



BILL PASCRELL

9th District of New Jersey



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An Update on the COVID-19 Pandemic

Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19

Tuesday, June 16th

6:00pm ET

Register to Participate at:

pascrell.house.gov/live/



Follow along on our social media for the latest on on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dear Friend:

During this trying time for our country, I want to ensure you have the latest information about the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and my work in Congress to protect the safety and economic security of North Jersey workers and families amid this ongoing crisis.

New Jerseyans have done a fantastic job at slowing the spread of COVID-19, but we are still facing a very serious public health crisis. Those protesting and resuming regular activities outside their home should exercise every precaution, including wearing a face mask, regularly washing your hands, and social distancing as much as possible. Additionally, all protestors and those operating outside the home and around others, especially those with underlying conditions, should seek a COVID-19 test. Free tests are widely available across the state.

Outlook in New Jersey

Slowing the Spread: As of June 12, there are 165,816 confirmed cases and 12,443 deaths in our state, including approximately 24,309 cases in New Jersey's Ninth Congressional District. These statistics are tragic, but thanks to Governor Phil Murphy's swift action as well as the efforts of New Jerseyans practicing

social distancing, we have been flattening the curve. Since COVID-19 cases peaked in New Jersey in mid-April, [statewide hospitalizations are down by 89%](#).

Social distancing is working and our collective sacrifice has saved countless lives. Despite the positive progress we have made, New Jersey's is still facing a public health crisis and the emergency orders the state is under has been extended through July. On June 9, Governor Murphy [lifted the statewide stay-at-home order](#) and raised the limit on outdoor gatherings to 100 people and indoor gatherings to 50 people, so long as the room capacity does not exceed 25%.

It is critical we continue to practice social distancing to further slow the spread of COVID-19 and prevent a resurgence. If you are outside your home and around others, it is vital you [wear a cloth face covering](#) and follow [CDC guidelines](#) for protecting yourself and others. Routine use of these measures will help keep the curve flat.

Re-Opening the Economy: On May 18th, Governor Murphy announced a [multistage approach](#) to responsibly put New Jersey on the path to re-opening the economy. We are currently in Stage One, with state and county parks, non-essential construction, curbside retail, drive-in activities, beaches, and elective surgeries all resuming.

On June 15, New Jersey [will enter Stage Two](#) of Governor Murphy's plan to safely re-open the economy. Stage Two will include re-opening outdoor dining for restaurants and indoor, non-essential retail on June 15. Beginning on June 22, barber shops, salons, and municipal pools will be able to reopen. In the period to follow, the state will work toward the gradual opening of personal care, gyms, and health clubs, at reduced capacities as the stage progresses.

Additionally, Governor Murphy [announced](#) that beginning July 6, childcare services, youth day camps, and organized sports will be allowed to resume with strict social distancing in place.

Unemployment: As of June 4, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development has [dispersed more than \\$6.25 billion in unemployment benefits to more than 1.2 million people](#). The Department has also made \$390 million in federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) payments. PUA is a new program authorized by Congress as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act to provide unemployment benefits to workers not eligible for regular unemployment like independent contractors or gig workers. For more information about PUA or unemployment benefits, please visit: myunemployment.nj.gov/

If you are experiencing issues receiving your owed unemployment benefits, please reach out to my office at 973-523-5152 for assistance.

Voting: To ensure everyone is able to safely cast their vote in the upcoming July 7 Primary, all registered New Jersey Democratic and Republican voters will receive vote-by-mail (VBM) ballots. Additionally, VBM ballot applications will be sent to all unaffiliated and inactive voters. All VBM ballots and VBM ballot applications will come with pre-paid postage provided. **Keep your eyes peeled: if you haven't received yours yet, you should soon.**

Over six million ballots and ballot applications are being sent to voters for our state's July 7 primary. This is a massive undertaking that will require cooperation between state, county, and local officials with USPS to ensure all ballots are received, returned, and counted on time. On June 12, I [convened the New Jersey Congressional Delegation for a discussion](#) with U.S. Postal Service Chief Operating Officer David Williams on USPS's efforts to prepare for our state's upcoming important vote-by-mail elections.

Federal Support for New Jersey

Support for Small Businesses: The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) has announced a \$50 million expansion of its Small Business Emergency Assistance Grant Program, which provides funding to small businesses facing financial challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The expanded program will provide grants of up to \$10,000 to qualified businesses and relaxes eligibility criteria to include a broader variety of businesses as well as home-based businesses and sole proprietorships.

These additional funds are available through the Coronavirus Relief Fund established under the Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act that Congress passed and I supported in late March.

For more information about this program, visit New Jersey's [COVID-19 Business Informational page](#).

Nutritional Assistance: Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients in New Jersey are now able to [purchase groceries online](#) through Amazon and participating Walmarts, ShopRites and The Fresh Grocers. This flexibility will help protect the program's recipients amidst the pandemic. In March, I joined Sens. Bob Menendez and Cory Booker in [calling on the United States Department of Agriculture to admit New Jersey into this critical program](#).

To learn more, recipients can visit the [Amazon](#) or [Walmart](#) SNAP portals to register their Electronic Benefit Transit (EBT) card. Any Walmart, [ShopRite](#) or [The Fresh Grocer](#) that currently provides online shopping will also accept online ordering with SNAP benefits.

Testing for COVID-19

People with COVID-19 can exhibit a wide range of symptoms. According to the [CDC](#), **symptoms may include cough, fever, shortness of breath, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell**. If you develop these symptoms, contact your primary care provider or make use of the following resources from the state.

- **Use the COVID-19 Symptom Checker** to determine whether you should seek testing or medical assistance: self.covid19.nj.gov/
- **Call (General COVID-19 Questions):** 2-1-1 (7am-11pm ET)
- **Call (Clinical COVID-19 Questions):** 1-800-962-1253 (24/7)
- **Get Tested:** Visit New Jersey's [COVID-19 Test Site Finder](#)

Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, patients will not have any out of pocket costs for COVID-19 tests from their insurance. Uninsured patients will be fully covered under a program funded by the New Jersey Department of Health and Human Services.

There are dozens of test sites open throughout our district, and finding the one closest to you is easy. Just visit New Jersey's [COVID-19 Test Site Finder](#). Testing sites have various operating hours and requirements. Most require an appointment in advance. Some require proof of residency in New Jersey or a specific county or municipality. So, please verify hours and whether an appointment is required before going!

Resources

My office has updated our fact sheets to ensure workers, families, businesses, and health care providers know their options for relief:

- [Hospitals and Health Care Providers Relief Fact Sheet](#)
 - *The CARES Act allocated \$100 billion for health care providers across the nation to respond to the outbreak, and the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act provided an additional \$75 billion. **New Jersey hospitals have received \$3.19 billion in relief.***
- [Individuals and Families Relief Fact Sheet](#)
 - *The CARES Act included \$1,200 economic impact payments for most Americans to address the severe impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak on personal safety and financial security amid this crisis. The IRS has delivered [159 million of these payments to Americans](#), **including over [3.9 million payments to New Jerseyans](#). Haven't received your check yet or have a question? The IRS has set up a hotline at 800-919-9835.***
- [Small and Medium Sized Business Relief Fact Sheet](#)
 - *On April 23, Congress passed an additional \$310 billion for the Paycheck Program Program and \$50 billion in small business disaster loans. I was glad to support this critical legislation to ensure our neighborhood small businesses have the support they need, and I am committed to doing more for our state and local governments, hospitals, and first responders. American small businesses have received over \$511.3 billion and **New Jersey businesses have received over \$16.8 billion in Paycheck Protection loans from this program.***

Additionally, **if you have recently lost health coverage** due to job loss of yourself or a family member, you are eligible to enroll in quality, affordable health care through the Affordable Care Act. Go to healthcare.gov to enroll and learn more about qualifying life events that allow you to enroll outside of Open Enrollment.

We are facing a global pandemic, and ensuring the safety of all families from COVID-19 and its impact on day-to-day life is my top priority. You can always reach me and my staff in Washington at 202-225-5751 or New Jersey at 973-523-5152 for assistance or further guidance. Remember, my door is always open to you. We are all in this together.

Sincerely,



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Member of Congress



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