



Mayor Brindle's COVID-19 Update April 3, 2020



CONFIRMED CASES

Today, there are 29,895 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New Jersey, with another 4,808 still under investigation. The County now reports 2,487 cases, with Westfield's case total now at 74 to date. For a more detailed breakdown of statewide numbers, visit the [NJ Department of Health COVID-19 Dashboard](#).

FEDERAL AND STATE UPDATES

This afternoon, the CDC issued new guidance to wear cloth face coverings, such as a bandana or scarf, in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. This is especially important given that people can have COVID-19 but remain without symptoms for days, making it difficult to know who has the virus. This is a precaution that can protect both you and those that you may come into contact with when outside your home.

Please be sure to leave all surgical and medical masks for health care workers and our first responders, who depend on these critical resources and are on our front lines keeping us safe. The use of face coverings does not in any way replace the need to social distance and remain at minimum six feet from anyone at all times -- which, along with sanitizing and washing hands frequently, remains an effective way to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The best way, above all else, to stay safe and healthy remains to stay home as much as possible.

On the State level, Governor Murphy signed an Executive Order today directing that all flags across New Jersey be lowered to half-staff indefinitely in honor of those we have lost – and those we will lose – to COVID-19.

LOCAL UPDATES

I would like to make a very timely and important introduction. This week, Bob Zuckerman began in his role as the new Executive Director of the Downtown Westfield Corporation (DWC) under the most unforeseen of circumstances. Bob has extensive experience in downtown organizations, Special Improvement Districts, and Main Street Programs. He most recently headed the South Orange Village Center Alliance and is currently President of Downtown New Jersey, a statewide professional organization that advocates for downtowns. Prior to working in South Orange, Bob served as Executive Director of the Lower East Side Business Improvement District during Hurricane Sandy, and was pivotal in helping the business community rebound. His experience also includes roles at the Greenwich Village-Chelsea Chamber of Commerce and the Gowanus Canal Conservancy.

Bob brings immense talent and experience to his new job, and I can think of nobody more uniquely qualified to take on the current challenge facing our Downtown business climate, as well as reimagining its post-COVID-19 future. He has hit the ground running this week, reaching out to our business owners and consolidating the resources being made available in advance of a video conference call he will host with them early next week.

I also want to recognize Beth Brenner and Nicki McAuliffe of the DWC, both of whom have worked tirelessly during this crisis to gather and promote the many offerings of our Virtual Downtown. Their commitment and resourcefulness is greatly appreciated as they continue to provide information to the community in support of Westfield's businesses.

Lastly, as we head into the weekend (and into spring break for those with children in Westfield Public Schools), please continue to check in on each other. This is hard for everyone, and kindness will go a long way in keeping our community connected through this crisis. I continue to receive suggestions about ways in which we can all work together -- from small, uplifting gestures to large fundraisers -- and I am humbled every day by the energy our residents invest in finding ways to help and being part of the solution. Thanks to each of you.