

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 3, 2020, 9:30 AM

CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well, good morning, everybody. I want to start by thanking the men and women of the NYPD and the Parks Department and all of the agencies that had our enforcement agents out yesterday, all over the city in large numbers, out there protecting people's lives by making sure there were no large gatherings by making sure that social distancing was being enforced. I am so appreciative for everyone who is out there from all those agencies who are giving out face coverings and I know people really appreciated that, a great effort yesterday and only a beginning because as more and more members of NYPD are coming back on the job, some of whom of course were sick, some of whom are still fighting against this disease or even in the hospital. And our thoughts, our prayers with all of them, all the people who work for the city on behalf of you who are still fighting this disease, our hearts and prayers are with all of them, all of you, all of your families. But what I am so proud of yesterday was a strong effort across the whole city by the NYPD, the Parks Department, all of these agencies to make sure that these rules are being enforced, to make sure people had what they needed. And this is just the beginning. More will come as we get more and more personnel back and we're going to deepen these efforts are going to be more and more efforts to give out those face coverings, more and more efforts to educate people. But as I've made very, very clear and Commissioner Shea has made very clear, more and more enforcement efforts as well in every single part of the city.

Now I have to put that in context. We of course need enforcement is part of life, but the big story here is what New Yorkers have done right. There's always going to be exceptions. There's always going to be some people who don't get the message or are thinking about themselves and not other people, but the vast majority of New Yorkers have really risen to the challenge powerfully. I want to thank you. It's been amazing to watch how carefully the vast majority of you are going about social distancing. How many people are already wearing face coverings – not perfect yet, but by the way, this is something we would never have imagined just a few weeks ago. But when you go out there, you see, and I've been able to, it's all over the city in the last a week or two, noticing that the vast majority of people wearing face coverings, and we're going to make that easier and easier, but people are doing it right overwhelmingly, we need people to stick with it. We need anyone who hasn't gotten the memo to get the memo because that's the only way we're going to get through this. But New Yorkers, you have a lot to be proud of. And that's the big story here.

Now it's important to always remember the direct connection between what you do and what happens to the whole city, and what happens to our future. It comes back to those indicators we go over each day now on Friday, I talked about what we had seen over the last few weeks and it's overwhelmingly good news. We know we're not out of the woods yet, but it's good news for

sure. But today I want to focus on the challenge. What today I want you to understand that when I talk about the danger of this disease reasserting, it's not an idle idea. It's not an idea somewhere someone just thought about, but it's never happened. It's an idea that unfortunately comes from the real-life experience that we've seen in other parts of the world. This danger that if you let your guard down, the disease can reassert and setback everything. So, when New Yorkers think about the question I hear so often from people, how do we get back to normal? I want you to think about it is every one of us that gets us back to normal. It's your responsibility. It's my responsibility. It's all of our responsibility to get back to normal. We all play a role in this effort.

And when you think about what would it mean if we didn't do it right, what should we be afraid of? What should motivate us not just because we want to do the right thing and we want to get back to normal? What should be motivating us to be aware of, to be worried about that will keep us, keep us on the mission, keep us focused, and I'll come back to that ugly word, that dirty word I mentioned the other day. Boomerang. That's the word I want you to think about when you think about what could go wrong. I've told you a lot about what's gone right, but I want you to look at that image of the boomerang, get it in your mind and think about, that's the thing you do not want. We cannot afford a boomerang with this disease in this city. Now it's a ferocious disease. I think we've all established the all have seen painfully so many of us have experienced in our own families and our own lives why it's such a dangerous disease, and this is not a disease that will just walk away and leave us alone and go quietly into the night. No, we're going to have to fight it back if we want to rid ourselves of it.

Look, the danger is a bounce back, a boomerang where the disease seems to be going away and then reasserts and the cases come on more and more and the numbers go up and more and more people are afflicted and that would set back a restart and a recovery by a long time. And I'll give you real examples to you what's happened some other places where that's exactly the problem they had. They jumped too soon in various ways and then their restart and recovery took a lot longer. So now the question I'm sure you will ask yourself as well, what can I do to make sure we don't have that boomerang to make sure we don't have that happen here? And the answer is that we need to stick with what's working. We need to understand that the restrictions in place are working and that they only get relaxed carefully and slowly. There's no on-off switch here. It's not like you have all the restrictions one day and the next day you're back to normal. I don't think people even expect that anymore. I think people understand we'll be fighting this disease in different ways for quite a while. Doesn't mean we can't start to get more normal, but it means job one is to beat back the disease. So, since it's not on-off, we would do things in careful stages and make sure that each step we take is working before we take the next step. We have to do this to protect our people. We have to do this to make sure our hospitals are not overwhelmed and they can be there to save our lives. We have to do this so we can restart and recover.

Now I told you when I talked to you about this image and I now hope it's really in your mind, the boomerang. It's not abstraction because it's actually happened in other parts of the world. I want to give you those examples. So, the place to look is to Asia because they have been through many experiences that prepared them for the coronavirus. Many parts of Asia went through SARS and the bird flu in different challenges and we can learn from their experiences – it helps us to understand our future and how we can get it right and what not to do as well.

So many, many parts of Asia have done smart strategies, but they also have made those missteps at times that are instructive to all of us. And the smallest misstep, the smallest weakness is exploited by this disease. So, I'm going to give you three examples of a boomerang and we can learn from each one. First, let's go to Japan. And the lesson of Japan is don't come back too early. This is a raging discussion in our own country right now is some states are rushing to restart and it looks to me like some of them are doing it without a lot of evidence, without a lot of health care indicators to tell them what's really going on. And I'm hoping and praying for them that doesn't backfire horribly on the people of those states. In Japan, there is the example, the region of Hokkaido and it was a region that had initially experience with the coronavirus. And then late in February, after having only about 70 cases, this region declared a state of emergency. For three weeks, there was a lockdown in Hokkaido. And again, I emphasized just three weeks, at which point it seemed like the disease had been contained. Now we all know three weeks is not a long time. So, after three weeks, the lockdown was lifted on March 19th and it wasn't lifted gradually. It was lifted rather abruptly. So schools were reopened, public gatherings were allowed again, there were still some restrictions, but some of the biggest indicators, if you will, some of the places where people get together the most, like our schools and public gatherings, those were the places that somehow were allowed again, almost instantly. 26 days later, there was a surge in cases again in Hokkaido, and guess what they had to do very sadly, they had to go right back to stringent restrictions. And that's what they're still experiencing now. So that's one case study of a place that thought they had it beat, didn't necessarily wait a long time to make that conclusion and then went very fast back into a restart and now unfortunately are paying for it.

Now let's look to Hong Kong. Hong Kong is an example of how even if things look better, small levels of activity can suddenly grow into something much worse. So, by early March it looked like Hong Kong was pretty much done with the disease and normal life resumed. Travelers started returning home to Hong Kong. People were allowed to go out again. Nightlife started again, obviously very, very active nightlife in Hong Kong, a city very much like New York City, lots of bars, lots of restaurants, clubs. People went back out and in late March the cases started to surge. What happened, the government had to now in Hong Kong put a variety of new restrictions in place, restricting travel, restricting gatherings, schools, all sorts of places people went, those restrictions had to be asserted again and then in April even more had to be added. So again, an example of a city very much like ours that found they had to put back restrictions and then go even farther. The last thing we want to see here again, our job is to have a clear, steady march forward, as steady as it can be when time comes to relax restrictions, relax them, and get it right once and for all and never have that boomerang effect.

One more example, Singapore. Now Singapore has been lauded for doing a lot of things the right way early on in this crisis. By the middle of March, there were relatively few cases, Singapore was getting a lot of praise for a very strong, focused effort to address this disease. But again, not every part of the equation apparently was considered in Singapore. And one of the things that typifies Singapore is there's a number of migrant workers and they live in dormitories. The dormitories were allowed to fill up. By late April, there are hundreds of new cases of the coronavirus and the government had to impose a two week stay at home order and now has even increased restrictions on schools and restaurants and other types of public gatherings.

So, three case studies. What they have in common is they're all examples of the dangers that exist if the restart goes the wrong way, and if that boomerang effect is allowed to happen and it's a reminder that we have to be vigilant because even a small number of cases can lead to that resurgence if the right restrictions aren't in place. It's also a reminder that what we're building up – the massive testing apparatus and tracing apparatus and the ability to isolate people, quarantine people, that has to be stronger and stronger all the time to make sure we put the disease in check and keep it in check. So, the bottom line is we have to get this right

Now, testing, as I said, testing is the key. Testing has always been the key and I'm going to talk to you now about something exciting happening right here in this city to make sure that we will have what it takes for wide-scale testing. As of this week, we have begun the process of producing test kits here in New York City and this is a first in our city's history because this was not a place like so many other parts of America that thought we had to have our own medical supplies and medical equipment built right here. But we've learned a tough lesson that we have to create and we have to protect ourselves. That's why we're going to have a strategic reserve going forward for New York City to protect New York City. So, for the first time we are producing now test kits in New York City and this has had to be put together very quickly. A lot of partners brought together a lot of different moving parts that had to be made since that has never been done before. So, we're really an uncharted territory creating these test kits in New York City. And I will tell you like so many other things we've been working on. There'll be moments when we have to figure things out. Sometimes there'll be times when we have to try something even if it doesn't work, try something else until we get there because we are in uncharted territory, but we are confident that we're making progress and we're confident that we're going to have test kit production in this city. That's going to be a key part of what we do going forward. Now, at one point I talked about a test kit and I use an analogy to a cup of coffee. If you want a cup of coffee with milk and sugar, you need a cup, you need water, you need coffee beans, you need sugar, you need cream. You need all the things that allow you to make a cup of coffee the way you want it.

Well, a test kit has something in common with that. You need three parts for a test kit. For the PCR test, the diagnostic test for the coronavirus. You need the swabs to take the actual sample. You need the transport medium, which is what keeps the sample in place on the way to the lab. And you need the screw top tubes to protect the sample from any contamination. So what the lab gets will be accurate. Well, the good news is these screw top tubes are something we have plenty of access to, but the two challenges where the swabs and the transport medium, the fluid that you actually keep the sample in. So the swabs, well, a painful, painful irony that the entire world experienced a shortage of these swabs starting over the last month. Why? Because almost all of them were made in Northern Italy. That turned out to be one of the epicenters of the global crisis. We realized we had to find another source. The global market wasn't working, there weren't sources around this country that were reliable enough. So, we decided we would make our own and this small piece of plastic here it, it's long. I want to remind you that way. This works is it is put literally biomedical professional well up your nose. So, it is a very careful effort that has to be done by someone that knows what they're doing. But this seemingly simple piece of plastic actually proved to be a complex matter because it has to be done just the right way and it has to be kept sterile in packaging like this until the point when it's actually used on a patient. So, getting this right proved to be actually a complex matter. But again, there's tremendous talent in

this city and so many people, so many companies, so many partners who came forward and said, we want to get this done because we know it'll save lives in our city.

So, our local partner is Print Parts, a 3D printing company and they are using designs like this one that have been clinically validated. In this case, we found a partner in the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston and another partner in Envision Tech, which is a medical 3D printing firm. So, we put together a coalition of different organizations to help us get this right. Now, how many when, well 30,000 will be delivered by this Friday and then we'll be on a track thereafter for 50,000 a week. Now, I mentioned what's called a transport medium, this is the fluid that the samples are kept in our local partners at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, a great New York City institution. They worked with what you might call a recipe, which follows a CDC-approved protocol, and the first batch of this transport medium will be produced this week in New York City. Still has to go through a validation process, so that's going to take a little more time. But by the week of May 17th we will begin to pair the locally made swabs with a locally made transport medium and then like that cup of coffee, we'll have all the pieces come together and for the first time in the city's history, we will have our own test kits produced in large numbers right here in the five boroughs.

In the meantime, we're not going to wait. That initial set of 30,000 swabs. That'll be delivered by Friday. We will pair with an interim source of transport medium from outside New York City, and that pairing will happen Friday May 8th. Those full test kits will be delivered wherever they're needed to be part of our widespread testing effort by the week of May 10th. So this is all growing all the time and more and more pieces are going to be brought into play so that we can get to that widespread testing to help us go on the offensive testing, tracing, isolating, quarantine all the pieces needed to fight back this disease and avoid that dreaded boomerang.

Now we've talked about testing from the beginning. First time I asked the federal government to help us get testing was on January 24th that request, that plea was ignored. We still are waiting for the federal government to help us. Now we need their help with lab capacity. We're still not getting the help we need and we're going to keep fighting for it. But I want to take a moment to appreciate the people who work in those labs. You know, we've been rightfully talking about our health care heroes, our doctors, our nurses, all the health care workers and our first responders, our essential workers, folks in the grocery stores and supermarkets and pharmacies. All the people out there doing such important work. But let's talk about the people who actually help us know if someone has this disease or not. The lab techs, let's talk about them. All the people work in the labs, we depend on them and they are unsung heroes too. And I want to thank everyone of course who works in the private labs because we're depending on them. But I want to highlight those who work in our public labs and I want to say – give credit where credit is due. I was on Friday evening, you know, of course the 7:00 pm clapping for all the health care heroes. I went to Interfaith Hospital in Brooklyn, a wonderful institution. Earlier in this decade, a lot of us in Brooklyn fought to protect Interfaith Hospital from closing. Thank God we all did, work with the community and the community stood up strong to protect Interfaith. And Interfaith has been front and center in this crisis. I talked to some of the folks that work at Interfaith, some of whom I knew from that first fight to keep it open.

And we were talking about everything that had happened there. And a couple of people from the lab came forward and said, hey, don't forget about us. Don't forget about the lab workers. So, to all the lab workers, first of all, in all the 56 hospitals in New York City that have been a part of this fight, all the lab workers in all the private labs. All of you are also heroes in this effort. I want to express my deep thanks to all of you, but I want to especially thank those who have worked in our public labs. So first of all, at the New York City Department of Health, the Public Health Lab, you've heard more and more about it. It's been a crucial part of this equation. More than 200 staff work there. And for the last two months, they have literally been working 24/7. It's been a big part of how we fight back to have the Public Health Lab, you know, nonstop getting results for New Yorkers who need them.

I want to thank Dr. Jennifer Rakeman, the Assistant Commissioner, Department of Health and the Director of the Lab and her entire team, job well done. And at Health + Hospitals, our public hospital and clinic system, more than 1000 lab professionals have been in the forefront. Our public hospitals have been the frontline of this crisis. I want to thank the technologists, the technicians, the pathologists, everyone who was part of those H + H labs. You've been amazing. You've worked nonstop, you've been strong and focused, and it's helped us to make the progress we've made with this disease so far. Special thanks to Kenra Ford, the Senior Assistant Vice President of Lab Services and her entire team. Thank you so much.

So, remember when you're thinking of all the reasons to be thankful to be a New Yorker right now, think of all the heroes we thank every day. But think of some of the heroes we may not think about as much. Think about those lab workers. You only get the answer to the test because of them. And we only find the ways that we can fight back this disease because of the information they give us and they never stop. They work around the clock. So thank you to all the great people working in the labs.

Now we're going to beat back this disease. We're going to do it with testing, tracing, isolating, quarantining, all these strategies that work. We're going to do it on a vast scale, but, in the meantime, we continue to fight that other part of the crisis, that horrible reality of people who have lost their livelihoods, struggling to make ends meet. And in so many cases struggling just to get food on the table. Remember the estimates before the coronavirus were about 1.2 million New Yorkers, and this is a very sad reality. 1.2 million New Yorkers experience some amount of food insecurity at any given point in the year. And that's a horrible number to begin with. It's something we've been trying to fight back for years now. That number, even though we don't have all the facts yet and we're still trying to understand the sheer impact of this horrible crisis on everyday New Yorkers, that number may have grown by a million. There could be as many as two million or more New Yorkers experiencing food insecurity now or who will be experiencing it in the coming weeks. So, we have to help people right now and from the beginning, I've been painfully aware there's a lot of New Yorkers who now have to ask a question they never thought they'd ask. And that question is, where's my next meal coming from? The answer from the City of New York, the answer from your City government is we will be there for you. No New Yorker will go hungry. No matter what it takes, we will provide food to everyone who needs it.

So, food delivery is a big piece of this because there are a lot of people who can't get out. They're seniors. They're vulnerable folks that maybe people with disabilities, whatever it is, there's

reasons why they can't get out, can't get the food. And particularly in this tough environment, there are a lot of people used to depend on other people to bring food for them who can't right now or dependent on members of their family who were the breadwinners, who don't have an income right now. So, we made it our business to do a massive food delivery effort for those who are most vulnerable. Again, I want to emphasize, a lot of people who need food right now are people who just weeks ago considered themselves solidly middle class or working class. Everything was if not fully under control in their life, certainly something like where your meals were coming from was under control. A lot of people felt a horrible disruption in their lives and we have to make sure that each and every one of them know, no matter what you go through, we're going to be there for you. There is no shame in asking for the help you need and we want to make it as easy as possible for you and your family. Currently we are at a capacity where we can deliver as many as 3.1 million meals per week. Our goal is to keep ramping that up as high as we need it to be. If needed, we can take that capacity as high as 1 million meals per day. A staggering number, but we can do that if that's what we need to do to keep people safe and to keep them fed here in New York City.

So, we continue to expand our Get Food program and particularly our delivery program. But to do this, to keep expanding we are going to need help at the community level. So, I'm going to today be asking people to join in who can help us in this endeavor. We need more personnel at the distribution site. So, if you're a nonprofit organization, a community-based organization, there are a lot of great ways we can partner with you. First of all, we need to immediately find an additional 300 staff members who can manage distribution sites. So we're looking for nonprofit partners with that skill, that ability to manage a site. We need you to come forward right away.

We need help actually preparing meals. Look we are now at a point where I'm talking about going as high as a million meals a day, where all of the places we're preparing the meals are getting maxed out. So, we need commercial kitchen capacity. And this is an opportunity to work with a number of nonprofits and businesses that currently don't have the ability to operate normally. We want to bring you back into play as part of this very noble effort to feed your fellow New Yorkers. We would love to get people who represent all the communities of this city. So we're interested in any organizations that can help us, particularly feeding folks with some of the foods they're more used to in the East Asian community, South Asian community, Caribbean community that will help. We're going to make sure people are fed. If we can help people to have some of the foods that they are familiar with in the process, that's even better.

And we need help with delivery in specific neighborhoods where we need more personnel. And in sourcing available meals in those neighborhoods. The more we can do locally, the better off we'll be. Having the kitchen capacity, having the delivery all happen locally -- the more local, obviously the less traveling around, the more efficient, the speedier, the better. So, I'm going to name some neighborhoods where we are particularly looking for help. We are looking for help in Melrose, in Washington Heights, in Howard Beach, South Ozone Park, in Gravesend, and Sheepshead Bay, in Morris Park, on the North Shore of Staten Island, in Flushing, in Jackson Heights, in Eastchester and in Sunset Park. And we're particularly looking for providers who can help us by producing at least a thousand meals a day. We've put out a request, it's online right now. Anybody from a nonprofit organization or anybody who thinks they can help us with these

immediate needs so we can really expand this meal program intensely, please go to nyc.gov/nonprofits, nyc.gov/nonprofits.

Okay. Few more things. So next Sunday, a very, very important day, every year, Mother's Day. It is a day that we cherish in our family. It's a day when everyone remembers to express their deep appreciation to, in our case, the mothers in our life, but every family, remembering how much we owe the moms in our families. Now, this is not going to be a typical Mother's Day to say the least, and, unfortunately, we've gotten some practice here because so many other crucial days in our year, from all different faiths, all different communities have overlapped with this horrible crisis. We went through Easter, Passover, now Ramadan, everyone's trying to figure out how to maintain our traditions and everything that is so dear to us in the midst of this crisis. Well, we're going to have to improvise again for Mother's Day. Now, Mother's Day for so many of us meetings gathering together. In fact, it's a day when our moms expect everyone to come together. Stop what you're doing and just slow down and appreciate the family and appreciate the mom in your life. But to appreciate mom this year, it means keeping mom safe. It means doing things differently. And that's particularly true if your mom happens to be older. We want to protect all the moms in New York City. And the way to do that is to show love and appreciation in different ways.

We used to all flock home to mom. This is not the year to do that. It is the year to show love and support in different ways. In fact, normally the gift we give to mom is to all show up. This time the gift we can give to mom is to give her some space and help her stay safe. So you can celebrate lots of other ways. Facetime, Skype, Zoom. There's so many ways you can celebrate. You can also do that old-fashioned thing we call a phone call, which moms still appreciate very much. In fact, many moms are like you could call more often, they'd like that. You can go outside mom's house and wave from the sidewalk. You can do all sorts of things. But let's remember how important social distancing is for everyone. And let's remember protecting mom's health should be the number one thing we think about on Mother's Day. Our moms have brought us through everything and the way we honor them is to remember what it's going to take to fight back this disease and bring them through safe and sound. And we can do that together

Now, I want to talk to you – something I talked about on Friday and it's such a powerful, tragic story, but also a powerful story of human devotion. I talked about a paramedic from Aurora, Colorado, Paul Cary. And we lost Paul. He came here to help us and we lost him to the coronavirus. And amazing how small a world it is. So, Aurora, Colorado is also where New York City's Emergency Management Commissioner Deanne Criswell comes from. And for years in her hometown, she served in the Fire Department. And she served with Paul Cary. And what a shocking coincidence that he ended up coming to New York City to help us in our hour of need and then so painful that this disease has taken him.

Well, first of all, my deepest thanks to the entire FDNY family, the firefighters, the EMTs, the paramedics, everyone at the FDNY, and my deepest thanks to NYPD. After Paul was lost, they gave him a tribute and treated him as one of our own. And a lot of you may have seen the images, but a powerful, powerful respect shown by our first responders to one of their own who didn't come from here and was only here a short time, but gave to New York City so much. And all of our first responders honored him as if he had been a lifelong New Yorker. And I know the

Cary family was deeply moved by that. I also want to thank the New York Daily News. Daily News, put Paul on the cover yesterday and it was a very moving tribute to him. And you know, the thing that goes on the cover of the newspaper sends such a powerful message. So to think that one of the most prominent newspapers in the country honored this man who came here of his own choice to protect us and serve us. That was a very beautiful tribute. So thank you to everyone at the Daily News for doing that. And thank you again to Paul's family. And we will remember him and we will memorialize him. But it's so important to remember this great example of heroism.

Now, we have an example of heroism in Paul, we have an example of people doing the right thing every day in New York City. It has become something we are so proud of to recognize how many people are just doing what's right, to protect other people, to be compassionate for other people, to care about other people, to recognize the depth of this crisis and be there for their fellow New Yorker. That's what everyone should do. Anybody – any everyday New Yorker, and especially anyone in a position of authority anywhere in this city, anywhere in this country should feel in their hearts what New Yorkers have gone through and ask the question of what can I do to help, just like all our heroes do?

Well, let me talk today, unfortunately, about someone who did the exact opposite of that. And I was shocked when I heard this. The White House Economic Advisor Kevin Hassett. He [inaudible] talking about the stimulus program, talking about what's needed to get New York City and all cities and states back on their feet. Yesterday morning, he says, well, everything appears to be happening safely. And literally, this is a quote he says, there is a chance that we won't really need another stimulus – a phase four stimulus. Listen to those words. There's a chance we won't need it. Well, let me tell you something, Kevin, why don't you come to New York City? Why don't you go to Elmhurst Hospital? Why don't you talk to our first responders? Why don't you talk to the families who have lost their loved ones? Or go to the ICU where hundreds of people are still fighting for their lives? In terms of your desire, which is pretty transparent to save money rather than to protect people, to risk the future of New York City and this State and so many cities and states around the country. It is outrageous that anyone with a position of authority in our federal government could even breathe these words. Because it's disrespectful in every way. It is an absolute misunderstanding of what has happened here and what continues to happen and the fight we're still waging. And how much it's going to take to get back on our feet. This year and next year and the years thereafter. I was disgusted when I heard these comments because it sounded like the comments not only of a cheapskate, but someone who just didn't care.

So, I hope President Trump will renounce these comments immediately. I don't know why this guy is his economic advisor if you could say something like that. The President needs to speak up and say that's absolutely unacceptable. Right now, we know in the Congress, intense effort is going on to create a stimulus. Why? Because what's happening in cities and states all over the country right now, red states and blue states, red cities and blue cities is mayors and governors unfortunately are having to cut back more and more. And it's soon going to really affect the basic services we all depend on. The kind of cuts we're talking about will lead painfully, horribly to furloughs, to layoffs of public sector workers who are the backbone of our cities, our states, the people who keep everything going. The people we need even more in a recovery. And here's

the painful reality I want you to take in. Listen to these very dangerous comments from this White House official and then translate it into reality. If there is not a fourth stimulus and that stimulus does not amply provide for the needs of cities and states this year and next year, then the very people who have been our heroes, the very people who have been saving our lives, those doctors, those nurses, those firefighters, EMTs, paramedics, police officers, the people keeping this place going, the people who keep it going all the time, the sanitation workers, the educators, all the people we are depending on for a restart and a recovery, their futures will be compromised.

Imagine if the very same doctors and nurses working in our public hospitals are the very same EMTs and paramedics who were such heroes in this crisis, imagine if after fighting through this battle, months from now they had to face furloughs or layoffs here and all over the country. If we don't get help from Washington that is what will happen. And I'm talking about one place, one city right here already, \$7.4 billion in the hole because of a crisis we didn't ask for and we didn't create. Came to us from another place. But all of you have fought heroically through it. I just want to see everyone in Washington show a little bit of respect for what New York City has gone through and so many cities and states around the country have gone through and just do the right thing and help us back on our feet.

Okay, we're going to go over the daily indicators. And as I've said, the reality of these indicators is what's going to determine our future and directly relates to all you do. We've generally seen progress, not quite enough yet. We have to keep at it. So, today progress, generally, still more to go. First indicator – daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19, that's up, and that's that one troubles me but it is the truth up from 92 to 113. But the other indicators are down. Daily number of people in ICUs across our public hospitals for suspected COVID-19, down from 677 to 645. Percentage of people testing positive for COVID-19, citywide down 21 percent to 20 percent. Only a little but still down. Public health lab tests for COVID-19 – percentage down, 50 percent to 33 percent. We keep putting together good days. I want us to put together great days and consistent days, but we're clearly moving in the right direction. Let's stick with it. Let's stick with it because it's working. But job-one is to get through this steadily, constantly, and get to the point where we can start to get to normal. But at the same time, job-two is always there – never let that boomerang happen. So, avoiding that boomerang, that's up to you, and that's up to all of us here at City Hall to make sure we are prudent and careful in the steps we take. You keep doing your part – and you're doing it great, New York – we'll keep doing our part, we will not let our foot off the gas until we're sure it's time. That's how we keep the boomerang from happening. That's how we move steadily forward together. A few words in Spanish.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, we will take questions from the media and I always like to remind people, please remind me of the name and outlet of each journalist.

Moderator: We'll now begin our Q-and-A. As a reminder also on the line, we have Police Commissioner Shea, Health Commissioner Dr. Barbot, Food Czar Garcia, EDC President James Patchett, and Senior Advisor Dr. Jay Varma. First question today goes to Roger from 1010 Wins.

Question: Hi, good morning, Mayor. I'd like to ask about the eventual reopening of New York City. It's going to happen obviously at some time. There may be workers, either older workers or workers with preexisting conditions or those with preexisting conditions in their families who are reluctant to go back to their workplace. Does there need to be legal protections in place to protect them from job discrimination?

Mayor: Well, it's a really interesting question, Roger. Clearly, look, there are tremendous protections right now in New York City against discrimination. We have one of the strongest human rights laws in the entire country and we're very proud of that. We absolutely want to make sure there's no discrimination as we begin our restart. So, I think it's a very fair question. The restart will have to come with really clear rules. Again, it will happen carefully and in stages. We have to make really clear what's expected of people, what types of businesses will begin, in what fashion, which ones will be handled later. So, I think it's incumbent upon all of us here at the City to get the message out clearly from the beginning. But absolutely important to say no discrimination of any kind will be tolerated. We need to make those rules clear from the beginning and we also need to let people know if they do experience any discrimination that they can turn to the City. And that's always true – by turning to our Human Rights Commission or calling 3-1-1. So, great question, we will be making sure to get information on that out as the restart really does begin.

Moderator: Next is Shant from the Daily News.

Question: Good morning. Question for both the Mayor and Police Commissioner Shea. Can you say how many fines were given out for social distancing violations yesterday? Also, were any arrests made in that context? I'm also interested in hearing the Police Commissioner's perspective on how well social distancing is going over in parks.

Mayor: Yeah, I guess we'll start by saying NYPD did a remarkable job as did Parks Enforcement and employees from a number of agencies we had out, both in enforcement effort and in efforts to educate and give out free face coverings. So, I think it was a strong day. I was monitoring throughout the day and saw enforcement actions happening all over the city. But I think the numbers also say that a vast majority of New Yorkers are following the rules as has been true throughout. So, Commissioner, do you want to elaborate?

Police Commissioner Dermot F. Shea: Sure. I would echo that in terms of, you know, we had a lot of help yesterday and we appreciate all the other agencies that were working alongside us. In parks specifically yesterday, we issued 43 summonses. We had an additional eight outside of parks for a total of 51. Now, not every single one was socially distancing, but the majority were. So, that's a total of 51 summonses. We also see six motorcycles in an incident in the 1-14 Precinct in Astoria Park. Two of those motorcycles turned out to be stolen. Too many summonses is to count for motorcycles in that incident as well as other incidents in the city. That's more for the moving violation and driving recklessly type of scenarios. And in terms of arrests, I'm aware of three arrests citywide.

Mayor: Okay.

Moderator: Next question is Yoav from The City.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor. I wanted to ask you about the HRA benefits offices. As we understand it, the police that supervised those offices are no longer barring access to individuals if they refuse to accept or wear a mask –

Mayor: Yoav, I couldn't hear that, [inaudible] 'no longer' and then I couldn't hear your words clearly.

Question: Sorry. They're no longer allowed to bar people from entering the building if they refuse to wear a face mask or a face covering. And I'm wondering if you can address that because it kind of contradicts the City's other messages on this.

Mayor: Yeah, I don't – I have not heard that before, Yoav, I want – I think it's abundantly clear that people need to be wearing face coverings and particularly in an enclosed space. We've been abundantly clear that, for example, a supermarket, grocery, a pharmacy, you go in, if you don't have a face covering the manager, the owner can send you right back out. It's just not fair to other people. So, I believe that makes sense at a public office too. Again, we are trying with all benefits, to any kind of benefit program, including things like food stamps, SNAP, etcetera, to get people to do all this online or by phone so there really is not a lot of reason to go in person or into an office. We're discouraging people from going to an office, but if you do go into an office, you need to be wearing a face covering. I don't know the details. We'll follow up. Our team will get you more later on today, but the clear message needs to be, people need to be wearing a face cover.

Moderator: Next is Christie from WCBS 880.

Question: Hi, good morning panel and Mayor. My question was just about these advisory boards that you were talking about last week. [Inaudible] you saying, [inaudible] –

Mayor: Christie, I'm having trouble hearing you, Christie. See, I don't know what's going on with your phone. Could you start again and speak slowly so I can hear you?

Question: Sure. Hello, does that sound better?

Mayor: Yeah.

Question: So, my question is about the advisory boards that you were talking about last week [inaudible] just wanted to know how those [inaudible] –

Mayor: I'm not sure I got all of that. And I just want to say to all our colleagues in the media, please, we're sometimes having trouble hearing you and whenever you can call in, if you have hard lines, it helps or whatever kind of a phone line or headset or lack of headset, whatever will make the calls come in clear so we can hear you is appreciated. But on the advisory boards, Christie, I think you're asking about the sector groups that we have put together. These are going

to represent all different parts of New York City in the sense of different industries, different key elements of life in this city. I am going to be personally meeting with each one obviously remotely, starting with the two groups that will represent key elements of the business community, the small business community and the community of larger businesses in this city. But there'll be a number of other organizations, there are a number of other advisory groups I should say. They're all coming together this week. They'll all be announced this coming week and get immediately to work and they will be crucial to the restart, to begin with, advising on how we go about the restart properly. And then they'll stick with us going forward as we have so many decisions to make and we want that input, we want the ideas, we want to test different things, and see what they think about them. So, all of those will be announced in the course of this coming week. They'll get started immediately. And then we can give you some progress reports as we go along on the work that we're doing.

Moderator: Next is Gersh from Streetsblog.

Question: Hello, Mr. Mayor and everyone on the call. How are you guys?

Mayor: Hey, Gersh.

Question: I want to ask you about the Open Street launch, Mr. Mayor and obviously Commissioner Shea. It was very noticeable how few NYPD officers or crossing guards were needed to safely create the space for the public. Now we talked to a DOT Commissioner Trottenberg on Prospect Park West, who said the administration's thinking had evolved on Open Streets in the eight days since she and the NYPD testified that such a plan was impossible. Now clearly yesterday proved that it is possible. So, can you talk to us a little bit about the administration's evolution on policing Open Streets and did you get a chance to experience one of these open streets yourself, Mr. Mayor?

Mayor: Gersh, look, first of all, what was deeply a concern to us weeks ago was that all of the agencies we depended on for enforcement starting with NYPD were really experiencing tremendous trouble because so many of their employees were out and obviously first and foremost, our concern was for our police officers and all our public employees who were fighting against this disease. But it also meant that a lot of agencies couldn't do what they normally could. And I am still fundamentally a believer in enforcement in all things. We had a good first day with a limited sample size. I don't think anyone yet can say that we know exactly what it's going to take to enforce these things going forward. But I can say one absolute evolution is that a few weeks ago we did not know what kind of capacity we've had in terms of returning officers and how many more would get sick each week and one thing or another, like we didn't know enough about where this disease was going. And overall, we've seen a lot of progress on that front. That means we have a lot more ability to enforce and that gives me a lot more comfort going forward with these open streets. But, you know, day one from what I could see went well, certainly hopeful – we're looking to expand. I think it's going to be great, but it always will require enforcement. We'll find out how much by doing it. And I think it's also fair to say with more and more knowledge of the open streets and warmer and warmer weather, more and more people will come. And again, that's where you do need enforcement for sure. I saw the open street on Prospect Park West and it looked like things were going well. Chirlane reported that the open

street by Carl Schurz Park was going well. So, definitely a good day and a good concept and we look forward to broadening it.

Moderator: Next to Sydney from Gothamist.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor, hope you're doing well. I wanted to ask about – going off of that bit about crowding in parks. Again, I know that you had expressed that the vast majority are doing it well and the vast majority of New Yorkers are doing it well. But I just wanted to ask about some of the, what seems to be a little bit of possible unequal enforcement, and what the City is doing to avoid that. And there was this particular photo near Christopher Street, the pier there, where there were very large gatherings and I'm wondering also what you all – how to approach this enforcement issue when it's hard to tell, I guess, if people are gathering with people in their households. Do you have any response or comment on that?

Mayor: Absolutely, first of all, I know you mean the terminology in good faith, but I want to contest your terminology instantly because this is literally a life and death matter. No, a gathering is a purposeful group of large numbers of people. We've seen examples of that as part of funerals or religious observances or sports activities or parties, barbecues. Those are gatherings. In some cases, you know, dozens of people, hundreds of people, even thousands of people. That's job one is to absolutely not allow that to exist anywhere in New York City at this point while we're going through this emergency and I've been very clear and Commissioner Shea's been very clear, we won't tolerate that and we are going instantly to break those up and anyone who persists is going to get a summons or worse. What we see in some places is a large number of people in a small area and our job is to make sure they practice social distancing. Even if there's a large number of people in a small area, people have to practice social distancing. If not, they're running the risk of a summons. I heard there were some real issues in the Hudson River Park. I instructed the Commissioner this morning to make sure there were extra patrols today in Hudson River Park. We're not going to tolerate even small groups of people not practicing social distancing.

Now, I want to affirm, if people live under the same roof – this is a matter of the truth. I think New Yorkers understand at this point, this is not business as usual, this is literally about life and death. If you live under the same roof, you do not have the same social distancing requirement. And we've talked about this incessantly because you're already in such constant contact. So, if a family is gathered together in a park, close together, that's because they already have been gathered close together. They should not come in contact with anyone else. They should keep distance from everybody else. A couple lives under the same roof, they are already connected to each other. It's a different reality but they should not come in contact with other people. They should keep the six feet. So, there are some things you see where you can say, 'Oh, look at those people, they are close together', but they are definably members of a family. People need to be honest about this because it's not cute to say, 'Oh, we're all together, we live under the same roof', if you don't, because you're literally endangering the lives of the people around you and then everyone else's lives because of potentially spreading this disease. So, the NYPD and Parks Enforcement, all enforcement folks out there are very, very clear, no gatherings. And even if you see small groups of people too close together, we're going to separate them. And if people have

any desire to resist, they are going to suffer the consequences. Commissioner, would you like to speak further to the question of what happened in the West Village?

Commissioner Shea: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. So, I think you summarized what we're facing day-in and day-out. Our priority is certainly large groups gathering for whatever the activity is and then it gets slightly more challenging when you bring up people in households out trying to get a little bit of exercise, and, you know, in close proximity to each other because they are constantly in close proximity to each other. But maintaining that six feet from others. The East Village, a couple of other places in the city too, we saw some incidents. We've certainly seen some incidents in Domino Park in the last couple of weeks and we will be out there again enforcing today and going forward to make sure that people are practicing that safe distance, also that people are wearing masks when out in public. So, it's more of the same, unfortunately, for New York City, they can expect it, but I would just reiterate that we had tens of thousands of interactions with people all across the city yesterday, most of them all without having to issue any type of enforcement activity, whether it's a summons or arrest. So, I think, again, New Yorkers are exhibiting extreme patience for the last two months. We're going to ask for a little more of it but we will be out there in force to remind them that, you know, for everyone's safety, they got to practice these social distance standards.

Moderator: Next is Fern from the Jewish Voice.

Mayor: Fern, you say? Fern, are you there? Hello, Fern. Are you there? Okay, let's get someone else and come back.

Moderator: Fern, we'll get back to you. Next is Ashley from the New York Times.

Mayor: Ashley – hey, Ashley.

Question: How are you

Mayor: Good, how you doing?

Question: [Inaudible] fine, thank you. I wanted to ask the Police Commissioner and you about a couple of things. One, yesterday in Harlem there was a memorial for a young man who was killed about a week ago and there was a really large crowd and the officer seemed to have the street shut off. I'm wondering for, you know – these kinds of vigils are pretty common in the warmer months and also in the winter. And I'm wondering if the Police Commissioner or you have any specific kind of social distancing guidance for officers who are in communities where you have overlapping public health crises – in this case, gun violence and the coronavirus – and where there's still some very strong mistrust of the police. And then the second thing – I want to ask about the incident on the Lower East Side where there appears to be an officer – officers appear to be making an arrest and one of them comes toward a group of bystanders pointing his taser. And apparently with his hand on the trigger, you hear it clicking. And he also – it sounds like he uses the N-word. I'm just wondering if the CCRB or the NYPD will be investigating that incident and what happened there.

Mayor: I'll start and just say that, Ashley, first of all, any incident where there's any potential of something inappropriate, unquestionably will be investigated. I don't know any of the details of this one, it is the first time hearing it, but there will unquestionably be a careful look at what happened there and the Commissioner can speak to it more. But on the question of a memorial, we have to get clear to people that no such events should be happening. We're at a point where when you start to attract large numbers of people, the chance of social distancing being maintained is minimal. And it's clear from the guidelines that both the State and the City have put out that we do not allow gatherings. It is too dangerous. It's too much of a – there's too much of a possibility it will spread the disease and harm people in the community. And I find it particularly painful and frustrating if it's a funeral or memorial, something honoring someone who's passed away, the ridiculous, painful reality that by gathering actually more people might pass away, more people might lose their lives. It's unacceptable in every community. So, no, we cannot allow such gatherings to begin with. We have to not allow them to be created to begin with. It's just they have to be stopped before they even get started. And that is the rule we will apply all over the city. Commissioner –

Commissioner Shea: Yeah. Ashley, regarding the Harlem Memorial, I am not familiar with that incident. I will certainly have somebody look into it. But, I think, that you know, that's the irony of this situation. This isn't an NYPD policy, this is now law. It's law passed down through executive orders that there ought to be no gatherings and it doesn't specify what the gatherings are for here – unnecessary, non-essential gatherings, and that would certainly encompass what you're referring to. So, your answer, we will be out there enforcing it wherever it happens across the city. And we just urge – we continue to urge New Yorkers to work with us. And the last thing we want is well-intentioned gatherings that wind up causing more harm. Regarding the incident in the East Village, when I mentioned earlier 51 summonses in three arrests, that was the three arrests I was talking about. It started out as a social distancing enforcement. There were three arrests made from that incident. I am aware of the video that's out there. It's being investigated currently by our Internal Affairs Bureau as a result of that very preliminary investigation that's ongoing. There was one officer modified and that's where we stand right now.

Moderator: The next question is Andrew from Gay USA.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. This is for you and for Commissioner Barbot. You signed a law in 2016, Intro 552-a, to mandate that the Health Department and other agencies provide demographic surveys to all persons served, including about sexual orientation and gender identity. But we've been given no data on LGBT people hit by COVID-19. Will you direct that the Health Department provide that data? There's a kind of a thirst for it among the LGBT service groups and AIDS groups.

Mayor: Yes. Thank you very much for the question. Certainly, I think that's the right thing to do. And you're right, we long thought it was important to put out information to show people what's really happening and how we can all work together to protect people. Commissioner, would you like to speak to this?

Commissioner Barbot: Yes. Can you hear me?

Mayor: Yes.

Commissioner Barbot: Terrific. So, yes, we are obviously committed to transparency and ensuring that all New Yorkers are counted during this pandemic and we will work with our partners to ensure that as data is available, we certainly report on it. We do health opinion polls and certainly that's an area where we're looking to provide more information about how our LGBTQ community is being affected by this pandemic. And so, we will be following up.

Mayor: Good. Thank you.

Moderator: Fern, from the Jewish Voice. Do we have you back, Fern?

Question Yes, but can you hear me okay?

Mayor: Yes.

Question: Thank you. Yes, thank you, Mr. Mayor. Concerning testing and this question, I go to the Health Commissioner as well. The City is now providing centers in local areas where people can go to be tested. I understand that priority has been given to people over the age of 65, people who have had the symptoms. The question is, do people just go down without making an appointment? That's number one. Number two, concerning health insurance, will they be required to bring their health insurance card? Will these tests be provided for free? And thirdly, especially for elderly vulnerable people, will the places be crowded? In other words, will they be afraid to go down? Will there be, you know, measures taken to make sure that people don't get so close to each other at the testing site?

Mayor: Yes, these are great questions and thank you so much. So, I'll give you the examples from the two sites that I've been to. A week ago, at the Morrisania Health Clinic in the South Bronx and yesterday in Coney Island at the Ida G Israel Clinic, both run by our Health + Hospitals corporation, and I was very, very impressed by what I saw. So, first of all, the testing is free. You do not need to have an insurance card. I want to make that very clear. The testing that's being provided – and, again, first priority is on older New Yorkers and anyone with those preexisting conditions like diabetes lung disease, heart disease. The focus is on those who are most vulnerable, but anybody who comes of course will be tested free. You do not need an insurance card. And people are socially distanced in line and tested individually. So, there is real care taken to protect people during the testing process itself. Let's please spread the word, because this is the beginning of a much bigger effort to test New Yorkers across the board. You're going to be seeing more and more testing in this city. But these sites are for people from communities who need the tests and real care is taken to keep people safe.

Moderator: Next is Luis from New York [inaudible].

Question: I'm hoping you can – hello? Hear me?

Mayor: Yes, Luis. Go ahead.

Question: Alright, thank you. Hey there, Mr. Mayor. I'm hoping you can share what you know about the expanded testing criteria the Governor outline last week. I'm guessing it isn't up and running yet since I know of a number of essential workers, from an EMT and airline steward, to restaurant owners and local pharmacies, yet none of them have heard of thing. So, if or when the time comes, how will essential workers be notified? Will it be through your upcoming public awareness campaign? Will the Health Department reach out to them? Is the Health Department even aware of every single person or merchant that needs to know? And also, Mr. Mayor, have you any details about the pharmacies that are participating in the testing process? You know total numbers, locations and such?

Mayor: Luis, thank you for the questions. So, a couple of things. I want to make sure all New Yorkers understand, we've got the diagnostic testing – what's called PCR testing, which is to tell you right now, anybody, do you have this disease right now or not? And that is the focal point of our effort to do massive testing and tracing building up in the month of May. That's going to be the main thrust. That's what's been used in one form or another around the world as parts of successful efforts to contain the disease and move to a restart. So, testing on a big level, widespread level, tracing each contact, following up with people in need their own testing, isolating and quarantining. anyone test positive. That has been the game plan that has worked in much of the world. That's what starting to grow in the month of May, it will start to be very widespread. We still need that federal support to be able to have all the lab capacity we need, but that's the core of the game plan. Luis, what you're referring to as another piece of the puzzle – the antibody testing. Two announcements in the last few days, the Governor made an announcement about a State initiative which was focused on certain health care workers, first responders – I think you're right, pharmacists. That initiative, the antibody testing that again is a kind of testing that we've said is imperfect. The antibody testing tells you something, it doesn't tell you everything about what you've experienced before. The State is doing that on a wider level. We've announced a collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control. We'll be insuring ultimately – and I hope this is responsive to your question – we'll be ensuring that all New York City first responders, all New York City health care workers who want that antibody test, they will get it. It will be administered through an effort put together by the CDC and the expenses and staffing, etcetera covered by the federal government. Details will be announced shortly, but that's been agreed to. So, that will be literally any and all health care workers and first responders. The State has other initiatives they're working on and certainly you can get the information from them, but that is different from the really community-wide, widespread testing that we are going to be building out over the coming weeks.

Moderator: We have time for two more. The next is [inaudible] from Hambodia.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. Can you hear me?

Mayor: Yes. How you doing?

Question: Hi, how are you? There's some criticism of you on Twitter over the weekend by elected officials that I'd like you to respond to saying there's a tale of two cities. On the one hand, you tweeted sharp criticism of a funeral, Williamsburg, and the next day police officers descended on the neighborhood giving out large numbers of summons. I know you mentioned

the distinction between gathering versus a bunch of individuals, but those people who got the tickets the next day were just a bunch of individuals out in the street. Yesterday, there were many images of jam-packed parks in the city, people not wearing masks. You had no Twitter comment. Assemblymen Simcha Eichenstein wrote, Hasidism regressively slapped in summons of up to \$1,000 for not wearing a mask, a tale of two cities. NYPD tweeted, no mask, no problem – this lady in the park didn't have a mask, we gave her a mask. Councilman Chaim Deutsche responded, I'm confused, when do you give a mask to when do you give a summons? And so my question is, why – if you can respond to this criticism, the politicians are saying that apparently there's one neighborhood that's gets sharp criticism and the community called out by name, while in other instances there's silence or the polite handing out of masks. Thank you.

Mayor: Yeah, Rubin. I just dispute that fundamentally. There has been enforcement for weeks and weeks. And look, I love my city and I understand everyone looks out for their own communities within this city, but I've ultimately heard critique of too much enforcement or not enough enforcement in a variety of different communities. So, we want to make this an entirely consistent reality. I want it to be abundantly clear, the NYPD will be out enforcing and a number of other agencies will be out enforcing in all communities the same way, period. What I saw with my own eyes on Tuesday night in Williamsburg was absolutely unacceptable and was something that we had not seen on that scale anywhere and it was exactly what we cannot allow to happen. And there had been other large funerals before in the community and we're not going to allow that to happen. So, we had a particular problem we had to deal with. But we've had other types of problems in other places, and we're going to deal with everyone equally. So, again, that hierarchy – and I'm sure Commissioner Shea will add to this – the worst thing is a large gathering. And if it's dozens of people, it's bad. If it's hundreds of people, it's worse. If it's thousands of people, it's terrifying. And Rubin, we saw on Tuesday night, thousands of people in close proximity. If they had not been broken up by the police, they would have stayed for longer, many of them did not have face coverings. This means lives will be lost. It is unacceptable. But that's going to be true in any community. You talk about a really large gathering, absolutely acceptable, everyone's going to get a summons. Anyone who stays, summons instantly. Again, whether it's hundreds, same thing; dozens, same thing. We're coming after all gatherings. That is different than a bunch of people in a park who are distanced from each other. If there's small clumps that people are not distanced, we're going to go in and tell them you have to distance immediately. If they don't, they're getting summonsed. Each situation is looked at in degree. If someone doesn't have a face covering, we're going to offer them a face covering. Someone says, I refuse to have it put on a face covering, they have a problem and they're asking for enforcement. So, it is going to be done equally across all communities, one message that we have to save lives and anyone who is not following these simple rules is endangering the lives of everyone else. Commissioner Shea?

Commissioner Shea: Yeah. As I'm listening to the conversation, I'm reminded of – you know, to thank the officers that are out there every day doing this work and across the city from borough to borough, regardless of what neighborhood it's in, officers are out there doing their best to enforce the social distancing, which is something six months ago we certainly couldn't have even imagined it. I think that I would agree, every situation is unique. They do the best they can in certain situations, and, first and foremost, they're trying to correct the condition, they're trying to educate people, they're trying to get compliance. The last thing they want to do is summons and arrest, and that goes from the Bronx to Staten Island. But there are some

gatherings that we have said, we are past the point of warnings. And I think we've been consistent from the start, we're out there across the city, engaging people and we get varying levels of compliance, and if it comes to summons, then, you know, wherever at the summons point. But we urge New Yorkers to hang in there with us. We are going to get through this, but we just need your compliance, we need your patients and we need you to continue to work with us. And that goes whether you're in Williamsburg, that goes whether you're in the Mott Haven, or whether you're in Staten Island or Manhattan or anywhere else in between. I think that, you know, you can always find that an individual that's not happy. I rarely come across somebody that is happy after they've received the summons. But I think that in the difficult circumstances that we are in, and we certainly are, the officers are doing the best they can in trying, trying times.

Mayor: Thank you.

Moderator: Last question for today goes to Gail from Impacto Latino.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. So, as we all know, the immigrant community of New York City has been disproportionately economically impacted, given the types of jobs that they had, restaurant work, hotels, etcetera. It's estimated that 30 percent of some of those businesses will not come back, leaving this community in dire economic distress. Can you talk to us about any plans you have for providing economic support to this community that can't tap into the federal and State programs available to legal residents and US citizens? And then I have one more question on the health side, do you have any estimates on how many Latinos are getting tested? Thank you.

Mayor: Thank you, Gail. Very important questions. So, on the second question, we're going to be able over time to put out, you know, more and more information based on community-based testing. Community-based testing is only started obviously in the last few weeks, but it's going to grow intensely over time. So, we certainly can get you information about how many tests are being performed in our different centers. And that tells you a lot about which communities are benefiting, and these are the hardest hit communities obviously. In terms of, you know, giving out data by individuals and their own demographics, I'm not sure we're structured for that right now. I'll have the team get back to you on that, but we can show you how the testing is growing neighborhood by neighborhood. But, again, this is a very initial piece of the testing program. We intend it to be much more widespread as May progresses, because we have to get into a very aggressive test and a test and trace strategy. The way to beat back this disease further is to have very widespread testing, very widespread tracing, isolating and quarantining anyone who needs it. And that's going to be an all communities. We're always going to keep a special focus on the communities that have been hit hardest, but we have to expand that ultimately over all communities of New York City. So, whatever we can get you now to give you a sense of the testing so far, we will get you. We'll come back with the answer on what kind of demographic data we're keeping by individual. On the question of small business, well, I think the fear is very real, meaning the fear that so many businesses might not come back is unquestionably honest, because we're all unsure of what the future brings and a lot of people, you know, have been going through now months where there's no income. I'm very, very worried for so many small businesses and I agree with you on immigrant communities. There's a particular danger to those

small businesses. Now, Gail, I would say to you, history would tell us something else, which is that small businesses in general are extraordinarily strong and resilient. Immigrant small businesses are legendary in this city for being able to take very limited means and build something. I don't want to bet against our small businesses. I don't want for a moment people to assume that a lot of them can't come back. In fact, I wouldn't be shocked if the vast majority came back. We're going to have to help in every way we can. For the small businesses that can receive that stimulus support paycheck protection program, again, any small business that has not yet applied, please go to the small business administration website, sba.gov and apply for that money. Those are loans that in many cases can be forgiven and turns and turned into grants. Please, if you need help, a small business needs help with that application process, call 3-1-1. That's a whole lot of small businesses and we want to make sure that they get that federal support and New York City gets its fair share. Now, if you're talking about a business that is owned by someone who is undocumented and they're trying to stay on their feet, there obviously are some special efforts that have been made to help undocumented folks, most notably by the Open Society Foundations. That's a big initiative, tens of millions of dollars, and it's being distributed by grassroots organizations that work with immigrant communities. That's where I think people can initially turn for help, tidying over and eventually getting back on their feet. I think you're going to see more initiatives like that. But, in the end, I think, you know, our job – it kind of comes back to where we started, Gail – is, the best thing we can do for immigrant small business is get through this as quickly as possible and as thoroughly as possible and make sure the restart happens as quickly as possible, but in a sustained fashion where we do not have the restart interrupted at all. And that's what we're focused on right now.

And that will bring me to the close, which, again, I will say the dirty word one more time – boomerang. That's the thing we have to avoid at all costs. I tried today to show you something about this disease in the context of what's been done around the world. This disease, if it were a person it would be a very clever and very, very dangerous person. And the way to think about it in that sense is this is a disease – don't turn your back on it, don't give it an opening. Even the smallest opportunity and this disease might reassert, and that's the boomerang. But the good news is, what we see is a lot of great examples around the world and we'll be talking about them going forward of what has worked. And a lot of times what we see is what's worked is a careful, steady approach based on real indicators, smart steps forward, smart steps to loosen up, but always making sure that the loosening up is working and not having the unintended impact of a backfire. So, we have lessons about that boomerang where places moved too fast or opened up too much and experienced that boomerang and a much longer setback. We also have growing examples of where the restart was handled carefully and slowly and the right way, and that's what we're going to be guided by.

So, we will get through this, but I want everyone to understand that work of creating the right kind of restart is on all of us. That effort to stop the boomerang, we all participate in that. If we do it the right way, we can make sure that we come through this and move together as a city and get to that restart that we all want and need. Thank you very, very much, everybody.

###