

Governor Phil Murphy

TRANSCRIPT: November 16th, 2020 Coronavirus Briefing Media

 (<https://twitter.com/GovMurphy>)

11/16/2020

 (<https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy>)

Holding a COVID-19 briefing. WATCH:

 (<https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice>)

 (<https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/>)

 (<https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy>)



Governor Phil Murphy: Good afternoon, everybody. I'm honored to be joined by the woman on my right who needs no introduction, the Commissioner of the Department of Health. Judy Persichilli. To her right, another familiar face, the State's Epidemiologist, Dr. Christina Tan. Great to have you both here. The guy to my left needs no introduction, the Superintendent of the State Police Colonel Pat Callahan; we have the Director of the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, Jared Maples; Chief Counsel Parimal Garg an eclectic cast of thousands.

We will get to the overall numbers in a minute, but I wanted to begin on a very sobering note. Today we're reporting an additional 2,232 cases, Judy, if my math is right. Yesterday, 4,540; Saturday 4,395; Friday 3,399. If you add all that up in just four days, you get to 14,566 and the cumulative total is up now to 281,493.

Another way to look at this is that 5% of our entire cumulative total has come in the past four days, which is pretty darn sobering. One in 20, in other words, of all of our cases from the first one on March 4th has come from just the past four days.

The positivity rate for all PCR tests recorded on Thursday, November 12th was 9.43% and the statewide rate of transmission is now 1.40.


Back to top

Yesterday's and Saturday's numbers are respectively the first and second highest daily counts we have reported not just of this second wave, but since we recorded our first confirmed case on March 4th. That was, by the way, 257 days ago. So let that sink in. Our highest case counts are now no longer from when this virus first began rampaging across our communities. They have come now, when we are grappling with pandemic fatigue and when we know people have begun to let their guards down.

We have got to get back in front of this virus as best we can right now, so that when a vaccine or multiple vaccines, which looks increasingly likely, are ready for wide-scale distribution, what we hope is just a matter of a few months, we are in a stronger position for our vaccination program to work. Judy, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but first batch is maybe by the end of the year, and then we'll go through obviously, first and foremost vulnerable communities, frontline healthcare workers and whatnot. But probably by spring to the broad availability of the broad population. That's not forever from now, right? This is just literally a matter of months.

But again, while we know that there are promising candidates from both Pfizer and Moderna, Moderna's announcement today was really positive and striking. I went back and forth with Stefano Bancel, who is their CEO, who has been a very good advisor to Judy and me and our teams. That's all good news but a vaccine is not yet available. And even when one is available, it will take several more months for us to reach a level of vaccinations to where we can begin life in something like a new normal, with less strict mandates for social distancing and masks.

And to that end, I must again pull back the reins at another aspect of our reopening. It gives me joy to be doing this, by the way. Today I'm signing an Executive Order to reduce indoor gathering limits to no more than 10 persons; that's down from 25 persons. That's a limit that has been in effect since August 3rd. This provision will take effect tomorrow morning at 6:00 a.m. There are several exemptions from this: religious services or celebrations, political activities, wedding ceremonies, funerals or memorial services, and performances will continue to be limited to 25% of capacity but with a maximum of 150 people. But all other private indoor gatherings such as house parties and public events must be capped at no more than 10, and in this we will be in line with a growing number of our fellow states throughout the region. We had a really good five Governors Zoom call yesterday with New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Connecticut, and myself, and more on that later, but that was one of many of the good exchanges we've had over the past eight or nine months.

What we're doing today we know will cause some people to readjust their Thanksgiving plans, and I understand why there might be frustration with this step. But as we have been saying, Judy and I in particular, with a good helping from Pat and Tina and others, we've been saying for weeks that this will not be a normal Thanksgiving. It's not a normal school year, it's not a normal Thanksgiving, it wasn't a normal Halloween, it won't be a normal Hanukkah or Christmas, and 2020 won't be normal, period.

We're urging everybody to keep their Thanksgiving plans as small as possible because we know that indoor gatherings and homes are particularly dangerous places for COVID-19 to spread. The smaller the gathering is, the less likely it is that someone is infected and puts their loved ones at risk. It is that simple.


As for indoor sports practices or competitions, they will be allowed to exceed the 10-person limit only for individuals necessary for the practice or competition, such as players, coaches and referees. In most cases where those necessary individuals exceed 10 people, spectators will not be permitted.




Likewise, outdoor gathering limits will also be pulled back from the current 500 down to 150. Again, with the exceptions for religious services or celebrations, political activities, wedding ceremonies, funerals, memorial services. This limitation will apply to a whole variety of events, including youth and high school sporting events or outdoor concerts, or other performances.


As it pertains, by the way, to youth and high school sports, the 150-person limit includes players, coaches and other team personnel and officials. The number of allowable spectators will in fact be lower than 150. Because the reduction is so severe, we know that there may be certain events scheduled for this coming weekend that would be impacted. To avoid disruption, the reduction for outdoor gatherings will take effect in one week, one week from today, Monday, November 23rd.

As a reminder, by the way, and this hasn't changed and we have to remind everybody of this, outdoor gatherings even now are subject to strict social distancing restrictions, including the requirement to wear masks whenever it is not possible to social distance. Any outdoor gathering, either before or after next Monday, must abide by those restrictions or face the consequences.

I know Pat will get into this in a little bit with his remarks but over the weekend, the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control did its own inspections, I believe Pat I've got 104 establishments in Camden, Essex and Hudson Counties. They found 15 various Executive Order violations. ABC will continue making these checks throughout this week. Folks should expect this. This is the first wave, if you will, of a sustained effort.

I know I speak for all of us up here when I say it does not give me or any of us any pleasure to institute these restrictions. I, for one, have sons whose sports events I've not been able to attend and I know that'll stay the case. As a parent, I understand the importance of watching our kids play and the thrill of cheering them on. But right now with the numbers we are seeing, we have to take these steps to preserve and protect, as best we can, public health and to try to slow the spread of this virus.  (<https://twitter.com/GovMurphy>)

Indoor sports is an area of concern. Sports, I think, generally is an area of concern but as we've said many times, it is very hard to distinguish from whether or not, Judy and Tina, it is from the actual sporting event or the adjacent activities, whether it's the locker room, a pizza party. That's why we cut out any interstate indoor sports because by definition, you're mixing with other people, you're staying overnight in hotels and that's no longer on.  (<https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy>)  (<https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice>)  (<https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/>)

I want to stay very specifically hockey is in our crosshairs,  (<https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy>)? I'm not sure why, but we are hearing more than anecdotal, more than here or there, a lot of noncompliance, including by parents. So I want anyone who's playing hockey, or whose mom and dad, or have kids who are playing hockey, I've got nothing against hockey, but watch yourselves. We have that high on the list right now and unless we see better compliance and lower levels of infection, we will take action.

Now listen, for all these reasons, I urge you also, and we haven't said this in a couple of weeks, Judy, download our COVID Alert NJ exposure notification app to your smartphone. The app has so far been downloaded roughly 345,000 times and every phone we add is another tool we have at our disposal to fight this virus.

I also urge you to cooperate with our community contact tracing corps if a contact tracer reaches out to you. Their sole job is to stop those who may have exposed to COVID-19 from unintentionally spreading it to someone else. They don't care where you were or what you were doing, the only thing they care about is you taking yourself off the field so you don't become a super spreader.

Statewide, and this is a little bit of an eye chart but we'll walk you through it. We are working on building capacity so that every county has at least 30 contact tracers on the job for every 100,000 residents. We have hit this benchmark in five counties plus the City of Newark. An additional 98 contact tracers started their training one week ago today and will be deployed as they complete it, and an additional 12 surge capacity tracers were hired to directly support rapid response efforts in Newark, and more broadly, in Essex County. Judy, thank you for your leadership there, which currently, by the way, is ground zero of the second wave.

But, and this is a huge but: our contact tracers cannot do their jobs if you don't take the call. Since the beginning, our contact tracers have been prepared to run into brick walls with some people who just weren't going to help out but now we are seeing a failure to cooperate in more than 60% of cases. Again, it's anecdotal, but a lot of that is with hockey and we're sick and tired of hearing this, folks and we reserve the right to take more drastic action. If we don't get better cooperation and better compliance, we will.

Listen, I know in particular for young people, you may think you're invincible. Maybe you think that people aren't getting sick anymore, or going to the hospital or dying anymore. Maybe you think you're the victim of some witch hunt. Whatever the reason is, I can assure you, it is false. It is a myth. These are the cold facts: more and more people are fighting for their lives against COVID-19 as we sit here, and we are now seeing an increase in the numbers of those who are dying. And by the way, Judy, I just spent some time after our

call going through the models and what this is going to look like in December and January is not pretty. It's not pretty today, it's going to get a lot worse, particularly if we don't have compliance on wearing face coverings, social distancing, particularly indoors, in and around sports.

So as of last night, as you can see, 2,115 patients are in our hospitals and another 253 COVID-positive patients were admitted just yesterday. And just yesterday, again, this is apples to oranges because they're not yet confirmed, 27 persons died in our hospitals. We are now seeing consistently increasing ICU counts. Today it's 417; 137 of them are on ventilators.

Today we're reporting, with the heaviest of hearts, another 14 confirmed COVID-19 deaths; 14,779 New Jerseyans are now confirmed dead, and another 1,801 are probable deaths. So please, I urge you, we all do, let's all go back, get back in the game like we were in the spring. I know this has been a very long haul but we still have more miles to go. I know you're fatigued and I don't blame you. I am. Who isn't? But we have got to bear down. We can do this, we must do this. With that, let's honor three more of the lives who we've lost and put more human faces, lives lived, lives lost, loved ones left behind to these numbers.

We'll start up in Totowa, where I've got a lot of good friends, which was the home of Adam Russo. Look at that lad. Adam was just 27 years old. Adam lived with spina bifida and used a wheelchair for most of his life. Even with the challenges that presented, he never let his spirit dampen and even though the multiple surgeries he endured, he soldiered on and graduated from Morris Township's Regional Day School where he received the Make A Difference Award. He was a huge sports fan, following the Mets, the Devils and NASCAR. Adam brightened every room he entered and brought smiles to all around him.

He is mourned by his parents, Jude and Sandy, I'll come back to them in a minute, and grandparents Lucy Russo and Glen Fossey, as well as by his aunts, uncles and numerous cousins. Adam will also be fondly remembered by his community. I had the great honor of speaking to his mom Sandy, who also lost her mother in January unrelated to COVID. One of the toughest calls, frankly, I've been a part of. And forget about me, just what they did for that little guy in his 27 years, and to see COVID-19 take him from them is just indescribable.

They also sent along a video that his dad Jude wrote, and it was sung by someone else. It sounded like Jackson Brown, I'm not sure it was, but it was incredibly moving. This is an incredible guy so keep him, his family, his mom and dad especially in your prayers. May God bless and watch over him.

Next up, we remember a guy who had a modestly sizable family, Dr. Elliott Samet. He was a noted pediatrician and though he was born and raised in Baltimore, the calling to serve others brought him to Passaic, where he established his practice and where he treated every patient as if they were a member of his own family. He was equally devoted to the Jewish community, as well as to his faith and to the study of the Torah. Through this, he selflessly supported families in need whenever and wherever he could, and the community responded to his goodness in kind. He was a founding board member of the Hatzolah of Passaic and Clifton Emergency Services, which has been a critical link to healthcare for countless families throughout this pandemic. Dr. Samet was only 69 years old.

He is survived by his wife, Toby, with whom I had the great honor of speaking. That's Toby, I think, dead center in that picture. She was also, by the way, COVID positive. She's doing better, but keep her in your prayers. He's also survived by their six children, as well as by the families who relied on him for the health of their children and by not just our Jewish community, but all of our state's communities of faith. May Dr. Samet's commitment to his community be his legacy, and may his memory be a blessing.

And finally today, we recalled the much loved Toms River community leader and Little League Coach on the left there, Ponch Ruiz. In his day job, Ponch worked for First Energy, but it was on the ball field where he created his own legacy. Season after season, Ponch was a fixture on the diamond and was a central figure in the success of the Toms River Little League, which you all, I'm sure no doubt know is one of the strongest programs to the state, if not the country, helping to keep the league running even as he managed his own team. The U-13 Stallions was his team.

Across 17 years coaching -- Pat, get this -- in the Toms River Little League, he guided his team, 17 years coaching, to 15 championships. The Mets could have used him. He was a friend to many and a mentor and father figure to many more. He passed his love of baseball onto hundreds of young players over the years. After his tragic passing, the Stallions made the decision to carry on and play their home games on the field they renamed in his honor. Last Sunday, after a stretch that saw them go 7 and 2, they won the championship. And you know Coach Ponch was smiling down on them.

Punch leaves behind his wife Joyce, with whom I had the great honor of speaking, and his five children Jassidy, Andrew, Nicky, Brandon with whom I had also the honor of speaking and Eli, as well as five grandchildren, Letti, Jay Marley, Damien, Maddox and Savannah. But more than that, he leaves behind a grateful community on and off the playing field. We thank Coach Ponch for passing on his love of our national pastime and for being a role model for so many. May God bless him and watch over him and his family. And the Stallions, by the way, are going to remain in good hands as Brandon, his son, Brandon, now serves as their assistant head coach.

So three, three more from among more than 16,000 New Jerseyans who have been lost throughout this pandemic, for them and for our own families, we have to recommit to the practices that we know can save lives, social distancing, wearing masks, washing our hands, taking yourself off the field if you don't feel well, or you have been exposed. That's what we got right now, folks, better days ahead. Vaccines are coming, I think sooner than we may have expected. I'm sure therapeutics will come that's all great. Right now. It's the basic stuff. That's all, that's the only hand we've got to play.

Now before we end today, I want to give a shout out to another of the New Jersey-based small businesses that have been honored to assist through the continued efforts of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority. Enjoy Your Party is a Hunterdon County-based company that provides professionally trained waitstaff and servers, bartenders, chefs, and utility workers to the food service, hospitality and catering industries. Can you think of a business that, based on its premise, could have been more crushed by this virus?

Founded by Rosanna Morelando and her husband Pat -- that's Rosanna sitting and Pat on the left -- back in 1998. Enjoy Your Party has built partnerships with more than 300 hotels, country clubs, banquet halls, colleges and universities. Before COVID-19, Enjoy Your Party was at its peak deploying more than 100 employees a day to locations across New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania, and even as far afield as Florida, Illinois and Wisconsin. But once the pandemic hit, everything came to a screeching halt. Working through the EDA, Rosanna and Pat were able to secure a grant that allowed them to keep their employees on the payroll so they could continue to provide for their families.

I had the opportunity at the end of the week to speak with Roseanna and Pat, and even with all that's going on around us, I know that we're going to beat this virus and get back to where Enjoy Your Party is once again back at full strength. Check them out, by the way, enjoyyourparty.com, very straightforward.

And with a heavy heart, not related to COVID, as a final thought today, I must acknowledge the passing of a former Jersey City Deputy Mayor, longtime champion for civil rights and a close and dear personal friend of mine, that guy right there Kabili Tayari. He was a community leader in the truest sense, and among his many roles in public service, he was also the head of the Jersey City NAACP, but he also had a statewide impact. Again, I was fortunate to call him a close friend and he served ably during my transition, as a member of our transition committee on budget issues. May God bless you, Kabili, and I send my condolences and blessings to all who knew him and likewise called him a friend.

That is all for today. Again, effective 6:00 a.m. tomorrow, the indoor gathering limit is reduced to 10 people. With that, please help me welcome the woman on my right, who needs no introduction, the Commissioner of the Department of Health, Judy Persichilli.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Thank you, Governor and good afternoon. As the Governor has stated, this will not be a normal Thanksgiving. With the alarming surge in our cases, we all need to be vigilant and take all of the public health precautions that helped us limit the spread of the virus last spring. Our lives and the lives of our loved ones depend on it.

The CDC has put together guidance on holiday celebrations that residents should follow to protect their health and the health of their loved ones. Everyone should celebrate only with members of their immediate household. However, if you do gather with others, please limit the number of attendees and to allow people from different households to remain at least six feet apart. Plan ahead and ask guests to avoid contact with people outside of their households for 14 days before the gathering.

Well, Thanksgiving is 11 days away, so if you haven't started doing that, start limiting your interactions today. Guests should avoid direct contact, including handshakes and hugs with others outside their household. The best option is to host outdoors rather than indoors, as much as possible. But even outdoors require guests to wear masks when not eating or drinking.

If you do host indoors, increase your ventilation by opening windows and doors by placing central air and heating on continuous circulation. If you are hosting, provide attendees with supplies that help everyone stay healthy. These include extra masks, perhaps a hand sanitizer, tissues, stock bathrooms with enough hand soap and single-use towels. Remind attendees to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Limit contact with commonly touched surfaces or shared items such as serving utensils. Use single-use options, or identify one person to serve shareable items like salad dressings or food containers. Use social distancing guidelines. Encourage guests to avoid singing or shouting, especially in groups. Keep music levels down so people don't have to speak loudly to be heard. Please keep safety in mind while celebrating the holiday.

We cannot let our guard down because we know the gathering provides an opportunity for COVID-19 to spread. With the upcoming holiday season, the department will be providing guidance today to the administrators of long-term care facilities to protect the health of the vulnerable population. The department strongly recommends against families taking residents out of the facilities for holiday celebration or gatherings. Individuals at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should avoid gatherings with individuals that they don't live with. Small family gatherings are a significant driver of increasing cases.

Residents of long-term care facilities are particularly susceptible. Bringing your loved ones home could put them at risk. Instead of family visits outside the facility, the department recommends visitation outdoors, or possibly indoors at facilities that meet the requirements for indoor visitation. Long-term care facilities should plan to accommodate increased virtual communications for residents and their loved ones during the holidays. Residents that leave the facilities for family celebrations must be quarantined on their return back. If a resident lives in a private residence or room, the resident may be quarantined in their private residence room. If the resident has a roommate, the resident should be quarantined in a separate observation room for 14 days. If an observation room is not available in the facility, the facility must notify the rest of the family that the resident will not be permitted back until the room is available, or until the facility is otherwise able to cohort returning residents in compliance with current CDC and Department of Health guidance and directives.

Long-term care facilities need to develop a plan for holiday visits and as part of that preparation, they need to estimate how many residents can be cohorted for a 14-day quarantine period, based on their current census and their projected census from November 25 through to December 31. They should create a reservation process for residents who want to leave and visit families for the holiday. Reservations should be tied to the number of individuals the facility can quarantine on their return. Reservations and any changes to reservations must be confirmed 36 hours before the resident leaves the facility. The facility should create a waiting list for residents who request a reservation after the established limit has been reached, and residents and families should be informed of the possibility that if a resident leaves without a reservation or on the waiting list, that may not be guaranteed readmission to the facility until the bed is available.

Residents and families must certify that they are aware of the dangers of exposure to COVID-19. They will be asked to follow masking, social distancing, and hand hygiene and they will notify the facility if anyone present at the holiday gathering tests positive for COVID-19 or exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 within 14

days of the residents' visit. We are still very concerned about the outbreaks we are seeing in long-term care, so we need to be especially vigilant to protect this population. We continue to partner with the industry to improve quality and infection prevention in these facilities.

Today begins the first in a series of educational sessions as part of the National Nursing Home COVID-19 Action Network Training Program. The goal of this training is to keep facilities on the path to continuous, best-practice quality improvement. The first session topic is COVID-19 Basics, understanding the strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We're encouraging all nursing homes to sign up for this federally funded training. Today is the last day facilities can register for these important courses, and the department is grateful for its partners from Rutgers Medical School, the New Jersey Healthcare Quality Institute, Trinitas Regional Medical Center, ID Care, Pharmicare Inc., and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement for helping drive this effort.

So moving on to my daily report, as the Governor shared, our hospitals currently have 2,115 individuals that are either COVID-19 positive or PUIs. There are 417 of those individuals in critical care, with 33% of them on ventilators. On Saturday and Sunday, we reported 1,935 new cases and an additional 2,232 COVID hospitals reported 84 deaths from Friday to Sunday. Fortunately, there are no new reports of multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children; the count remains at 1.

The Governor reviewed new cases and deaths reported. The breakdown by race and ethnicity is White 54.1, Black 18.1, Hispanic 20.3, Asian 5.5, other 2.1.

At the state veteran homes, the numbers remain the same, and at our psychiatric hospitals, cumulatively there are 256 cases and 13 patient deaths. I have to unfortunately report one death reported from a patient hospitalized from Ancora. The patient had comorbid conditions and COVID-19 is identified as a secondary diagnosis.

The daily percent positivity as of November 12th for New Jersey is 9.43%. The northern part of the state, 10.31, the Central part of the state 7.36, and the Southern part of the state 10.67. That concludes my daily report. Stay safe and remember for each other and for us all, take the call and download the COVID Alert NJ app. Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you, Judy, a couple of quick things. Number one, you used the word cohort and there was some confusion in the spring and the summer about what cohorting means. And let me be blunt: that means keeping folks separated, and every single edict whether it was from me or more importantly, the series of guidance and orders that came from Judy and the Department of Health in long-term care was explicit about cohorting of patients, separating them and separating staff, as well. Thank you for going through the risks that we still have with long-term care residents, especially as the holidays are upon us.

Secondly, just quite striking today. We've talked over the past couple of months, when Ocean County was leading the way in positives, Monmouth right behind it. Then we talked about Essex more recently, the metro New York suburbs. 12 of our 21 counties in the testing are triple digits in the reports today, and only one of them is over 200, which gives you a sense of the community spread here, up and down the state. Gloucester is on that list. Burlington and Camden are obviously the big metro New York, Ocean is back on it, Monmouth is on it, so it is a reality in every part of our state, every corner of our state. Thank you, as always.

Pat, any more color on the ABC piece or compliance generally? Power outages, we lost our power last night for a bit, high winds. It feels like it's settling down a little bit. We'd love to get a sense of the outages. And also, it's chilly but we've got some decent weather ahead of us and marry Judy with Pat here, let's do as much as we can folks, outdoors, as long as we can. This week looks like it'll allow us to do that a little bit more than last week. With that, Pat, welcome.

State Police Superintendent Col. Patrick Callahan: Thank you, Governor, good afternoon. On Friday evening, Little Falls Police Department responded to Chelas Restaurant and observed several patrons at the bar not social distancing. That restaurant was cited. To the Governor's opening remarks, ABC investigators, criminal justice investigators, along with local law enforcement conducted 104 compliance

checks. 15 of those establishments appeared to be in violation and those respective prosecutor's offices in Camden, Hudson and Passaic are working through that. I'm not going to read through the list of the 15 places, but I'm sure we can make that available once those violations, once they're physically and actually cited.

To your point about power outages, Governor, we had a high of about 42,000 last night, we're down to just over 5,200 split 3000 PSE&G customers and about 2,100 JCP&L. The weather this week does look fairly mild. We hope it continues that way.

If I can just add my two cents on Kabili Tayari, who I didn't get to know until the first week in March when this started. I got to know him very well in short order. Early on he called, he could not find his deceased uncle and enlisted the help of the State Police, and he was in one of our temporary morgue sites. We connected him with a funeral home, a cemetery and he was in tears on the phone how grateful he was that we were able to do that. He will be missed, that distinct voice and character. I was honored to get to know him, at least for a few short months. Thank you for mentioning him.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you, Pat. That's a great story. Kabili, as I mentioned, worked on our transition. He was a giant in Jersey City, particularly in the African American community but more broadly, as well. He was on me constantly to do a town hall in Jersey City, and that he was going to be one of the hosts of. My guess is had COVID not hit, that would have done it to pass this year. Unfortunately, we're not doing town halls. But when we get back to doing them, why don't we do one on public health in Jersey City in Kabili's honor? Thank you, Pat.

We'll start over here. Before we do, as I mentioned, on Thursday we're going to be back into the Monday-Wednesday-Friday rhythm. It'll be at one o'clock unless you hear otherwise. I appreciate everyone's patience doing this a little bit earlier today, we have a White House VTC right after this, so I'd love you to be economical with your questions. That's the first one we will have had since the election. I think the last one we had was the Friday, if my recollection serves me, Friday, October 30th, right before the election so this will be the first since the election, I think hosted by Vice President Pence. My guess is it'll be a big discussion on vaccines, would be my guess if I had to predict it, Judy, but we'll find out and we'll let folks know if we get anything that comes out of that.

I also should say this, there continues to be a current federal administration and there's been an elected administration and President-Elect Biden's co-chair of his COVID Task Force is a very good friend of ours, Dr. Vivek Murthy. In addition to doing the Zoom call with the five regional Governors yesterday, I had a significant conversation and a lot of back and forth with Vivek, going through what Judy and Pat and I and Tina and our teams are announcing today but also more broadly, what other levers we can push, particularly fighting the fatigue and convincing folks even if they're healthy, especially if they're young and healthy, that they're not invincible. This was something we spent a ton of time on in the spring, that they could be asymptomatic, in good health, but be COVID positive and pass that to someone who was in a more fragile or older state. That's still the case. We talked a lot about how we could we could push back on that, whether it's social influencers or other means. I want to give him a shout out as well.

With that, Elise, it's good to see you and good to have you back. I think you're first up to bat here with Aswan.

Q&A Session

Elise Young, Bloomberg: Good to see you as well. Just two questions. Some states are reporting very long lines for testing. Do you expect that to happen in coming weeks in New Jersey or are you continuing to expand testing? Can you give us some more details on the contact you've had with the President Elect's team regarding vaccination strategy? Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Yeah, so we're on with the President Elect's team literally every day. As I mentioned, I was on with Vivek, not just on the phone, but then a lot of healthy texting after it back and forth. What do you think of this? What do you think of that? Other than getting a general sense and agreement from him that the timing that I mentioned earlier, Judy, I think is now kind of being widely accepted as the timing, something by the end of the year, starting with at-risk vulnerable communities,

frontline healthcare workers, essential workers and then moving into the general population by April or May. I don't want to put words in Vivek's mouth, but I think that's a widely accepted range. I know Tony Fauci sees it that way and I believe the incoming team does.

I did get interviewed this morning. It is essential that we get federal support, and that includes money. I think there's 100-and-something million that's been designated and I think it's, we estimate an \$8 billion-plus endeavor. We need, as good as Judy and Tina and their colleagues are, and they're the best in the business, as good as the plan may be with your friend General Gus Perna, New Jersey's own, as good as the distribution plan may be. We need the feds.

To your first question, Elise, we are getting more capacity and that, I mentioned, at the end of the week, I believe I did the Cue Health tests. I had a good conversation with their CEO. That's a pretty cool one because it looks like something around this size. You have 20 cartridges. It takes 19 minutes turnaround and importantly, unlike the Abbott Binax NOW test, which is also a game changer, but does not connect into our health databases, either in New Jersey or elsewhere, and we continue to work on that, this one does.



(<https://twitter.com/GovMurphy>)

Judy, I do hear that depending on where you go, the lines have gotten longer so I'm not suggesting we're immune to that. But we are one of I think only five states getting the Cue Health tests. Again, I want to give a shout out to Admiral Brett Giroir for the help there. So thank you. Let's go back, Matt, we'll do a circle go back to Daniel and come back around. Thank you. Nice to see you, as well.



(<https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/>)



(<https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice>)



(<https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/>)

Daniel Munoz, NJBIZ: Likewise. How many daily cases and total hospitalizations and other metrics do you expect this to peak at, high and low estimates and when? What kind of quote "drastic action" would you take if people don't cooperate with contact tracers? Do you expect that people might use the religious service exemption to circumvent gathering restrictions, for say Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas and New Year's?



(<https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy>)

You had said that this pandemic can be brought under control, say as soon as April with the vaccines being introduced. Are you confident in that timeline still and what makes you confident on the timeline?

Governor Phil Murphy: Judy, a bunch of these are in your hands. I hope people don't use the religious services exemption to misbehave, or behave irresponsibly. That certainly is not what we're – this is out of great respect for the right and the passion to worship and we just hope people take that responsibility, and we expect that they will.

Other drastic action, or you can imagine other steps which we don't want to take, but we've already shut the garage doors in March. If we had to, we'd do it again. Where we see transmission, we're taking action against where we see it and we'll continue to do that. Judy, I know you look at and I looked at this morning a bunch of different modeling on where cases peak, hospitalizations peak and it depends on our behavior and it depends on the model. Any color on that? And do you still feel like April is a time when we're in a different, better place?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: First, on the modeling, we look at new cases, hospitalizations, average length of stay, admission, discharges and the most important component of our predictive modeling is behaviors. We make assumptions about social distancing, masking, etc. We know on average 30%, 31% adhere was what we used back in the beginning of the year and it turned out that 50% was the actual. If we go back to 50%, we expect a peak at the end of the year and a very busy January in February, but not as high as it was in April. If people are not vigilant, it could be worse. That means we would exceed 8,300 hospitalizations, 2,300 critical care, we would be worse than April. I cannot encourage people enough to understand how their behaviors, each one of us, our behaviors can manage that.

Governor Phil Murphy: Does April sound like a time, based on the vaccine timeframe, where you could say, you know what? Maybe if the weather's getting a little bit warmer, the vaccines more distributed?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Yeah, the vaccines, I don't think it's going to work right away. They're going to build up antibodies and then see how it works. I'm concerned for the next six months.

Governor Phil Murphy: Yeah. I mean, we also have made the point here that just because there's a vaccine, everyone can't just automatically overnight let their hair down. Right, Tina? I mean, you still have to do the social distancing, the being smart about common sense behavior is still going to be with us.

Two quick things. One is marrying back to Elise's point and the other is this point about behavior, Judy, that turned out to be a lot better than the modeling suggested. Back to Elise's point, the number of positive cases and comparing them today versus the spring has the deficiency that we had no testing capacity in March and April. No one did and we were not immune to that. We now have, you know, we're testing 45,000 plus the Binax plus the Cue coming on, we have a massive amount of testing capacity that we didn't have then. To me, and this came out of the Governor's call yesterday, among other things, the things that we know in the spring and now if you're in the hospital with COVID, you know that you're there for that reason, so hospitalizations, to Judy's point, is a key metric.

The other point is the behavior point. Ron Klain is now President Elect Joe Biden's Chief of Staff has been advising us over time, as he was the Ebola czar. Early on, he said one of the things we found was that the bully pulpit works, pleading with the public works, and that there's a combination of that behavior turned out to be better in that case, in the Ebola case. And to Judy's point, the behavior was better than the models would have predicted. I just hope it continues.

You know, we had a fear of the unknown. None of us had ever lived through this in the spring and now we've got this fatigue that we've been around, okay, here we go again, we've been around this thing, and some bad behavior and some myths have begun to spring up that we frankly didn't have to deal with in the spring. I would just underscore triply the point, we did it, folks. We did it, but we have to do it again. And Judy said, and I'm with her, we're talking about six months here, not six years, not six decades, not a lifetime but it's right here, right now. Alex, over to you real quick.

Alex Napoliello, NJ.com: Thank you, Governor. Good afternoon. For Commissioner Persichilli, can you tell us how many or if any hospitals went on divert over the weekend, and for how long they were on divert?

I'm also am wondering about the long-term care facilities. You said you were concerned about them? There are 241 outbreaks listed on the dashboard as of right now. How many of those are, say, from the last week? Can you kind of give us a picture of what's going on in the nursing homes over the last week?

For the Governor or for Parimal Garg, I want to know if the indoor and outdoor gathering limits, if the exclusion for religious services would also include wedding receptions? Not just the wedding, but the reception itself?

And a question on testing. We don't have numbers on the amount of tests from today. You mentioned those much higher numbers on Saturday and Sunday. Why is testing going up, going down, numbers going up, going down? How can you offer to the public a full picture of the coronavirus track in New Jersey without frequently mentioning the amount of tests?

Governor Phil Murphy: Judy, how many on divert and any more color on long-term care? I know you already gave some in your remarks, but any more color you've got.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: We have four on divert. The reason is patient volume. And the maximum time they've been on divert is about four hours.

Governor Phil Murphy: Any more color on the 241 outbreaks that are on the web dashboard, any sense of how recent these are?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Yeah, most of them are recent. I think Tina's team looks at this every day.

State Epidemiologist Dr. Christina Tan: Per our last report, I guess last Thursday, we had roughly about 160-ish active outbreaks in long-term care facilities. We are reporting 24 new today. So unfortunately, every day we're seeing more long-term care facilities with new active outbreaks.

Governor Phil Murphy: Testing, we've got an issue which we've talked about the Binax does not sync up with healthcare databases anywhere. We're working on that. Every state is working on that, so the numbers that we report are really the PCR tests, and they will now include when the Cue Health tests get online, there'll be a part of that.

I know this to be the case, we had this in the spring and into the summer. There's a difference between saying what your capacity is versus how many people are demanding it. Those are two different sides of the equation. We have the ability to test x, only y showed up on Sunday to get tested, as an example.

Justice of the Peace Parimal Garg, the wedding reception, not the wedding ceremony itself.

Chief Counsel Parimal Garg: So the exception does include weddings. If there was evidence that the reception was a completely separate event unrelated to the ceremony, then we'd look at that on a case-by-case basis.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you. Dustin, good afternoon.

Dustin Racioppi, Bergen Record: Good afternoon. You had been saying that you weren't going to touch the indoor gathering limit, just because it's difficult to enforce. Can you just explain your decision to do that now? Will law enforcement be advised to do anything to try ensuring people follow the rules?

If we keep on this trajectory, what combination of numbers would trigger you to issue stay-at-home orders again, and to close non-essential businesses? Healthcare workers are worried that they don't have the backup staff to come in from out of state and want to know why the state hasn't shut down elective surgeries. Is that something that's imminent? And do you have enough supplies, particularly N-95 masks, for what looks like an exponential surge?

Last, we hear there's an agreement with the Senate President about taxes for recreational marijuana. Can you confirm that and provide any details? Thanks.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you. Listen, I think we felt again it brings us no joy to bring these limits down, but we felt there's just too many instances of folks gathering irresponsibly inside, including in private settings. At this point, we had no choice but to take the steps that we've taken. I'm not sure it has an implication on law enforcement other than it's easier to count 10 heads than more. I assume your posture is the same here, Pat, right, in terms of enforcing?

State Police Superintendent Pat Callahan: That's correct, Gov.

Governor Phil Murphy: I don't think it'll be – Judy you should weigh in, and Tina – it won't be one number, nor did one number lead us to take the actions today. Again, where we're seeing transmissions we're trying to figure out what combination of bullhorn, Executive Order, surging of resources as Judy and team have done in Newark and Essex County on testing, tracing. I think it's a combination of numbers that you hear from us a lot. Yes, positive cases but you've got that question of the denominator and the fact that we have a lot more testing capacity today. But it's hospitalizations, its positivity rate, rate of transmission, ICU, ventilators, there's a whole range of things. That'll continue to be the portfolio that we look at.





I mean, Judy, you've said this. When we look at our capacities, and Pat, you're overseeing the OEM buildup of our stockpile, the one area that I think we mentioned this as long ago as maybe six weeks, the one area that we have concern, particular concern are healthcare workers, because it's an obvious point, but it's worth reiterating. In the spring when it was New York, New Jersey, getting crushed you had most of the country at that point had a surplus of healthcare workers and that's not the case. I mean, you look at these maps today and everyone is on fire, in many cases more on fire than we are. So that's a rightful concern and question. It's why Judy and team have kept the bullpen signed up at the near. Nothing on elective surgeries yet but at a certain point, that's obviously on the list, but nothing imminent on that regard.


I would say on recreational adult use marijuana, Dustin, I think we've made good progress. We had a very productive leadership meeting on Thursday. Our teams have been at it since then. I've got no news to report per se but I do want to say we've made good progress. I'm optimistic and I want to give a shout out

to the Senate President, Speaker and their teams who have been in a really good spirit to try to find that common ground. Thank you for that. Matt, at long last, good afternoon.

Matt Arco, Star-Ledger: Good afternoon. Just following up with one of Dustin's questions. I mean, you've acknowledged that private indoor gatherings are nearly impossible to enforce. So I mean, do you realistically expect that maybe in the next week, two, or a month, there'll be citations for violating the Executive Order. And with a major shopping day, Black Friday, still expected to draw big crowds to malls and stores, is the 50% capacity limit on non-essential retail enough to prevent this from becoming a super spreader event day, considering stores have eliminated measures to count customers and prevent overcrowding?

Commissioner, do you expect the latest rounds of restrictions to do enough to significantly slow the current trajectory of new cases? Or are there are other steps that you've recommended to the governor or any other officials? And if so, what are those steps?

Governor Phil Murphy: Judy, do you want me to start and then go to you? Is that all right? On the first one, indoor gatherings, it's hard but I think you saw from comments both at and I made about the Alcoholic Beverage Commission, we're plussing up no  (https://twitter.com/GovMurphy) testing and tracing, and contact tracing, community corps, but enforcement. But there's no question behind private doors, it's harder. It is harder and which is why we're pleading with folks. You know, we  (https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy) Pat or colleagues or I or any of us, can't be inside your living room for Thanksgiving, you probably wouldn't want us there to begin with. But we can't. We don't have visibility into most of those. But that does not mean  (https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice) that we as an enforcement matter are not going to be is all over it as we can be.  (https://www.instagram.com/governorphilmurphy/)

I sure hope we don't have super spreader experiences based on retail. Judy, I'm not aware of having a lot of retail, or Tina. The thing about retail is you're required to wear a face covering. There's a lot of PPE and barriers and one-way aisles. And by definition, you're not there that long. As opposed to, and this is the challenge with indoor dining. You're sedentary. You got to take your mask off to eat and you're there a while, and that's just not the case in retail. Retail establishments have behaved, as have restaurants, by the way, incredibly responsibly. We need them to keep that up. The restaurant challenge is far less because of irresponsible behavior than it is the very act of what it is to eat. You've got to take your mask off.  (https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy)

We were in Lambertville on Saturday night. I was happy there and Princeton for brunch on Sunday, but we were outdoors in both cases. You've just got a lot more degrees of freedom. Judy, I don't recall you said anything by way lately that we quote-unquote rejected in terms of steps that you'd take. But I mean, the other steps that are on the list I think are the obvious ones, right? We talked about elective surgery. I hope the heck we keep indoor dining, please God, I hope we can keep indoor sports. But those are challenges, right?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Yeah, it all depends on people's behaviors. This is a very transmissible virus and masking and social distancing are so important. It seems so simple but that's the key. We watch it every day. We know exactly how many beds are available in our hospitals. We know exactly how many critical care beds. We work with the CEOs on calls weekly and we've talked about staffing, conventional staffing, get your contingency and crisis staffing in line, you may have to use it. We really hope not, but we look at this every day and we've looked at it every day since March.

Governor Phil Murphy: Amen. And by the way, one other topic with my fellow governors yesterday was schools. The general consensus is that the school experience has been better than we could have expected pre-K to 12, but particularly pre-K to 8 I think is really where -- and we've got no update on the transmissions in schools.

But I do want to say two things. In-school transmissions is separate from something that happened outside that somebody then brings in, whether through sports are going to get your hair cut, or whatever it might be. That's something that the behavior outside of the four walls also matters.

I also want to use this as an opportunity to shout out the educators, the parents, the administrators, everybody in our educational community because it's one thing to say that the results are better than we could have ever expected so far, which is true. It's another thing to say that transmission is a lot more in the

communities than it is inside the four walls of the schools. But that does not mean it is not stressful. And educators, especially at the frontlines, have done an extraordinary job under extraordinary challenging circumstances. Moms and dads, administrators, the folks, principals, the folks that got these schools ready to go, this is really stressful. Just because the experience so far, knock on wood, we take every one of these cases deadly seriously, the experience is well within, if not better than any expectation, does not mean that it has been easy. God bless each and every one of them.

Sir, good afternoon.

Reporter, NJ Spotlight: Good afternoon, Governor. Your Road Back Recovery Plan included a phased, three-stage strategy for reopening the economy. We entered stage two in June but did we ever get to a full stage three? And with the new restrictions announced today, what stage are we in now?

Given the huge advances in testing capacity, isn't it a bit off to compare new daily cases with those from April in May? Do you have any sort of estimate of what the numbers in the early days would have been if you had the testing capacity that we have now?

53 people have now tested positive in an outbreak at the Carrier Clinic. What are the testing and isolation protocols for mental health facilities? Do they differ from congregating with family members in the group care centers, more ramped up?

Last one real quick is why is New Jersey's outdoor event capacity at 150 when New York is limiting both indoor and outdoor gatherings at private residences to just 10 people?

Governor Phil Murphy: We're not in phase three. I don't think we ever fully got to phase three, frankly. I think we're somewhere back between one and two but I don't have my -- I used to carry this thing around in my wallet like a Bible. I don't have it in front of me but we'll come back to you as to where we think we are. We're in a phase of high concern, I would say is the way I would put it.

I think your question is a good one but I think we've sort of addressed it on the testing. We can't ignore the fact that the testing capacity today is light years different than what it was in March and April, which is why, again, the Governor's call hit this. You hit it, Judy, in your remarks. Hospitalizations, we know if you're in the hospital and you've tested positive for COVID, whether it was March or November, you've got COVID and you're sick enough to be in the hospital. I don't think there's any more necessary color to that.

I just think we continue to think of the limits that outside this virus is a lot different than it is on the inside. We've said that from moment one, that happens to be the case, Tina. It's much more lethal indoors. We also say, at the same time when you're outside, it isn't just that it's 150 but it is today and it will be when the 150 goes into effect, social distancing, face coverings, etc., are also part of our requirement.

I have no color on the outbreak, Judy. Any comments on that, the 53 persons in the Carrier Clinic?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Yeah, we're aware of that outbreak. We're working with Carrier Clinic to make sure that they're cohorting appropriately there. The requirements for any congregating living is the same, no matter the reason for the congregation.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you, Judy. Dave, you and I had apparently more than a modest viral moment unintentionally on Thursday. I don't mean viral as in virus, by the way.



David Matthau, NJ 101.5: Oh, yes, that's right. Governor, a couple of questions. You announced formally today the 10 inside gathering does not apply to religious services, celebrations, political, wedding, funerals, memorials, services performances, Realistically speaking,. I mean, we know in Lakewood, for instance, with the religious services, there was a huge spike up. Is there a concern that if we don't really put the limits for all of these exceptions, is there a concern that we're really not going to lower the number of daily cases and they may actually still continue to go up? Because it would seem that people at weddings and funerals are crying, screaming, laughing? I mean, there's a lot of activity, a lot of outside verbal, loud situations.


Governor Phil Murphy: Judy's just banned singing, for instance, in the state.

David Matthau, NJ 101.5: Well, that was significant, I thought. A technical question, what about movie theaters and indoor amusement venues? Are they affected, 10 or less indoors or not?

Second question, Governor, you touched on this with the kids, you had some strong words for them in terms of their behavior. We have a lot of college kids coming home for Thanksgiving, and some of them may actually be at home until the start of the new year, at least. What specifically do you – I mean, you mentioned some of it, but what do you want them to know? What do you want their parents to know in terms of talking to their kids? What's the message to these young people?

Final question on the nursing home situation, Commissioner, you had talked a lot about steps that were taken, but are you guys considering other additional steps to try to protect what we know is our most vulnerable population, including perhaps banning all communal dining and any other activities that may go on in a nursing home? Are hospitals ready for a bigger surge? Perhaps could we see an explosion of cases coming in Thanksgiving week, for instance, you know, that will show up a week or two later? Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you, Dave. We're going to be relatively –  because we're under the gun here and the White House, we will be relatively crisp in answers. Listen, as I said it, religious service is exempted. They continue to be at the lesser of 25% capacity or 150 persons. But it's religious services responsibly. The overwhelming amount of evidence is that is happening. We need it to continue to happen. So a very fair point, you've got at a minimum, we've got Hanukkah and Christmas coming up – Advent obviously preceding Christmas in the Christian faith. We've got to make sure that we both preserve the right to worship but do it the right way and the responsible way. 

Movie theaters and indoor entertainment, Parimal, movie theaters is kind of a unique animal here, I know. 

Chief Counsel Parimal Garg: Sure, and there have been a number of lawsuits suggesting that movie theaters are entitled to first amendment protection, so they're subject to that 25% limit up to 150 people. For other indoor entertainment venues or businesses, any type of gathering at that business would be subject to the 10-person limit.

Governor Phil Murphy: May I say – I'll use my First Amendment right to say that I don't agree with the First Amendment argument on movies, but that is a legal reality. Colleges and universities, we've spoken a lot about that. It was a big part of our conversation among Governors Wolf, Carney, Cuomo, Lamont and myself yesterday, and I think we're going to, as a region – and by the way I should also say Governor Raimondo and Baker had wanted to be on it. They couldn't be. I don't want to speak for all the other six but I think the seven states are going to put out some pretty consistent guidance and value statements on several things. One of them, I think, will come sooner than later. Dan I think is working on this with his counterparts, on returning college and university kids back into our region. I think, Judy, it'll have a fairly specific testing requirement and quarantining requirement associated with that. And, if at all possible, unless there's some particular reason that you're coming back for Thanksgiving and you're staying through the end of January, which is a calendar I think most schools are on in any event, but more to come on that sooner than later. I think the parents, just as I mentioned in the hockey example, parents need to be full partners in this and they need to know that we mean business as it relates to what we're asking of their kids.

You know, the last two, Judy, are really more for you. Other steps that we are considering or could consider with long-term care? With a heavy heart, we may well, because mental health here has clearly been impacted in terms of visitations and lacking in group gatherings. Are we expecting potential upsurge in hospitalizations and otherwise coming out of Thanksgiving? I hope not. But sadly, yes. Any more color on either of those?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Well on long-term care, we're in constant communication with the long-term care facilities and the associations. Our goal right now is to put out some guidance that will step up testing. We know that the infections, the virus is coming in to long-term care because the residents, in most cases, are not going out. We're looking at that pretty critically right now. And with complete cooperation, by the way of the associations and the facilities. They have adequate PPE, they have adequate staffing. They've tested that they can cohort appropriately, and they are our main activities to

stop the spread, so it must be coming in from the outside. There'll be more to come in that regard, but we have to be in compliance with CMS regulations on visitations. We cannot supersede that and put in more restrictive visitation.

Governor Phil Murphy: Judy, I assume this is a rhetorical question in terms of expectation. I think the models show us that hospitalizations are going up. The question is how high? That's based on our behavior, everybody. But I assume that Thanksgiving, as we've been talking, is a concern.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Absolutely. We've seen a tick up. After every opening, we've actually seen a tick up in cases and then lagging hospitalizations. We do expect the tick up. What we see is the recovery happens fairly quickly and we go back to a steady state. Those recoveries now are longer and we expect after Thanksgiving, a tick up. But unfortunately, because of the community spread, the recovery, we believe, is going to be longer and that's the concern.

Governor Phil Murphy: I mean, we've said this in different ways but we said particularly if you rolled the clock way back to May, we started with state parks and golf under capacity restrictions, and then moved through a whole series of outdoor stuff. Ultimately got to indoor and we said from the get go that you take on more risk, especially when you take the indoor step. But the risk is, you know, the risk at least in warmer weather was a manageable risk, and that's why we were as incremental as we were. And by the way, we never went above 25%, as an example, of indoor dining capacity and I'm glad we didn't, even though the restaurant industry has been crushed. But as a public health matter, that was the right thing to do. Some states went full bore 75%, 50%. The industry has been crushed and by the way, shame on Congress. We need a federal stimulus bill to help folks who are unemployed, small businesses, restaurants, states. It's shameful that we have not had another big slug of that. But the risk, and Tina, you are the boss, here on these things with Judy. The risk, in my mind, was measured. If you compare Judy's behavior to my behavior, and I had more indoor stuff in my past month than you did, I was a higher likelihood to be exposed or become infected. But that's a manageable risk.

This is now in the second wave, as you're saying, Judy, this thing is now well beyond that and the recovery curve is stretched out. Holidays don't help. I don't think we're going to be taking any more steps to open stuff up for the time being but, folks, this is a good place to end.

It's how we gather. We should show a shot from here out looking at you, and just show folks who are watching someday what it looks like in this room. There's only probably 20 of us in a room that has a capacity of 150. And by the way, Parimal, we may want to think about whether or not this is deemed to be a gathering as of tomorrow and seriously think through whether or not we want to be, even if we are in the room together with a couple of pool cameras, whether or not we ought to be revisiting this very gathering.

But I think everyone in the room would suggest you're at least six feet away from each other and everyone's got a face covering on, and we'll all go out and we'll put disinfectant on our hands. We need folks, to please God, I think there's some notion that when you're in your house, that you've passed through some magic doorway. Especially as we celebrate holidays, we've got to remember that's just not true. It is just not true.

So stay at it, everybody. No state crushed this curve like New Jersey. We've just got to do it again. It's not forever and always. We're going to get to a better place sooner than we all may think right now. So Judy and Tina, thank you, as always. Pat, likewise. Jared, Parimal, Dan, the whole team. Unless you hear otherwise, we'll be back with you at one o'clock. We're going to visit the format though, which I do want to do that between now and Wednesday, but we will be with you Wednesday at 1:00 in some form or another. Thanks, God bless.

Governor Phil Murphy

Home (/governor/)

Administration

Governor Phil Murphy (</governor/admin/about/>)

Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver (</governor/admin/lt/>)


First Lady Tammy Snyder Murphy (</governor/admin/fl/>)

Cabinet (</governor/admin/cabinet/>)

Office of Health Care Affordability and Transparency

(</governor/admin/affordablehealthcare/index.shtml>)

Boards, Commissions & Authorities (</governor/admin/bca/>)

Internship Opportunities (</governor/admin/internship.shtml>)  (<https://twitter.com/GovMurphy>)

Governor's Residence - Drumthwacket (<http://www.drumthwacket.org/>)  (<https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy>)

Key Initiatives

Economy & Jobs (</governor/initiatives/#Economy>)

Education (</governor/initiatives/#Education>)

Environment (</governor/initiatives/#Environment>)

Health (</governor/initiatives/#Health>)

Law & Justice (</governor/initiatives/#Justice>)

Transportation (</governor/initiatives/#Transportation>)



(<https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice>)



(<https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/>)



(<https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy>)

News & Events

Press Releases (/governor/news/news/562022/approved/news_archive.shtml)

Photos (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/govmurphy>)

Public Addresses (</governor/news/addresses>)

Executive Orders (/infobank/eo/056murphy/approved/eo_archive.html)

Administrative Orders (/governor/news/ao/approved/ao_archive.shtml)

Direct Appointments (</governor/news/appointments>)

Advice and Consent Appointments (</governor/news/acappointments>)

Statements on Legislation

(/governor/news/statements/approved/statements_archive.shtml)

Administration Reports (</governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml>)

Transition Reports (/governor/news/reports/approved/reports_archive.shtml)

Press Kits (</governor/news/press>)

Social

Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/>)

Twitter (<https://twitter.com/GovMurphy>)

Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/>)

Snapchat (<https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy>)

YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice>)

TikTok (<https://www.tiktok.com/@njgov?>)

Contact Us



(<https://twitter.com/GovMurphy>)



Scheduling Requests (</governor/contact/scheduling/>) (<https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/>)



Contact Us (</governor/contact/all/>) (<https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice>)



(<https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/>)



(<https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy>)

Statewide

[NJ Home \(//www.nj.gov\)](http://www.nj.gov)

[Services A to Z \(//www.nj.gov/nj/gov/njgov/alphaserv.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/gov/njgov/alphaserv.html)

[Departments/Agencies \(//www.nj.gov/nj/gov/deptserv/\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/gov/deptserv/)

[FAQs \(//www.nj.gov/faqs/\)](http://www.nj.gov/faqs/)

[Contact Us \(//www.nj.gov/nj/feedback.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/feedback.html)

[Privacy Notice \(//www.nj.gov/nj/privacy.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/privacy.html)

[Legal Statement & Disclaimers \(//www.nj.gov/nj/legal.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/legal.html)

[Accessibility Statement \(//www.nj.gov/nj/accessibility.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/accessibility.html)

(//nj.gov/opra/)

(https://my.state.nj.us/openam/UI/Login)

Copyright © State of New Jersey, 1996-2023
Office of Governor PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-6000

(https://tech.nj.gov/)



(https://twitter.com/GovMurphy)



(https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy)



(https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice)



(https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/)



(https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy)