

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

**MAYOR DE BLASIO CALLS FOR RENT FREEZE AMID COVID-19 CRISIS**

*New Yorkers should text COVID to 692-692 to get regular updates on the latest developments regarding COVID-19; Text COVIDESP to 692-692 for updates in Spanish*

**NEW YORK**—Mayor de Blasio today called for a rent freeze for 2.3 million tenants in nearly 1 million rent-stabilized units across the City amid the COVID-19 epidemic. The City will work with the State to suspend the Rent Guidelines Board process for the upcoming year, which will maintain all regulated rents at this year’s level and provide a lifeline to tenants in need.

“We are in the midst of a crisis only comparable to the Great Depression,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “The people of our city are struggling and a rent freeze is the lifeline so many will need this year to stay above water.”

Citywide as of 6:00 PM on March 27<sup>th</sup>, there are 26, 697 positive cases of COVID-19 and 450 fatalities. There are 4,880 confirmed cases in the Bronx, 7,091 in Brooklyn, 4,627 in Manhattan, 8,529 in Queens, and 1,534 in Staten Island.

As of 6:00 PM on March 27<sup>th</sup>, there were at least 5,250 people hospitalized. Of those individuals, at least 1,175 were in the ICU.

**Rent Freeze**

Due to this evolving crisis that is causing loss of employment and income across the City, the data that typically informs the Rent Guideline Board is rapidly changing. As a result, the City will work with the State to suspend the Rent Guidelines Board process for the coming year, which will maintain all regulated rents at their current level for 2.3 million tenants in nearly 1 million stabilized units across the City.

**Critical Supply Update**

790 ventilators have been dispatched to hospitals across the City over the past three days. The de Blasio Administration has also now received and distributed approximately one half of the 2,000 ventilators promised by the federal government. Tomorrow, the City will deliver 600 more ventilators. This comes after the Mayor requested a total of 15,000 ventilators from the federal government last week.

Today, 20 trucks also distributed critical Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), delivering 200,000 N95 masks, 1 million surgical masks, 50,000 face shields, 10,000 boxes gloves, and 40,000 isolation gowns to hospitals citywide. Tomorrow, the City will deliver 800,000 N95 respirators, and 2 million surgical face masks.

To date, the City has distributed a total of 8,918,000 face masks, 179, 328 face shields, 476, 565 N95 masks 159, 204 gowns, 1,570,300 surgical gloves, and 835 ventilators to hospitals across the City.

### **NYC Health+ Hospitals Elmhurst**

The City has continued to surge resources to NYC Health+ Hospitals Elmhurst to accommodate the influx of patients with COVID-19 related illness. This morning, the Hospital received 8,000 N95 masks, 18,000 head covers, and 2,000 booties. Last week, the Hospital received 13,000 N95s masks, 221,000 surgical gloves, 33,000 face masks, 17,500 gowns, and 1,665 face shields. The City has also re-supplied the Hospital's number of ventilators 4 times in the last 10 days, and distributed an additional 40 ventilators.

As of today, NYC Health + Hospitals has added 64 clinicians—a combination of registered nurses, nurse practitioners, physician Assistants and physicians—to assist Elmhurst staff. NYC Health + Hospitals has already redeployed 45 ambulatory staff from the ambulatory area to work in the hospital, and will bring on 105 new nurses tomorrow. In addition to today's surge, 56 additional staff members were also added to the current rotation of staff yesterday.

### **Brooklyn Navy Yard**

Yesterday, Mayor de Blasio visited the Brooklyn Navy Yard where he thanked workers from Makespacenyc, Adafruit, Bednark Studios, and Boyce Technology, and Duggal Visual Solutions for producing face shields. These firms will produce a total of 120,000 face shields by the middle of next week.

Numerous businesses have reached out about how they can provide support. The City launched this in-take form and a designated hotline (833-NYC-0040) for local businesses that have resources to offer that can potentially support the COVID-19 emergency response effort. We have received over 1,225 responses so far.

Over the next 3 months, local industrial firms are preparing to manufacture Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to supply the city's health care workers and hospitals, including up to 1.5 million face shields.

### **Update on City Construction Sites**

Following a new executive order from the State, all non-essential construction activity will be halted until further notice, unless the project is an emergency project necessary to protect the health and safety of the occupants, or if shutting down the site would create unsafe conditions. In addition, essential construction may continue and such construction includes: roads, bridges, transit facilities, utilities, hospitals or health care facilities, affordable housing, and homeless shelters.

In addition to new State-wide restrictions on construction activity, The Mayor will issue additional guidance that establishes enforcement protocols for DOB, NYPD, FDNY and other city agencies. These orders will allow tens of thousands of construction workers to stay home, helping to further reduce the spread of COVID-19.

At any construction site that remains open, contractors must implement strict social distance procedures, including for purposes of ongoing construction work, use of construction hoists, pre-shift safety meetings, and appropriate egress routes. Sites that cannot properly implement these critical distancing procedures and best safety practices will be ordered to close. Any company violating this Executive Order can be fined up to \$10,000 per violation.

### **City Jail Update**

Through a combination of efforts by the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice and the District Attorneys, the City will have released at least 450 people by the end of today, March 27<sup>th</sup>. The City jail population is now 4,809 marking the first time since 1949 that the City's jail population is below 5,000.

### **Park Space**

Public open spaces, including playgrounds and fields, will remain open for the time being with strict limitations. Proper social distancing must be kept at all times and will be enforced by the NYPD and the Parks Department. Robust signage will also advise park goers on social distancing practices and banned activities.

NYPD has been instructed to educate and warn people who are caught violating social distancing practices. After this weekend, the City will make a decision as to whether to impose fines on those who are not adhering to this guidance.

Given the high volume of individuals at specific City basketball courts, the City is removing hoops at 80 locations to ensure proper social distancing. Team sports are now prohibited, and spaces must be used for solitary exercises only. Barbeques and other gatherings are strictly prohibited as well.

Additionally, all permits have been suspended for ongoing activities in plazas, including non-Parks public spaces.

### **Social Distancing at Supermarkets**

To keep those at high risk of COVID-19 related illness safe, the City recommends that all supermarkets implement senior-only hours from 6:00 AM to 8:00 AM. City supermarkets should also continue to implement social distancing rules inside and outside stores, including limiting the number of people they let in at any given time.

### **Worship Services**

In keeping with social distancing guidelines, the overwhelming majority of houses of worship across the City have ceased their religious services. A small number of congregations continue to hold services across the City. After an initial warning, NYPD will be enforcing the suspension of religious services this weekend and will impose fines and other penalties, including building closure, on those who are not adhering to the guidance.

### **Self-Report COVID-19**

The City has created a new, online Portal that will allow New Yorkers to self-report COVID-19 data, helping the City to communicate with affected members of the public and assist in the identification of areas that may require an enhanced response.

By going online or calling 311, New Yorkers can quickly input information about themselves and legal guardians can add information for children or adults in their care:

- Individual COVID-19 status
- Symptoms and date of onset
- Quarantine status
- Contact information to receive important updates

New Yorkers can update their status at any time through the Portal or by calling 311. The Portal is available in 11 languages: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Polish, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu. It is not intended as a mechanism for providing medical advice or treatment, and should not be relied upon as a method to obtain medical care or emergency service.

Personal information will be stored securely and only accessible to city employees protecting public health. It will not be accessible by ICE, used for law enforcement purposes, or any other purpose. See privacy policy here.

#### **New Delivery Service:**

The City is launching a new matching application between those who need food and individual TLC licensees. The City is reaching out directly to vulnerable populations as we phase in this new service, and will share more information in the coming days.

#### **Reduced Agency Services**

Due to COVID-19, the City has reduced or suspended certain non-essential agency services. For a full list see here.

#### **Stay Informed**

Nearly 800,000 New Yorkers have signed up for the City's COVID text notification system to get regular updates on the latest developments with coronavirus in New York City text COVID to 692-692. New Yorkers can text COVIDESP to 692-692 for updates in Spanish. You will receive regular SMS texts with the latest news and developments. If you have any questions on finding medical care call 311.

###