. You have to be about the people. When you see the people in New York City heroically fighting back, the health care heroes, the first responders, the Test and Trace Corps, the educators who brought back our schools, you can only look at that and say, thank you and congratulations, you're doing exactly what it takes to bring back a great city. When you look at the jobs coming back, when you look at all the folks who are saying, we're doubling down, we're committed to New York City. Any leader should say, thank you, that's right, we're moving forward. But to paint an apocalyptic picture – I mean, that's what Donald Trump would have done – you know, throw out some sharp terminologies and gaudy pictures of what's happening that don't resemble the reality. Look at this city, go around the neighborhoods of the city, people are fighting back. Neighborhoods are vibrant, we're turning the corner. That's what leaders should celebrate. And if they're not there must be an ulterior motive. And the ulterior motive is he doesn't want to talk about the nursing home scandal, the cover up of the facts with the nursing homes. He doesn't want to speak to the families who have lost their loved ones. He doesn't want to speak about the three women who have accused him of sexual harassment. That's what's really going on here. Go ahead, Andrew.

**Question:** You did say that a leader needs to get out there and answer questions, and he did do that yesterday. So, I'm wondering on that level, this is something you said he needed to do, and he did it. What does he need to do next?

**Mayor:** To me, full cooperation with all of these investigations, in every way acknowledge what has happened here. And we still haven't heard that truly. And I don't think this is over. I think we're going to get more and more information. So, the bottom line is we can't move forward if there isn't full honesty about what happened and a full acknowledgement of the suffering that has been caused. And we're nowhere close to that at this point. Go ahead.

**Moderator:** We have time for two more first. We'll go to Michael from the Daily News.

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Mayor.

**Mayor:** Good morning, Michael. How you been?

**Question:** I'm all right. I'm all right. So back on the Cuomo questions here, you said yesterday for him to remain in office, he has to govern, and he has to answer questions every day. Could you just give us some more detail on what that means? I mean, what, from your perspective, does

he need to do to remain effective in office? You know Andrew just mentioned facing the press yesterday. I mean, moving forward, what does he need to do to be kind of an effective leader in government for him to, from your perspective, remain in that job?

**Mayor:** Look, I'd say, let's go to the big picture here. Effective leaders treat the Legislature with respect, treat county executives with respect, mayors with respect, and listen to the voices of people. There's a lot of things that need to happen and often happen. But restoring local control is absolutely necessary here. And I would've said that before all these scandals, I was saying that before all these scandals. To be a leader, sometimes, guess what, you have to share. You have to work with other people. You have to respect what's happening on the ground in communities. It's not just about one person. It's about the people as a whole. So, you know, I think something that would be an act of real respect for the people of New York State would be to restore full local control so all of us closest to the ground can get back to work doing what we do. Look, we have an incredible health care team. We've got Dr. Chokshi on the team, Dr. Varma, Dr. Katz. Respect the health care professionals, whether they're in Albany or in counties around the state, or cities around the state, respect the health care professionals, listen to them, follow their guidance. That's the kind of thing that would help us move forward. Go ahead, Michael.

**Question:** Okay. Just a follow up to that. So, I mean, if the Governor doesn't restore local control do you then envision calling on him to step down?

**Mayor:** Michael, that's not what I'm saying. I'm saying the right thing – you asked the question, what would it be like to actually effectively govern? We have more work to do to overcome this pandemic, but we're in a totally different situation than we were a year ago. And this city is recovering and recovering rapidly. Important fact, our OMB estimates are that we will have 4.5 million jobs in the city by the end of the year, the recovery is happening now. We could do more if we had more freedom to vaccinate, more ability to make our own decisions and move quickly, we need local control to do that. So, that's what good government would look like at this point, restoring the rule of law as it was, restoring the normalcy of government so we can get our job done. That's an example of smart, good government at this point in history,

**Moderator:** For our last question, we'll go to Nolan from the Post.

**Mayor:** Nolan?

**Question:** Yes. Can you hear me?

**Mayor:** There you go. How are you doing, man? How are you doing?

**Question:** I'm all right. I'm all right. How are you?

**Mayor:** I'm hanging in.

**Question:** I was – you haven't explicitly ruled it out, so I figured I'd ask you, do you think you'd be a good governor?

**Mayor:** Nolan, Nolan, Nolan. Nolan, I – look, you watch these briefings every single day. I hope you can tell whatever aspect of the COVID crisis you asked me about, I'm deep in fighting back this crisis, working with our health care team, working with the people of the city to bring this city back strong. That's what I'm doing. That's where I'm focused on. The future will take care of itself. I'm focused on bringing the city back. Go ahead, Nolan.

**Question:** Well, the answer reminds me a lot of the answer you were providing in the run-up to 2019. That sort of – to that idea, to the idea of managing a huge bureaucracy, you've been talking about how it's important to treat colleagues and to treat subordinates with respect. And you've been blasting the Governor over his bullying of his staff and of lawmakers. There've been a lot of reports and talking to a lot of staffers of yours who say that you have your own tendencies when it comes to managing work. The Governor is a screamer. You're someone who can be deeply personally insulting, and you leave people questioning their self-doubt, oftentimes after interactions with you, especially if things haven't gone exactly to script. So, do you think that management style works, and have you adjusted it at all since many staffers went public with it in all of those open letters during the summer?

**Mayor:** Yeah. Nolan, I don't agree with any of your characterization with all due respect. There's a very, very intense place, but it's a place where we focus on collegiality and a team environment. We have to get a huge amount done. There's no place like New York City Hall in terms of how much has to get done each day, the intensity of the issues, the importance of the issues. It is a tough environment, but we all work together, and we have a team that reflects this entire city and, yeah, we have intense conversations, but I'll tell you one thing, even when I'm putting people through the paces, I ask everyone's view and opinion. One of the things I cherish is, I say the way we do things is everyone gets to recommend the course of action, which I think is highly respectful of people. I say, I want to hear what you think we should do. And that's how every meeting proceeds. And then I challenge to see if I think it's the right idea. And I test to see if it holds water, when we put things through the paces, and that should be an exacting process. But it's a process where I start by respecting the professionalism and the intelligence of the people in the room. And I think that's allowed us to do great things. That's why we got to Pre-K for All in record time, people literally said – go back and check all the coverage, Nolan – they said there was no way in hell we can have pre-K for every child in New York City and do it as quickly as we did it. But we did. You go over, you know, our affordable housing plan. People said it was going to be impossible. We got it done on pace, and in fact, we added 50 percent more. No one said, you know, wow, you guys are going to be able to bring down crime while reducing incarceration, while reducing the number of arrests, while implementing neighborhood policing, you're not going to be able to do all that. We did all that. And then this year, this last year building the biggest Test and Trace Corps in the country, bringing back the public schools when people said it couldn't be done. It took a lot of work, but I submit to you that the leadership approach I use gets things done because I choose great people. I ask them to show me the way, I put them through their paces, we come to an agreement, and then we move. And that's why we could do all these things.

So, everyone, look, this is a perfect segue to the last thing I want to say, which is New York City's moving forward. We've got momentum. We've got momentum in our vaccination effort. We have well over two million vaccinations and that's going to grow rapidly. We've got

momentum in bringing our economy back. As I said, we're on track to get to 4.5 million jobs in the city by the end of the year. We've got momentum in deepening public safety, great work of the men and women of the NYPD, more and more engagement with communities, deepening neighborhood policing, and more reforms to come as well. So, this is a city on the move, and I guarantee you, you're going to see amazing things happen in 2021. And you're going to see a recovery for all of us. Thank you, everyone.

###