

Information on coronavirus

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New York City to Close All School Buildings and Transition to Remote Learning

March 15, 2020

Video available at: <https://youtu.be/hLjT9ub-X1c>

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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 Bill de Blasio today announced new updates on the City’s response to COVID-19. The City will move towards a remote learning model for all school days until Spring Recess. Students will not report to school buildings for instruction until Monday April 20, 2020 or longer if necessary.

“As we learn more about COVID-19 every day, we are keeping every possible option on the table to keep New Yorkers safe. That’s why we are asking the people of our City to make hard choices as we introduce more restrictive measures to create greater social distancing—including the temporary closure of our school buildings. We all need to change our lives—in ways both big and small—to keep each other safe,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**.

“The health and safety of our students and families remains our top priority, and we are committed to providing instructional opportunities for all of our students,” said **Schools Chancellor Richard A. Carranza**. “We know that millions of New Yorkers depend on our schools for education, but also so much more, and we will be supporting each of them during this time. We have the best students and most dedicated staff in the world—and nothing will change that.”

There are now 329 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New York City and 5 fatalities.

Update on City Schools

Effective tomorrow, March 16, New York City schools will close. Starting March 23, the City will move towards a new Remote Learning Model for all school days until Spring Recess. Students will not report to school buildings for instruction during this time. School buildings are scheduled to reopen to students following Spring Recess on Monday, April 20, 2020. Grab-and-go meals will be available for students throughout the entirety of the closure.

The schedule for this week is as follows:

Monday, March 16: Citywide closure. Students, teachers, and principals do not report.

Tuesday, March 17- Thursday, March 19: Teachers and principals participate in professional development on remote learning.

Thursday, March 19-Friday, March 20: Students who need it will be able to begin process of picking up the technology necessary for remote learning. Additional guidance for families will be sent this week.

Monday, March 23: Remote learning launches, with additional guidance provided throughout the week of the 23rd.

NYCDOE-specific instructional resources in English for students in grades Pre-K through 12 are currently available online at schools.nyc.gov/learnathome. More information about remote learning, meals, and other core services will be made available for families at schools.nyc.gov.

To help all students adjust to remote learning environments, Apple and T-Mobile will ensure that in the coming weeks, 300,000 New York City public school students who don't currently have an internet-connected device will have one for their schoolwork, beginning with 25,000 iPads that will be distributed next week

To keep healthcare providers unaffected, the Mayor is calling upon New Yorkers to watch the children of their neighbors, friends, and members of the community who work in the healthcare sector.

Update on Senior Centers

The Mayor is instructing all programs run by Department for the Aging to close and cancel all congregate meal, recreational, and educational services and activities, effective immediately. Senior centers will operate strictly to deliver food to seniors, either as take-home meals or meals delivered to homes. Centers are advised to create a phone bank to call the center's participants to ensure they are well and to help avoid social isolation.

New Guidance for Businesses

Members of FDNY, the New York City's Sheriff Office, and the Department of Buildings will actively inspect businesses and issue fines to those who do not comply with the City's new restrictions and guidance on Sunday and Monday evening of this week. The guidance, issued Friday, requires businesses with an occupancy of 500 persons or less to maintain an occupancy level at or below 50%.

Department of Correction

To reduce exposure for COVID-19, DOC will suspend in-person visitation beginning Wednesday, March 18. The City is also taking additional measures to help detainees stay in contact with their families and communities, including increased access to phones and postage stamps. For the first time, the City is also working to implement a televisit initiative that will allow people contacting detainees the convenience of using their own personal PC or mobile device to complete the teleconference.

New Guidance for Health Providers

To minimize possible exposures to healthcare workers, vulnerable patients and reduce the demand for personal protective equipment, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene will advise patients with mild to moderate illnesses to stay home. DOHMH strongly recommends against testing these persons who can be safely managed at home, unless a diagnosis may impact patient management.

Healthcare facilities should also now plan for enhanced surge capacity. Per CDC & WHO guidance, patients can now be managed with droplet precautions along with gown, gloves, and eye protection. This means that patients can be evaluated in a private examination room with the door closed.

Additionally, DOHMH recommends healthcare workers do not need to use a fit tested N95 respirator or Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR) for routine (non-aerosol generating) care of a COVID-19 patient.

New Guidance for HRA Centers

- New Yorkers can continue to apply for, access, and manage a range of benefits online via ACCESSHRA, including SNAP benefits/food assistance and one-shot emergency assistance, such as rent arrears and utilities grants.
- Additionally, effective tomorrow, via ACCESSHRA and our website, we are advising clients who have appointments at any of our Cash Assistance offices or programs that we will grant good cause if they are unable to keep those appointments.
- This will limit in-office appointments to clients who have emergency Cash Assistance needs that are not addressed by the moratorium of evictions and utility shutoffs.

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