

Still on 'PAUSE':

Cuomo extends closures an additional two weeks

Directs schools & nonessential businesses to stay closed through April 29

Increases maximum fine for violations of state's social distancing protocol from \$500 to \$1,000

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo provides a coronavirus update during a press conference in the Red Room at the State Capitol. (Photo by Mike Groll/Office of Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo)



Amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo on Monday announced all "New York State on PAUSE" functions will be extended for an additional two weeks. The governor also directed schools and nonessential businesses to stay closed for an additional two weeks, through April 29. The state will re-evaluate after this additional two-week period.

•Cuomo said New York is increasing the maximum fine for violations of the state's social distancing protocol from \$500 to \$1,000 to help address the lack of adherence to social distancing protocols. The governor reminded localities they have the authority to enforce the protocols.

•The governor is asking the federal government to allow the USNS Comfort hospital ship to be used for COVID-19 patients. President Donald Trump has already granted the governor's request for the Javits temporary hospital facility to be used for only COVID-19 positive patients, and the addition of the USNS Comfort would help relieve pressure on the state's hospital system with an addition of 1,000 beds for COVID-19 patients.

•Cuomo announced the creation of the First Responders Fund to assist COVID-19 health care workers and first responders with expenses and costs, including child care. The State Department of Health is accepting donations for the fund, and Blackstone is making an anchor \$10 million contribution to the fund. Donations can be made electronically at <https://www.healthresearch.org/donation-form/>

"This virus is an enemy that the entire country underestimated from day one and we have paid the price dearly," Cuomo said. "While the numbers look like they may be turning, now is not the time to be lax with social distancing – that would be a mistake – and we all have a responsibility and a societal role in this. As I said from day one, I am not going to choose between public health and economic activity, and to that end I am extending all 'New York State on PAUSE' functions for an additional two weeks. People are dying and our health care workers are exposing themselves to tremendous risk every day. If we can't convince you to show discipline for yourself in terms of social distancing, show discipline for other people."

or by check sent to below address. Donors should specify the donation is for "COVID-19 NYS Emergency Response."

Health Research Inc., 150 Broadway, Suite 560, Menands, NY 12204

•Cuomo said the state is partnering with Headspace, a global leader in mindfulness and meditation, to offer free meditation and mindfulness content for all New Yorkers as

a mental health resource for residents coping with the unprecedented public health crisis. New Yorkers can access a collection of science-backed, evidence-based guided meditations, along with at-home mindful workouts, sleep and kids content to help address rising stress and anxiety at www.headspace.com/ny.

Erie County offers information on public face masks

The Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) made the following announcements earlier this week.

Online Case Map

The Erie County Online COVID-19 case mapping tool has been updated with a ZIP code layer. Access this map at www.erie.gov/covidmap.

Cloth Face Coverings

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has

recommended cloth face coverings (masks) for individuals when spending time in public spaces, like stores, where keeping a six-foot distance from others is not easy or possible. These coverings should:

- ✓ Fit snugly, but comfortably against the side of the face
- ✓ Be secured with ties or ear loops
- ✓ Include multiple layers of fabric

✓ Allow for breathing without restriction

✓ Be able to be laundered and machine-dried without damage or change to shape

Most people will be able to make these from materials around their home. There are no-sew methods described in detail on the CDC website: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html)

coverings.html.

If someone is ill with respiratory symptoms, they should wear a cloth covering over the nose and mouth when around other people or in public spaces. Masks can also help people avoid touching their faces – which is another way to reduce the risk of infection.

An important note from CDC: Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children un-

der age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

Cloth face coverings are a risk reduction tool and should be used along with frequent hand washing, good respiratory etiquette and cleaning/disinfection of frequently touched surfaces.

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