



Mayor Brindle's
COVID-19 Update
April 7, 2020



CONFIRMED CASES

- Today, there are 44,416 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New Jersey, with another 2,220 still under investigation. Currently, the County reports 4,358 cases, with Westfield's case total now at 98 to date. For a more detailed breakdown of statewide numbers, visit the NJ Department of Health COVID-19 Dashboard.
- I'm saddened to report that two additional fatalities -- a 94 year-old female and an 84 year-old male -- bring the total number of deaths in Westfield to five. Let's keep the families of these residents in our thoughts. To lose any member of our community to this virus is tragic; to see the number continue to climb is heartbreaking.

STATE AND COUNTY UPDATES

- Today, Governor Murphy signed an Executive Order to waive 2019-2020 school year assessment requirements for eighth and twelfth grade students due to #COVID19.
- In addition, the Governor also ordered the closure of all state and county parks and forests, effective 8:00PM tonight, until further notice, due to ongoing gathering that violates social distancing requirements.

LOCAL UPDATES

In light of this order, Westfield will follow suit and close all municipal parks, which will be enforced beginning at 8:00PM tonight. I am concerned that the closure of the County parks will result in further crowding of our own, making it extremely difficult to maintain and enforce appropriate social distancing. Additionally, we are entering what will be, by all expert accounts, an extremely difficult few weeks in New Jersey with respect to the incremental increase in COVID-19 cases. As we prepare for the peak of this virus in the coming weeks, we will continue to prioritize public health and undertake all measures we can to save lives and flatten the curve.

As a resident, a neighbor, and a parent, I am disappointed in having to make this hard yet necessary decision -- especially during spring break week. But as mayor, my guiding principles in making any decision are those rooted in science, facts, and priorities that serve the well-being of the community. I saw a quote recently from Dr. Amy Acton, the Director of the Ohio Department of Public Health, and she characterized COVID-19 related decision making this way: "On the front end of a pandemic, you look a little bit like an alarmist...And on the back end of a pandemic, you didn't do enough." Of the two options, I'll gladly take the first to navigate our community through this crisis.

- In the last few days, I have received some messages about crowding along residential roadways among joggers, walkers, and cyclists. With the closure of the parks, it is more important than ever to ensure you are following safety guidelines when outside in your neighborhood. As a reminder, pedestrians should utilize the sidewalk or shoulder of the road and always walk against traffic, while cyclists should be on the shoulder riding with the flow of vehicular traffic. Please be courteous and maintain six feet of distance from others.
- We have received a request from our recycling provider, Giordano Company, to communicate about the high amount of latex gloves and masks in the recycling loads this week at their processing facility. These items are NOT considered household recycling, and should be properly disposed of as trash. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

Finally, on this World Health Day, let's take a moment to thank all of our medical professionals who are on the front lines to keep us safe during this crisis. While we continue to keep them in our thoughts, I can think of no better way to honor their bravery than to do our part and stay home.