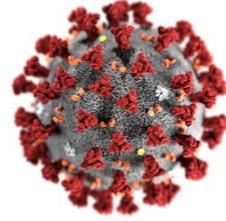




## Mayor Brindle's COVID-19 Update May 5, 2020



### CONFIRMED CASES

- Today, there are 130,593 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New Jersey, with another 550 still under investigation. Currently, the County reports 13,503 cases, with Westfield reporting one additional case for 239 to date.
- For a more detailed breakdown of statewide numbers is available online at the NJ Department of Health COVID-19 Dashboard.

### STATE, AND COUNTY UPDATES

- The NJ Division of Consumer Affairs will begin a program to grant temporary emergency licenses to recent graduates of nursing, physician assistant, pharmacy, and respiratory care therapy programs who have not yet been able to take and pass their licensing exams, so that thousands of recent graduates will be able to quickly join the teams of health care professionals currently fighting COVID-19.
- The State received new guidance yesterday from The U.S. Department of the Treasury Secretary regarding how it can use the \$2.4 billion in CARES Act funding that New Jersey has received, indicating greater flexibility in how it can be used – which means more of it will stay in New Jersey and can be put to good use for first responders and small businesses.

## LOCAL UPDATES

- Thank you to resident Amanda Marcotullio, who has been volunteering with a group called Invisible Hands to provide free delivery of groceries and other essentials to the elderly and immunocompromised. There are currently about ten volunteers enrolled in the Westfield, Mountainside, and Cranford areas, with many more needed to help fulfill the incoming requests for assistance. Invisible Hands has completed 4,000 deliveries to date throughout NYC and parts of NJ. If you are interested in volunteering to assist or in donating to keep their operation funded, please visit <https://invisiblehandsdeliver.org> for additional details. In addition to helping with volunteer recruitment, Amanda is happy to field questions about the organization at [amanda@marcotullio.net](mailto:amanda@marcotullio.net).
- We have received several inquiries from concerned residents and restaurant owners concerned about the lack of face coverings by residents when picking up food at downtown establishments. Please remember that anyone patronizing/picking up from any restaurant must be wearing a mask, even if it's simply getting ice cream with the kids.
- Don't miss our Virtual Town Hall at 1:00PM tomorrow, where I will be joined by Town Administrator Jim Gildea, Police Chief Chris Battiloro, and Regional Health Officer Megan Avallone to address questions from the community about COVID-19 and where we stand on Town operations and public health. To join and ask questions via Zoom, please visit <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83412588581>.
- As a reminder, second quarter property taxes can be paid online ([westfieldnj.gov/taxcollector](http://westfieldnj.gov/taxcollector)), via mail, or by depositing payment in either the Police Department entry vestibule or the drop box behind Town Hall (adjacent to the USPS mailbox). The last day to pay without penalty is June 1.

## LORD & TAYLOR NEWS

- You may have read press reports today that Lord & Taylor plans to liquidate merchandise at its 38 stores nationwide in anticipation of closing the locations. While highly disappointing to think about losing such an iconic part of Westfield, the reality is that we've been anticipating this outcome for quite some time. My outreach to the owners of the property, Hudson's Bay Company, began shortly after I was sworn in two years ago. The outcome of those conversations has resulted in the process currently underway to designate the local Lord & Taylor properties, which includes their retail location and the two parking lots across North Avenue, as an "area in need of redevelopment." I feel very optimistic about the opportunity for collaboration between Hudson's Bay and the Town to reimagine the possibilities for the site. I have found them to be willing collaborators and interested in hearing the community's input as we discuss what's possible to provide an outcome that works for both of us. It's important to remember, however, that those almost seven acres are their private property, so it will be imperative that we work towards an outcome that benefits our community while yielding an economic benefit for them. Otherwise they could move forward with an "as of right" development and/or tenant that may not be in the community's best interests. So I ask that you stay informed, engaged, and open minded as the redevelopment process moves forward. As these conversations continue to develop, I will of course keep you apprised.

Wishing you all a good week ahead and continued good health.