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Mayor de Blasio Issues State of Emergency

March 13, 2020

New Yorkers should text COVID to 692-692 to get regular updates on the latest developments regarding COVID-19

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio issued a state of emergency today to remove any legal and regulatory barriers related to response efforts for COVID-19 until further notice.

In partnership with the State, the City will place occupancy and spatial limits on New York City's large venues and cancel all existing and future events exceeding a capacity of over 500 people until further notice, with restrictions put in place on establishments with a capacity under 500 people.. The City has also set a target benchmark of getting 10 percent (roughly 35,000 people) of the City's workforce to telecommute and 20 percent (roughly 71,000 people) on staggered work schedules.

"We're making tough choices that we know carry very real consequences for New Yorkers' health, but also their livelihoods. To curb this pandemic, we need greater social distancing. Each of us needs to change our lives to protect the people most at risk. We're therefore cancelling large gatherings and implementing strict reductions on smaller ones. This isn't the first set of restrictions we've handed down and it will not be the last. As we learn more about COVID-19 and how it spreads, we'll continue taking steps to keep New Yorkers safe," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**.

There are now 95 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New York City.

Currently, 29 New York City residents are under mandatory quarantine and 1,784 are under voluntary home isolation. Those under mandatory quarantine receive daily calls and twice weekly, unannounced visits by DOHMH. Upon identification, all individuals under voluntary home isolation will receive calls and texts with information and reminders to call a doctor or DOHMH if they feel sick or develop symptoms, such as fever and cough or shortness of breath.

New Restrictions and Guidance for Large Events

Existing and future standalone events with attendance exceeding over 500 persons, including parades, sports events, performances, races, and rallies are canceled until further notice. Programming will also be canceled at indoor venues with consistent seating capacity over 500.

New Restrictions and Guidance for Establishments:

Establishments with a capacity of 500 people or less, including concert venues, theatres, museums, department stores and religious institutions are required to maintain an occupancy level at or below 50% of their legal capacity to ensure maximum social distancing.

With the emergency order in effect, the City will examine its Census outreach work, and recommend the suspension of door-to-door canvassing for upcoming local special elections.

New Guidance for City Schools

To effectively implement social distancing, the Department of Education will cancel or offer web-based alternatives of extracurricular activities such as athletic games and practices, school-wide assemblies, parent teacher conferences (available by phone), school field trips, school plays, and recitals. After school programs, including DYCD programs, currently remain unaffected, with the exception of some extended use permits that serve primarily adults.

Emergency Assistance for New Yorkers

- The Department of Social Services will activate the City's emergency food contracts in coordination with other City agencies as needed.

The City will also continue to provide a range of resources and services that help New Yorkers make ends meet every day:

- For eviction assistance, please call 311 or Infoline at 718-557-1399 to be referred to one of HRA's Homebase offices.
- If you are facing eviction at Housing Court you may be able to access free legal representation through HRA's Office of Civil Justice. Please Call 311 for more information.
- Individuals seeking emergency Cash Assistance to cover rent or utility arrears can visit any one of HRA's Job Centers to apply for these benefits also known as "one shot deals". Additionally, individuals with an active Cash Assistance case can also visit www.nyc.gov/ACCESSHRA to apply for a one shot deal online. Eligibility will be determined based on factors including available income and resources. Call 311 to find your local Job Center.
- Please go to ACCESS/HRA at www.nyc.gov/ACCESSHRA to see if you qualify for SNAP/food stamps.
- If you need emergency assistance with food, call 311 to find your local pantry or kitchen – note there is no income guideline for emergency food.
- Please go to <https://info.nystateofhealth.ny.gov/> or call the NYS State of Health at 1-855-355-5777 to see if you can qualify for Medicaid or other free and low cost health insurance.

Over 121,000 New Yorkers have signed up to receive text alerts on COVID-19. To get regular updates on the latest developments with coronavirus in New York City text COVID to 692-692. You will receive regular SMS texts with the latest news and developments. If you have any questions on finding medical care call 311.

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