



# This Week in New York

Covering New York State and City Government

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**“We believe in the ideas of family, mutuality,  
the sharing of benefits and burdens  
for the good of all, feeling one another’s pain,  
sharing one another’s blessing  
recognizing that at the heart of the matter  
we are bound to each other.”**

**-Mario M. Cuomo-**

## *In the News – State*



### **Governor Expands Services in Opened Regions of the State**

As most of New York progresses through Phases 1 and 2 of the State’s NYForward plan, Governor Andrew Cuomo continues to finetune the reopening and expand the allowed services.

This week Governor Cuomo announced the following openings:

**Outdoor Dining in Phase II:** Outdoor dining at restaurants will be permitted in Phase 2 of reopening. Restaurants in the seven regions that have already entered Phase two - the Capital Region, Central New York, the Finger Lakes, the Mohawk Valley, the North Country, the Southern Tier and Western New York reopened this week for outdoor dining. Outdoor tables must be spaced six feet apart, all staff must wear face coverings and customers must also wear face coverings when not seated. Long Island and Westchester are scheduled to move into Phase 2 next week.

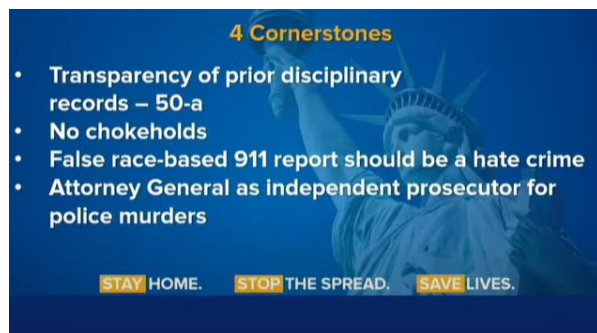
**Elective Surgeries:** Erie County is now eligible to resume elective surgeries and ambulatory care. The Governor previously announced that the state will allow elective outpatient treatments to resume in counties and hospitals without significant risk of COVID-19 surge in the near term, and a total of 52 counties can now resume elective surgeries. Four counties do not have hospitals.

***Dentist Offices Open:*** Dentists began opening statewide this week. Offices will be subject to state guidance on best practices for safety and social distancing.

***Medical Schools Opening:*** Medical schools statewide will be allowed to reopen on June 22nd, following appropriate precautions, in order to safely prepare for and welcome new cohorts of medical students this summer and fall.

In addition, Governor Cuomo announced that the State is expanding COVID-19 testing criteria to include any individual who attended any of the recent protests across the state. The Governor encouraged any individual who attended a protest to get a test. More information on where and how to get tested for COVID-19 is available [here](#).

## Governor Advocates for Four Cornerstones of a Police Accountability Agenda



Speaking at today’s daily press briefing, Governor Andrew Cuomo itemized four “cornerstones” of what he considers a “real reform agenda that can address what is going on on the street.”

The agenda includes legislation to revisit Section 50-a of the Criminal Rights Law, ban chokeholds, classify a false race-based 911 call as a hate crime, and appoint the State Attorney General as an independent prosecutor for police killings.

The State Legislature will return to Albany next week to consider several measures, including amendments to Section 50-a of the Civil Rights Law and initiatives to ban racial or ethnic profiling, the use of a chokehold, and increased medical training for police officers, according to published reports.

Section 50-a provides that “personnel records used to evaluate performance towards continued employment or promotion” for police officers, firefighters, firefighter/paramedics, correction officers or peace officers within the department of corrections and community supervision or probation department are considered “confidential and not subject to inspection or review” except by court order or consent of the employee. The law was enacted in 1976 and was last amended in 2014 to include probation officers.



# State Department of Motor Vehicles Begins Reopening Process

This week State-run Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) offices in the counties of Albany, Onondaga, Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, and the five boroughs of New York City began to process registrations and other transactions by mail and began accepting transactions through secure drop boxes located at each office.

County Clerks that operate DMV offices in the remaining 51 counties of the State have been advised to follow the State DMV's timeline and guidance for reopening. For more information about services offered at county-operated offices visit the [DMV Offices](#) webpage.

As regions enter Phase 3 of reopening, DMV will offer limited in-person transactions in state-run DMV offices by reservation only and will resume all other road tests at that time. Until then, there will be no in-person transactions in any DMV office and reservations will only become available as regions enter phase 3.

## ***Mail-in & Drop Box Transactions*** [DMV Opening Guidance](#)

DMV is expanding the ability for New Yorkers to complete necessary transactions by mail and drop box including:

- all vehicle registrations and plate transfers;
- license plate surrenders;
- sales tax only transactions;
- license and registration renewals (online option is available);
- replacement of lost documents (online option available);
- address change (online option available).

Customers should ensure their documents are filled out completely prior to bringing them to the DMV. Note that customer service representatives will not be available to assist with these transactions.

Once a transaction is processed, a receipt, and/or all applicable documents including registration stickers and license plates will be mailed to the customer.

## ***Extension of Expired Documents***

All driver licenses, non-driver identification cards, and vehicle registrations that expired March 1, 2020 or after and vehicle inspections that expired March 31 or after were previously extended and continue to be extended.

## ***Updating to REAL ID or Enhanced licenses***

Presently, upgrades to a REAL ID or Enhanced Driver License (EDL) cannot be made as these transactions require an in-person visit. As an alternative, current licenses may be renewed online now

and upgrades to a REAL ID or an EDL in a DMV office later. Also due to COVID-19, the federal REAL ID enforcement deadline has been extended one year until October 1, 2021.

### ***Transactions available online***

The DMV offers more than [60 transactions online](#) including:

- select driver license services, such as renewing or replacing a license;
- vehicle transactions, such as renewing or replacing a registration;
- requests for DMV records, like crash reports or driving abstract;
- paying fines and fees for suspensions, civil penalties, driver responsibility assessments;
- pleading or paying New York City traffic tickets.

### ***Road Tests***

Commercial Driver License (CDL) road tests will resume in all regions that are in at least Phase 1 of the State's reopening plan and all other road tests will resume when regions enter Phase 3. Customers whose CDL road tests were canceled because of COVID-19 will be given priority when rescheduling. Reservations for other CDL only customers will be available in the days following on the DMV website at: <https://dmv.ny.gov/schedule-road-test>.



## **Executive Orders**

### **New York State Executive Order 202.36 (June 2<sup>nd</sup>)**

Extends for 21 days the period for paying property taxes without interest or penalties in a county, city, town, village or school district of which the chief executive officer has requested an extension (a list of entities is in the Executive Order).

### **New York State Executive Order 202.35 (May 29<sup>th</sup>)**

As of May 29, 2020, the regions meeting the prescribed public health and safety metrics required for Phase Two reopening are: Finger Lakes, Central New York, Mohawk Valley, Southern Tier, and the North Country. Any additional regions which meet the criteria after such date will be deemed to be incorporated into this Executive Order without further revision and will be permitted to re-open Phase two industries, subject to the same terms and conditions.

## *In the News – City*



### **As New York Nears First Phase of Reopening, Mayor de Blasio Calls on MTA to Take Concrete Steps to Keep New Yorkers Safe on Mass Transit**

Mayor Bill de Blasio this week sent Governor Andrew Cuomo and MTA Chairman Pat Foye a 7-point plan of “concrete, actionable” recommendations to help the MTA meet increased demand as New York City begins Phase 1 of its reopening process on June 8th. The recommendations are designed to make the subways and buses a safe, reliable, and socially distant option for the New Yorkers who will return to the workplace using transit.

“New York City is a mass transit city – it always has been, and always will be,” said Mayor de Blasio. “These ideas will give New Yorkers the confidence that public transit is more than just the fastest way to get around – it’s a vital ally in our ongoing fight against COVID-19. I urge the MTA to implement them right away.”

The recommendations include:

- ***Increase Frequency of Service:*** Increase frequency significantly during peak hours while limiting the increase in ridership to allow for maximum social distancing. Return to regular rush hour service for Phase 1. The MTA should prepare to accommodate at least another 100,000 – 200,000 more riders per day.
- ***Capacity Limits on Buses/Trains:*** Limit capacity on buses and trains to allow for social distancing. Skip stops if over capacity.
- ***Limit Station/Train Overcrowding:*** Monitor platform crowding and temporarily close stations when needed during peak hours
- ***Social Distancing Signage/Markers:*** Clearly mark six feet of distance on platforms, trains and buses. Demarcate specific seats on trains and buses for riders, block off every other seat to maintain social distance.
- ***Hand Sanitizing Stations:*** Install hand sanitizer in all stations and buses, including next to MetroCard vending machines and any other high-touch locations.

- **Face Coverings:** Require face coverings for all individuals using subways, buses and trains. Provide face coverings throughout the system to ensure that all riders have them. The city will initially provide one million FREE face coverings, and the MTA and State should match that commitment.
- **Personnel:** City will work with MTA to identify personnel to help promote and enforce social distancing.



## Comptroller Stringer to Mayor de Blasio: Cut \$1.1 Billion in NYPD Spending Over Four Years and Reinvest in Vulnerable Communities

New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer sent a [letter](#) to New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio calling on the City to cut \$1.1 billion from the New York City Police Department (NYPD) over the next four fiscal years. The Comptroller recommends shifting both responsibilities and funding from the NYPD to social service providers and community-based organizations to service vulnerable communities.

Comptroller Stringer's letter outlines strategies to shift responsibilities away from the Police Department and toward social workers, counselors, community-based violence interrupters, and other trained professionals better equipped to handle calls related to individuals in mental health crisis, homelessness, and other non-criminal activities.

"Breaking down structural racism in New York City will require long-term, lasting change — and that must include reducing the NYPD's budget," New York City Comptroller Stringer said.

The Comptroller proposes to implement a 5 percent cut to the NYPD's Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) Executive Budget by reducing NYPD uniformed headcount through attrition, cutting overtime, and trimming Other Than Personnel Services (OTPS) — saving approximately \$265 million annually. Mayor de Blasio's budget proposal includes a 0.31 percent cut to the NYPD's \$5.9 billion budget, according to Comptroller Stringer.

By doing so, Comptroller Stringer asserts, the City could free up funding to support frontline services, rebuild communities ravaged by COVID-19 and systemic community disinvestment, and dramatically reduce police interactions. The Comptroller highlighted highlighting existing models and approaches that have proven successful in Eugene and Springfield, Oregon; Tucson, Arizona and Camden, New Jersey.

To generate the funding, the Comptroller Stringer proposes:

- **Reduce NYPD uniformed headcount through attrition:** The City should suspend hiring of new police classes in FY 2021. Assuming a 3 percent attrition rate, that would bring expected uniformed headcount down to approximately 35,000 by end of FY 2021, or the same average headcount from 2011 and 2016. Savings would also accrue from associated fringe benefits savings.
- **Cut NYPD uniformed overtime by 5 percent:** Overtime spending for FY 2021 is budgeted at \$519.6 million. A 5 percent reduction in budgeted overtime for uniformed officers would yield a \$26 million annual savings.
- **Trim Other than Personnel Services by 4 percent:** The City-funded OTPS budget for FY 2021 is \$429 million. A 4 percent reduction in OTPS savings would yield \$17 million in savings. This could be achieved through reductions in the NYPD's spending on computer services and other service contracts, as well as a lengthening of the replacement cycle for NYPD vehicles, among other possible actions.

## Briefs

### **Department of Financial Services to Require State-Regulated Insurance Companies to Expedite Claims for Looting and Vandalism Damage**

The State Department of Financial Services will issue an emergency regulation to help businesses and consumers who suffered damage from looting and vandalism by requiring New York State-regulated insurance companies to expedite the resolution and payment of related insurance claims.

Additional relief provided by the emergency regulation will include allowing policyholders to make immediate repairs to damaged property if necessary to protect health or safety, and to submit claims with reasonable proof of loss, including photos, so businesses do not have to wait for police reports to file a claim. The emergency regulation will also offer small businesses and consumers the option to resolve disputes through an impartial mediation process paid for by the applicable insurer.

### **SUNY Board of Trustees Announces Departure of Kristina Johnson as Chancellor**

#### ***Dr. Johnson Appointed as the Next President of The Ohio State University***

State University of New York Board of Trustees this week announced the departure of Dr. Kristina M. Johnson as Chancellor. Dr. Johnson was appointed president of The Ohio State University, where she will start September 1. She will continue her duties as SUNY Chancellor to help prepare campuses for fall semester until an interim leadership structure is appointed by the SUNY Board of Trustees.

Dr. Johnson became the 13<sup>th</sup> Chancellor of SUNY on April 24, 2017. The State University of New York is the largest comprehensive system of higher education in the United States, and more than 95 percent of all New Yorkers live within 30 miles of any one of SUNY's 64 colleges and universities. Across the system, SUNY has four academic health centers, five hospitals, four medical schools, two dental schools, the state's only college of optometry, and manages one US Department of Energy National Laboratory. As of Fall 2019, more than 415,500 students were enrolled in a degree-granting program at a SUNY campus. In total, SUNY serves about 1.3 million students in credit-bearing courses and programs, continuing education, and community outreach programs.

## **Council Committee to Consider Legislation to Address Police Practices**

The City Council Committee on Public Safety is scheduled to address police misconduct, including a bill to criminalize an officer's use of a chokehold or other techniques that restrict breathing and a second bill requiring the NYPD to create guidelines for police discipline, according to Speaker Corey Johnson.

Intro 536, sponsored by Council Member Rory Lancman, chair of the Committee on the Justice System, would make use of chokeholds a misdemeanor. This bill will be amended to include other deadly techniques, like placing a knee on a person's neck. A hearing on this bill will be held on June 9.

Intro 1309, sponsored by Council Member Donovan Richards, Chair of the Committee on Public Safety, will be amended to call for the NYPD to create clear guidelines for police discipline. These guidelines, known as a disciplinary matrix, would be made public, giving all New Yorkers a better understanding of potential penalties for police misconduct.

## **City Launches Small Business Emergency Grant Program**

Mayor Bill de Blasio announced a Small Business Emergency Grant Program for small businesses who were impacted by looting and experienced damage to their storefronts. With \$500,000 in initial funds from SOMOS Community Care, the City will begin providing grants to small businesses of up to \$10,000 per business, starting in the Bronx. These grants will help with recovery, including repairs, security systems, and locks. The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City will work with Small Business Services to assess the level of need throughout the city, with the intent to raise funds for repairs of businesses in other boroughs.

New York City's Small Business Service's Emergency response team is on the ground in affected communities, surveying damage and providing applications to apply for the grant to small business owners. The City is also providing emergency legal support, incident report support, and insurance claim support.



## What to Know About Absentee Voting for the June 23 Primary

(Source: [City and State](#), April 28, 2020, excerpted)

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in significant changes in the upcoming June 23<sup>rd</sup> primary. The State Board of Elections canceled the Democratic presidential primary now that former Vice President Joe Biden has become the presumptive nominee. The regularly scheduled state and federal primaries will still take place across New York, but Governor Andrew Cuomo has canceled nearly all special elections that were set for June 23. Polling places in districts with races on the ballot will be open, but Governor Cuomo also expanded absentee voting in order to minimize the number of people at polling sites for the safety of both voters and poll workers.

### **Do I need to apply for an absentee ballot?**

In order to vote by mail, voters must still fill out and submit an application to receive an absentee ballot. This application will be sent to all registered voters by mail in accordance with an [April 24 executive order](#) which mandated that every registered voter in the state receive an absentee ballot application, with postage, to ensure that everyone who may wish to vote remotely has the opportunity. Voters would fill out the form, and mail it back to their local board of elections. Individuals may also print an application online or apply digitally by emailing the completed form to the local board of elections.

### **Aren't there specific criteria you have to meet in order to qualify for an absentee ballot?**

Yes, and technically this is still true. However, Governor Cuomo through an [April 9 executive order](#) expanded the definition of a “temporary illness,” one of the reasons for which someone could request an absentee ballot, to include “the potential for contraction of the COVID-19 virus.” This effectively makes everyone in the state eligible for an absentee ballot. This executive order only applies to elections held on or before June 23, so a new order would be needed if the coronavirus pandemic is still an issue in November.

### **Will polling places still be open?**

Yes, all polling sites in districts with elections will still open.

## *Coming Up*

### *New York State*

*The Senate and Assembly are at the Call of the Respective Legislative Leaders.*

### *New York City*

*Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>*

*Committee on Public Safety, Remote Hearing, 10 a.m.*

*Int 0536-2018 - A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the City of New York, in relation to chokeholds and other such restraints.*

**Proposed Int. No. 536-A** - Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign A.6144 and S.6670A, legislation that would establish the crime of strangulation in the first degree; disregard of banned employment procedures.

**Res 0027-2018 Proposed Res. No. 27-A** - Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to pass, and the President to sign, the Eric Garner Excessive Use of Force Prevention Act of 2019 (H.R. 4408), which would prohibit police chokeholds and other tactics that result in asphyxiation.

### **Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>**

**Committee on Higher Education, Remote Hearing, 10 a.m.**

Oversight - The Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) on the City University of New York.

### **Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Committee on Fire and Emergency Management, Remote Hearing, 10 a.m.**

Oversight - The City's Emergency Management Preparedness for Potential Second Wave of COVID-19.

### **Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Committee on Transportation, Remote Hearing, 10 a.m.**

Oversight - DOT and MTA's Response to COVID-19

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