

Deaths: 306 (total 18,247)

COVID-19 Tracker Site: <https://covid19tracker.health.ny.gov>

New faces today: Sarah Feinberg, Patrick Foye,
Also, Howard Zucker, Melissa DeRosa and Robert Mujica (Member for MTA Board)

- What day is today? Today is another day to do better.
- Hospitalizations down
- Intubations down
- New COVID Cases, slightly down but still unacceptable
- 306 deaths (287 Hospitals, 19 Nursing homes)
- Reopening? Need to be smart, we have never been here before, follow number and data, not political, even in this election year
- If we do it right, it is a science
 - o Is the infection spreading? Look at diagnostic tests
 - o Track rate of transmission
 - o Is hospital capacity going to be a problem? Beds (at least 30%) and at least 30 day supply of equipment
- Test-Trace-Isolate, remains key to controlling rate
- Increasing number of tests, ~30k tests a day, more than any other state in the US or country per capita
- More on testing to come...(not today)
- Trace: Find positives and trace back, test those people, isolate those people
- Contact tracing finds cases quickly so they can be isolated and reduce spread
- Case Reported, Case interview, Contact Notification, contact follow up
- Problem is the SCALE of the operation
- Yesterday 4,681 people we tested were positive, how do you now communicate with 4,681 people and trace back all of the people they have been in contact with? It is an overwhelming scale.
- Last week we announced Mayor Michael Bloomberg would lead the first even testing/tracing/isolation program
- At a scale we have never seen before and we need it tomorrow
- Estimate is 30 contact tracers' s foe every 100k and additional tracers based on projected number of cases in a region
- Statewide 6,400-17k tracers depending on cases
- Will require tracing army
- We will draw tracers from State City and County Health Departments and other employees, also what other state employees can we train?
- Will have to be tested before they can do this
- Thank you to Mayor Michael Bloomberg

Bloomberg joins via video:

- Questions continues to be how do we reopen? Need to have contact tracing
- Isolate virus and keep it isolated
- We are glad to support the state in implementing this program
- Will need a lot of well-trained people

- Enlisted Johns Hopkins University
- Also teamed up with Vital Strategies and Resolve to save lives
- Hiring training deploying a small army will be a challenge
- Brought in staffing organizations and working with CUNY and SUNY
- John Hopkins has developed training class with test you have to pass in order to be hired
- Also put technology to use
- Vital strategies doing 3 apps, tracing, reporting to DOH and info for the public
- Also developing protocols and playbook to do this effectively
- Will release the playbook publicly to help everyone (other states and countries)
- Also bring in outside experts so others can see what does well
- Learn as we go and make adjustments
- Will be getting on a call with Mayors from around the country to discuss these issue (in an hour)

Cuomo:

- Monumental undertaking, problem bigger than any one of us but not bigger than all of us
- NY will be a laboratory to put together best system
- Will also be coordinating on tri-state basis, don't want to get limited by jurisdiction
- The next problem...
- In an emergency, problems compound
- We have that now with NYC subway system, Daily news did front page story
- Conditions on NYC Subway system have rapidly deteriorated
- MTA employees & NYPD have become sick and some have lost their lives
- Greater need than ever to disinfect all stations and trains/busses/ADA vehicles
- We need our essential workers and they need the public transit system
- Have pushed essential workers to keep working
- It is our obligation to do everything we can to keep them safe
- MTA stepped up to clean trains every 72 hours
- But we know the virus can live on surfaces for hours or even days
- We honor essential works by our actions
- Trains and busses should be disinfected every 24 hours
- This is a task no one has ever imagined before, this scale is unprecedented
- We have cleaned trains but how do you disinfect?
- New process/ New methods/ New cleaning agents
- Subway cars, stations, busses
- This is the right thing to do, another challenge for the MTA
- They have recommended a plan they can disinfect all subways, busses
- 1AM-5AM stopping trains to do this
- Lowest ridership ~10k people
- MTA will still provide transportation will have busses, for hire and dollar vans at no costs to essential workers
- This will be one of the most aggressive creative challenging undertakings that the MTA has done, will require MTA/State/City/NYPD presence to do this
- Consulted with elected officials, have agreed to adopt the plan
- MTA is undertaking something that some would have said was impossible
- MTA will also disinfect Metro North and LIRR, they will do that without disruption
- This is a joint MTA/State/City Partnership
- Not one to shy away from a challenge
- Will require a lot of effort, MTA has stepped up, big part from City and NYPD
- We have never been here before, guarantee there will be other unanticipated consequences
- We will all do our part
- Applaud the Mayor for taking this on, always easier to say no

Mayor deBlasio:

- You and I have talked about this kind of idea
- When we disrupt something that isn't working and we go somewhere new and better that is a positive
- Commend the Governor and MTA
- Thanks, Michael Bloomberg, for his partnership on tracing, NYC plans to hire 1k tracers
- We are going to find a way to make our subway system cleaner than it has even been
- Homelessness has been an intractable issue; this is an example to a new way to get homeless off the streets
- Also, the heroic outreach employees, this work has been stymied by mental health and other issues
- This will disrupt that reality, get people off the trains, get services to them
- Shut down encampments, helped get them services
- Very productive conversations in the last few days
- Will protect people and get a new way to help
- We will make this work together and will change people's lives for the better

Cuomo:

- You are right now one said it was going to be easy but no one said it was going to be this hard either
- Lessons we have learned, telemedicine, tele-education, new health system
- We have never had to disinfect trains and busses like this, you live learn and you meet the challenge
- This is a daunting challenge, mayor is stepping in with eyes wide open takes challenge and courage
- Want to say to essential workers, we thank you with not only our words but with our actions
- We will rise to the challenge, we have overcome the obstacles

Q&A:

Will the subway be pegged to on pause order?

- No
- Goes into effect May 6th

What is your response to criticism that Seattle was quick to respond and you were not?

- No state moved faster from first case to full shutdown
- It is factually wrong
- We now know that there were more than 10k
- Federal government was focused on west coast, did not shut down travel from Europe
- Times did not write editorial to shut down until after we had shut down
- If you don't have to be consistent it is easy to raise a point

If you had done the shutdown a week or two earlier, what difference would that have made?

- We had cases coming from Europe that no one knew
- No one saw that happening or you would have done Europe travel ban with you did China travel ban
- If you want to rewind, go back to November and December, where were the experts? Governors don't

Would you sign a lookback bill?

- Would need to see bill and read bill

Still hearing about UI issues, rent do tomorrow, what can do?

- Doing everything we can, way ahead of other states
- Still dealing with last legislation with new program
- No one can be evicted for non-payment of rent, there are weeks left on that EO
- At the end of that period will have to think about what to do
- Don't want landlords are walking away from buildings either

MT is providing rental assistance, would NY do that?

- If I were Montana I would do that too, we have \$13B deficit

Toxic Shock in children?

- Seeing some children who may have blood vessel inflammation, it is rare

In terms of contact tracing how can you alert everyone? What if they were on subways?

- They interview you, come up with the people you believe you were in close contact with
- Then you have to call all those people, do the best you can
- Then must isolate, may have to give hotel rooms or other facilities
- Huge undertaking
- They have some high tech apps where they can trace cell phones, that brings up other issues

You have mentioned that NY does have COVID only facilities, can you give names?

- Will get those to them

Parents are asking about summer camps; Congressional members have sent letter about these camps?

- What you can say to Stefanik, we can provide childcare and other services if we have money
- They have provided no funding, nothing for police, fire, schools, rental assistance, teachers
- You can do a lot of good things but you need funding
- Looking at what childcare, daycare in limited basis for childcare

There were reports of bodies at Brooklyn funeral homes being stacked will there be penalties

- We are investigating and issued guidelines, not acceptable
- There are fines and suspensions
- Funeral home should not have done that

Asked about elective surgeries in facilities that may be over 70% but have few COVID cases? Also could this further exacerbate issues?

- Understand there are places that need this for revenue
- Where we know there is capacity, we have opened them up
- We have built in buffer of 30% incase COVID number spikes
- Antibody testing has two-week lag
- Have to learn lesson
- Different regions are not out of the woods yet. Don't get cocky.
- We may need those beds for people who are gasping for air
- If necessary, would have to go to a facility that is doing those procedures