

Governor Phil Murphy

TRANSCRIPT: June 4th, 2020 Coronavirus Briefing Media

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Governor Phil Murphy: Good afternoon. Pat, you'll forgive me, I want to give a shout out to a mutual friend of ours, NJ Transit Police Chief Chris Trucillo, we're wearing, we're flying the NJ Transit flag today, so to Chris and his brave colleagues, to Kevin Corbett and the whole NJ Transit team, thank you for everything you do.

With me to my right, the woman who needs no introduction, the Commissioner of the Department of Health, Judy Persichilli. To her right, the State's Epidemiologist, Dr. Christina Tan, also well known to you all. Thank you both for being here. To my left, another person who needs no introduction, the Superintendent of the State Police, Colonel Patrick Callahan. Director of the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, Jared Maples is with us. Good afternoon.

A couple of things that are off-topic. We had some tremendously powerful thunderstorms move across the state yesterday, and I think Pat, with more intensity in the south than anywhere, but we saw it on the roads as we left here, headed over to the ROIC yesterday. It hit Mercer County and it hit the state pretty hard. At last count, we had about 95,000 households remain without power. The Board of Public Utilities continues to monitor the progress of our power companies to restore service and the expectation is that many of these homes and businesses will be back online by later today. I spoke with a friend in Mount Laurel, and she said she and her family actually ended up going into their basement, and that was the first time she could remember that they had done that, either in a long time or ever, so it was pretty nasty.

And yesterday, something that we had been speaking to, we had another day of overwhelmingly peaceful protests by countless residents no longer willing to sit by and accept systemic racism and explicit bias as just part of our national condition. I continue to applaud all who are taking to the streets peacefully, and



especially those who are wearing face coverings, to create a better future for our entire New Jersey family. I think Pat, you mentioned to me, and I know you'll get into this in more detail, there are at least another 19 peaceful protests scheduled for today. That'll put us, I believe, well over 100 since these protests started, and with very few exceptions. There have been exceptions, but very few exceptions, these have been overwhelmingly peaceful.

And that's a contrast, I have to say, as you see on television, both with some other parts of our country in the here and now, and let's also not forget that today is June 4th, which is the 31st anniversary of Tiananmen Square, and so it's a contrast both to some places out there in our country today, and it's a contrast to what we saw 31 years ago today in Beijing.

Now moving forward, I want to begin with a quick review of the latest numbers regarding unemployment. Last week, 26,752 New Jerseyans filed new unemployment claims, continuing a decline that we have seen over the past four weeks, but still an astronomical number of newly unemployed. In total, 1.2 million New Jerseyans have filed for unemployment since this emergency began back in March. It's a truly unprecedented number. And overall, our unemployment system has paid out a total of \$5.2 billion in benefits to our fellow New Jerseyans, \$1.8 billion from the State Unemployment Trust Fund and \$3.4 billion in federal funds, as you can see.

Additionally, federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance for those who were ineligible for so-called regular unemployment has been up and running now for five weeks, and 70,000 workers who had exhausted their benefit have all been notified to start certifying for Pandemic Emergency Unemployment compensation, which provides 13 weeks of additional benefits for those who have not been able to find new work. This is another significant population of workers who did not qualify for regular benefits, who have been made eligible for the newly created PEUC federal assistance. Labor Department staff continue to work hard to clear claims, so every New Jersey and who qualifies for unemployment benefits receives every penny to which they are entitled. No one will lose any part of their benefit because of a time lag. And I thank everyone at the Department for their continued hard work to provide for financial relief and support that our residents need.

As I announced yesterday, I signed an Executive Order allowing for our restaurants and bars to resume serving patrons in outdoor seating areas beginning Monday, June 15, pursuant to the directive released by Judy and the Department of Health. I want to amplify that this order also states explicitly the means for our non-essential retail stores to once again welcome customers into their shops. And as it happens, and as we predicted, we being Judy and I in this case, the rules of the road that will govern the restart of these businesses are the ones that have guided our essential retailers for the past two months, since I signed Executive Order Number 122 on April 8th.

To prevent overcrowding and ensure social distancing, all retail establishments must limit the number of customers in their stores to 50% of their approved capacity. Additionally, both customers and employees will be required to wear face coverings, with the exception of those who have medical reasons for not doing so. Stores must also provide special shopping hours for high-risk individuals wherever possible. We want them to erect physical barriers between customers and cashiers or baggers where practicable, and regularly sanitize areas used by their employees, among other requirements. No municipality or county may impose additional restrictions of their own on retail businesses, whether they be essential or non-essential. We've said that several times since we've gathered here over the past couple of months. There's one set of rules for everybody, regardless of where you are in the state.

We already have good practices with these protocols since, as I mentioned, they've been in place for our essential retail spaces for nearly two months. And the great news is that customers know the drill. And while it may seem odd for us to be wearing a face covering in our favorite local shop, with a store owner who may be our neighbor and friend, we have to recognize that this virus remains among us. COVID-19 doesn't care whether we're in a supermarket or a bookstore, social distancing must remain our routine. But again, on Monday, June 15, with these protections in place, our downtown's and Main Streets can once again open up and small businesses can again open their doors to their communities. We have all waited for this and so long as we continue practicing social distancing, and so long as retailers do all we are requiring of them to do to protect their stores and their customers, we will take a big step forward in our restart and recovery.

Now with that, let's take a look at the overnight numbers. Yesterday we received an additional 603 positive test results for an updated total of 162,530. Here are the trend lines. Perhaps more importantly, here is the trend line that we discussed on Tuesday of RT, you can see it's 0.85, which is the rate of spread for each new case. The fact that it remains below one, which means the rate of COVID-19 is slowing, the spread of COVID-19 is slowing, or in other words, each new case is leading to fewer and fewer cases. We need all of us collectively to keep that below one.

The daily positivity or spot positivity rate, which is another way to look at this for test samples collected on May 31, which was Sunday, is 4.2%, and that's from roughly on that Sunday about 20,000 recorded samples.

Looking to our long-term care facilities, as we do every day, new cases 33,957 continue to be a challenge, and while the numbers of blessed fatalities of folks that are lab confirmed, passing of 5,286, that remains far below where we saw at the peak, there remains a disproportionate share of the strain on these facilities.

Our hospitals report in 1,982 patients being treated for COVID-19, and our field medical stations again reported 21 patients. By the way, getting below 2,000 hospitalizations, Judy, is a milestone for our recovery. Think of where we were, 8,000 and something not that long ago. This is the breakdown of hospitalizations across regions. The number of patients in ICU or critical care was 537. Ventilators in use at 406.

Here are yesterday's hospital admittance and discharge numbers, charted across regions. I would just say, I will be the happiest guy in Central and North Jersey if in fact it was zero. Judy and I didn't like the data we got today. That should almost be n/a. I'd love to come back to you and say that it was zero, and we will come back to you if it was, but you can see 33 new hospitalizations in the South. All in all, these are very good indicators as we prepare to enter stage two, in what will only be 11 days from now.

But let's keep in mind that there are those we are still losing. And today we're announcing another 92 of our fellow blessed New Jerseyans have passed away due to COVID-19 related complications. That puts our statewide total at 11,970. And yes, we are certainly seeing fewer deaths than we were seeing at our peak, but tell that to a family member who just lost a loved one to COVID-19. Just because the curves are bending down is not an excuse for us to stop doing all that we can and all that you have been doing, folks, to push them to zero.

Let's remember, if we can, a few more of those we've lost, and let's use their memories as an inspiration for all of us to keep working at this. We start with a very special guy. This is Chai Suthammanont. Chai was 68 years old. Apparently when people asked him how you pronounced his name, he said Chai, as in the tea. Born in Bangkok, Thailand, Chai came to the United States at the age of 17 to study photography, but eventually settled in Jersey City and landed in the restaurant industry, at the famous Greenwich Village jazz club Sweet Basil. Chai loved all music from classical to rock to jazz and everything in between. In over a 20-year career, he would rise from day bartender to General Manager. He gained a reputation for making Sweet Basil among the first restaurants or bars to offer health insurance to all of its employees, and for his honesty and advocacy among the musicians and artists.

And the list is long of the great and the good who Chai hung with and who called him a friend. It included by the way, the late New Jersey Poet Laureate and dad of Newark Mayor Ras Baraka, Amiri Baraka. Chai and his first wife, the late Rose had three sons, Victor, Craig and Keith and I had the honor of speaking with Keith yesterday. Keith today serves as a Jersey City firefighter. Chai met his second wife, Christina, at Sweet Basil, and together they had a son Derek, he's the youngest. He's 22 years old, and Chai retired from Sweet Basil in 2001 to spend time raising Derek. I had a very emotional conversation with his wife, Christina, yesterday.

He was an active participant in his children's lives, eager to help with a home project or share a recipe or cooking up, or just talk about life. He'll be remembered for his kindness, humility, humor and generosity, as well as for his malaprops and mispronunciations, which were sometimes purposeful because he could make people laugh, and that was one of his other great attributes. He leaves, as I mentioned, his wife Christina and his four sons, his dad, as well as four grandchildren, his five siblings, and many nieces and nephews. God bless you, Chai.

Next we remember Charles D'Angelo. He went by Chuck and lived in Wayne for the past 20 years. It's hard to believe a guy who looks that healthy and strong has been struck down by COVID-19, but he was. A graduate of Pope Pius High School in Passaic and Fairleigh Dickinson University, he would have a successful business

career as the President and CEO of Clifton Institutional Services for 30 years. But for the past five years, he was better known as the owner of the antique shop, Chuck Rogers Funtiques in Boonton. Chuck was a parishioner and choir member at Our Lady of the Valley Roman Catholic Church in Wayne, and a proud member of the Knights of Columbus. He also sang with the Cavaliers of Harmony Barbershop Quartet. He was a champion horseshoe pitcher and avid bowler who boasted a high game, which is beyond reach, I can tell you for yours truly, of 299. It's no surprise he was President of the Worldwide Bowling League.

Chuck is survived by his wife, Maureen, his wife of 30 years, and their children. His daughter Nicole and sons Steven and Michael, and their spouses along with seven grandchildren. And by the way, I had the honor at the same time using multiple phones to speak with Maureen and her kids, Nicole, Steven and Michael yesterday, and he was quite a guy. Chuck also leaves his father Charles Iggy D'Angelo and two sisters, Roseanne and Kathy. And again, Chuck was only 67 years old. God bless you, pal.

And finally today, we remember Martha Ventura of Cliffside Park. Born in New York to Italian immigrant parents, she came to New Jersey to work at Lever Brothers in Edgewater, which created and manufactured soaps and detergents, and she called our state home ever since. She was a devout Catholic and a member of the Church of the Epiphany in Cliffside Park. Martha was also a consultant at Weight Watchers and loved helping people. Cliffside Park played an outsized role in her life and she passionately followed the goings on in her community, whether it be the latest political issues, and their longtime family friends the Calabreses, or the fate of Cliffside Park's Red Raiders Athletics.

Martha is now reunited with her beloved husband Andy, who passed away in 2015. She leaves behind her son Tony, who's now relocated down by me in Monmouth County, but said make sure you mentioned the Calabrese family, because they were really important to her, and hats off and have done so, and we will not forget that. Tony's also got a wife Karen, and she also, Martha leaves behind her grandchildren, Lauren and Ashley and their spouses, and great grandchildren, Anthony Ryan and Parker, as well as many nieces and nephews. Martha lived to the age of 94.

So may God bless Chai, Chuck and Martha and their families as well as everyone we have lost to this pandemic and their families. We are closing in on 12,000 lives lost in New Jersey. That is practically an unfathomable number, and yet we must remember every single one of them, whenever we put on a face covering because but for our actions to protect ourselves and our families, we could be living the pain that thousands of fellow New Jerseyans are living as we speak. Hang in there folks, keep doing what you're doing, and together, we will get through this.

Switching gears, I want to spend a moment to remind everyone to make sure that you are counted in the 2020 Census. First, some good news. Our census response rate continues to increase and we're now tied with Massachusetts in 20th place nationally at 62.7%. I know a thing or two about Massachusetts and we are committed, with all due respect to Massachusetts, to beating them. We have four counties which have a response rate of over 70%: Burlington, Hunterdon, Morris and Somerset, and we have many more over 60%. But we need to get the rates up in the counties seen here in light blue: Atlantic, Essex and Hudson especially. I know that there was reluctance in some of our communities to fill out the census. But let me make very clear why you should feel complete confidence and why it's so important for you to do so.

First, the census is secure, and I want to emphasize that. Your personal data is protected by the very strong federal laws, and we've got your back right here in New Jersey as well. No one will have their census data used against them, period, full stop.

Second, the census is easy. You can fill it out online or by phone, it literally only takes a few minutes.

And third, as I mentioned, the census is really important. This isn't just a count. It's the way that billions of dollars of federal dollars are distributed. And if we're not counted, and we weren't in 2010, that money is going to go somewhere. It's going to go to someone else in another state who was counted. It's that simple. Census data impacts funding for instance, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, including pass-through child support and programs like social security and unemployment insurance compensation. And the census ensures that these programs are implemented in an equitable way, and can help those who are most in need.

The census impacts us all, whether it's social service programs, education, healthcare, transportation, COVID-19 relief, or of the many other things that affect our everyday lives, an accurate count can mean literally billions of more federal dollars coming to New Jersey. It's our money, folks. Let's get it back here. So take a moment and go to 2020census.gov and be counted. It's our civic duty, and it's for everyone in our state.

Next, I want to shout out another unrelated issue, but I'm very proud of the action yesterday taken by the New Jersey State Board of Education to adopt First Lady Tammy Murphy's initiative to incorporate climate change education into its K through 12 Learning Standards. This makes us the very first state in the United States of America to take this step in climate education. No other state has done this. The adoption of these standards across our K through 12 schools will strengthen the future of New Jersey's green energy economy, and we're going to be relying on this sector to help us in our restart and long-term recovery, by the way.

Today's students are tomorrow's workforce and tomorrow's leaders, and I think especially of the children growing up in our environmental justice communities, who bear a disproportionate burden from climate change. By incorporating these standards into the nation's number one public education system, which we are, we are creating a catalyst and knowledge base that will propel us to our goal of 100% clean energy by the year 2050. I congratulate the First Lady for all of her hard work and I also thank the many advocates and stakeholders who played a role, and a special shout out to our dear friend, former Vice President Al Gore, who has been a tremendous partner throughout. This keeps our tremendous public schools at the forefront nationally.

Now, before I turn things over to Judy, I would want to remind us all of where we stand. Because so many millions of you had been so diligent in social distancing and wearing covers on your face and continuing to do all the other things that are now part of our daily routines, the data we received from our hospitals keep moving in the right direction. Look at that, since the peak and only since two weeks ago. The past two weeks have been filled with many more green lights than red lights. And the green lights outnumber the red ones in every region of our state, North, Central and South. This is why we can look forward to our restaurants opening for outdoor dining, and for our small businesses to reopen on June 15. And why our salons and barbershops will be able to open on June 22.

But we still have work to do. As we see here, let's keep pushing these numbers down. And when we do, we'll get through stage two that much sooner. Again, we started showing you this way this week, new cases per day, we continue to drop. That's really good news. Patients in hospital, we're still number one of any American state, we need that to drop. Fatalities per day, the fourth-highest American state. We need that to continue to drop as well.

Again, generally, we're seeing the numbers that we need to see. We've slowed this virus. We're in a very good position to move forward on our road back together as one New Jersey. And with that, please help me welcome the woman who needs no introduction, the Commissioner of the Department of Health, Judy Persichilli.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Thank you, Governor and good afternoon. Well, the Governor has outlined a multi-stage process for restarting New Jersey. This includes permitting outdoor dining starting on June 15. I know all of us are looking forward to dining out at our favorite restaurants. Outdoor dining allows us to be in the fresh air and visit with friends and family and at the same time, maintaining social distance.

To safeguard the public's health as we enjoy this experience, last evening, the department released the health and safety standards to protect patrons and staff. Employers should provide staff training in hand washing, cleaning and disinfection, social distancing, use of face coverings, and monitoring for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The staff must be checked daily for symptoms. They must wear face coverings at all times and gloves when in contact with customers, and when preparing and serving food or handling utensils and other items. Seating must be limited to a maximum of eight customers per table, and the tables must be a minimum of six feet apart. All tables, chairs and shared items such as menus and condiments must be disinfected after each use.

Similar to the practices we've seen in essential stores, restaurants need to use signs and physical guides, such as tape on the floor, to ensure parties are six feet apart while waiting. All self-service food or drink options such as buffets, salad bars and self-service drink stations must be eliminated. They must post

signage at the entrance that states that no one with fever or symptoms of COVID-19 should enter the food or beverage establishment. Physical barriers and partitions should be installed at cash registers, bars and host stands, and hand sanitizer stations should be set up for customers.

Before the customers enter the outdoor seating area, they should be informed of the required safety measures, such as social distancing, good health hygiene practices, and the need to mask up when they are away from their table. Restaurants should decline entry to the indoor portion of the establishment to a customer who is not wearing a face covering, unless the customer has a medical reason for not doing so, or is a child under two years of age.

In waiting areas, again, six feet of spacing will be needed to be marked off. The department recommends that customers stay in their cars or away from the food or beverage establishment while waiting for a table if outdoor wait area cannot accommodate social distancing. Restaurants should alert customers via calls or texts when tables are ready to limit touching, and use of shared objects such as pagers or buzzers should not be used. We recommend that restaurants take reservations to limit traffic and volume, so I encourage you to call your favorite restaurant that can accommodate outdoor dining and make a reservation.

Moving on to my daily report, last evening as the Governor shared, the hospitals reported 1,982 hospitalizations and 537 individuals were in critical care with 76% on ventilators. We are reporting one new case of multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children. That is a total of 35 cases in our state. The children affected have either tested positive for active COVID-19 infection, or had antibody tests that were positive, indicating exposure to the virus. In New Jersey, thankfully, there are no deaths reported at this time. The ages of the children affected range from 1 to 18, and six are still currently hospitalized. The breakdown of race and ethnicity is White 23%, Black 27%, Hispanic 40%, Asian 7%, and other 3%. The Governor review the new cases and deaths reported today. In terms of deaths, the breakdown of deaths by race and ethnicity is as follows: White 53.3%, Black 18.5%, Hispanic 19.5%, Asian 5.4% and other 3.3%.

Our state veteran home numbers remain the same as do our psychiatric hospitals. The overall percent positivity in New Jersey 4.23; in the North that is 3.30%, Central 3.72%, the South 6.45%. That concludes my daily statistical report. Stay connected, stay safe and stay healthy.

Governor Phil Murphy: Judy just to repeat something – first of all, thank you for not just today, your report, but for everything. 79.5% of the fatalities are of our older brothers and sisters of the age 65 and over, and we continue to have one fatality, please God it stays that way, and that was a blessed lost life under the age of 18. So again, please God, it stays that way.

Pat, before I turn over to you again, we've got this sort of non-peaceful protest, COVID-19 compliance and then we've got the peaceful protest reality. And again, New Jersey so far, and we have to earn this every day folks, so far has been overwhelmingly peaceful. And it is, as I mentioned, it is a contrast to other places and to history, and I mentioned 31 years ago today. The protesters were peaceful. What was done to them wasn't, and I say that because law enforcement, it takes a village to have a peaceful protest. You need folks who are committed to change and to doing everything they can to wipe out systemic racism and honoring not just George Floyd, but Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor and all the names that have come before. It takes the elected officials, the community leaders, the faith leaders of all faiths, and it takes law enforcement. And we've seen that, overwhelmingly.

With that, any observations on either COVID-specific as well as peaceful protests updates? And again, to repeat what you and I and Judy have said consistently, we not only respect the right to protest, we hold it up, peaceful protest, on a pedestal but please, cover your face and try to stay clear of each other. Pat.

State Police Superintendent Col. Patrick Callahan: Thank you, Governor. Good afternoon. Only one EO violation charge last night, a subject was arrested up in Newton in Sussex County for criminal mischief, resisting arrest, defiant trespass and ultimately an EO violation. To the Governor's point with regard to our demonstrations throughout the state, overwhelmingly peaceful. There are, as of right now, 19 scheduled for today. We do work in partnership with our law enforcement agencies across the state. This morning I was on with Chris Leusner and the entire State Association Chiefs of Police, I think there was more than 250 chiefs on that virtual meeting. We talked about the challenging challenges of not only Executive Orders, but then on top of it, the civil unrest that's come with it. And the men and women in their agencies throughout the state have been doing a phenomenal job as well. And to the Governor's other point, let's just keep on doing it

peacefully. It allows New Jersey to once again stand at the forefront and be number one, as we are in so many things. So I greatly appreciate everybody's compliance in remaining peaceful throughout these demonstrations. Thanks, Gov.

Governor Phil Murphy: Pat, amen. I mean, the weather's warm, the anger is real, the pain is real. This gap between privilege and pain is yawning. Folks have every right to stand up and be heard, but please do it peacefully. We have to earn this every day, folks. This is not like we've put all this in the rearview mirrors. As I said several times here, we're in year one of century five since slavery came to our shores and the outrageous is rightful, but we've got to continue to do it peacefully and earn that peace every day. We're going to start over with Brent. Before we do, Dan, we're going to be here at one o'clock tomorrow, so that'll continue.

I want to say we had overwhelmingly, Judy and Pat were with me, overwhelmingly COVID-19 focused White House call led by the Vice President yesterday, which was largely a series of updating. It was overwhelmingly, in fact, almost 100% of it was discussion about health protocols, a lot of the things we speak about every day here. I wanted to say that earlier, but I thought it was informative. Also, Matt Platkin joined as Chief Counsel. Matt reminds me that the General Assembly just passed the bonding legislation, which is a huge step, overwhelmingly and that's a huge step forward. Again, bonding is not something we all wake up reflexively wanting to do, but the alternative here is devastation of our frontline workers, the very people we need at their positions and posts, healthcare workers to firefighters, police, educators, EMS, and everybody in between. That's a big step in the right direction, so I want to give a shout out to Speaker Craig Coughlin and the leadership team for getting that done. Again, we'll be back with you tomorrow at one o'clock, unless you hear otherwise.

Brent we ended, you were toward the end yesterday. We'll begin, as I hope our protocol today.

Q&A Session

Brent Johnson, Star-Ledger: A reader asked if you're an employee at a restaurant that will open for outdoor dining, but don't feel comfortable to come back to work yet, will they still be allowed to collect unemployment?

Two, an organizer of at least one protest over the lockdown restrictions was charged with violating orders. Will any of the organizers of the police brutality protest be issued citations?

Three, are people who have tested positive for COVID antibodies included in the state's total of positive tests?

Two more. Does the outdoor dining guidance allow places like wineries and breweries to hold tastings? And last one, the public health emergency expires soon, if not tomorrow, will that be extended?

Governor Phil Murphy: I'll give you some quick ones and then maybe either Judy or Matt can come in, or Pat. The public health period is something we have to renew; the state of emergency does not have to be renewed. I'm sure that we will almost certainly extend it, because we're still not back to 100%. But when we have got news on that, we'll let you know. The tests we report are not antibody, these are PCR tests, and we went out of our way to say that a couple of weeks ago. Those are really important tests, but they're important for different reasons than the ones we need the data for, which is how many people have it right now? That's the data we need to take the reopening steps. Judy or Tina can correct me if I'm wrong.

I think each protest is its own. I don't think there's a blanket answer to that. I mean, God willing, these all remain peaceful, but I'll leave it to Matt or Pat to comment on that.

And maybe I think if people are not comfortable, personal opinion, I don't want to hang your unemployment insurance on this, we have to respect that. But what's the law tell us, Matt? And also, wineries and breweries, in terms of their ability to host – I assume you mean outdoor events?

Chief Counsel Matt Platkin: So with respect to unemployment insurance, it's really, Brent, a case-by-case analysis as to whether they're eligible, so I couldn't give you a broad answer there. On wineries and vineyards, yes, they are eligible, are able to have outdoor tastings. They're just limited, limited to their existing privileges. So whatever they're able to do now, they can do under the new guidance.

Governor Phil Murphy: You know, like a lot of things, by the way, that we do, we stipulate as best we can based on the data what you can do. If folks, you know, we've signaled that faith indoors in some form, and we're still working through with a lot of the faith leadership what that looks like a week from tomorrow. We're not making people do it. We're saying what we believe is responsibly allowed in that step. Anything you want to add on any? You all good? Okay. Thank you. Dave, good afternoon.

David Matthau, NJ 101.5: Hi, Governor. With regard to the non-essential retail rules, could you just give us a little color in terms of common sense here? A lot of these stores are small, people are going to be going in them. They may be able to do the 50% capacity, but if you're looking at stuff on the shelf, you know, just remind us perhaps of common sense that we need to be following with this regard?

Also, for stage two, can you give us a sense of what you're working on next? I know that you had mentioned museums, libraries, possibly indoor dining is going to be part of stage two reopenings eventually. You know, what's on the forefront here? Give us a taste of what's going on.

And then perhaps you and the Commissioner could talk a little bit about this new hospitalization report, total of 33, none in the North, none in the Central part of the state? This sounds really significant.

Governor Phil Murphy: Too good to be true.

David Matthau, NJ 101.5: Yeah, it almost does.

Governor Phil Murphy: We think it is, by the way. We think we've got a data issue today on that. I hope I'm wrong, by the way. You hope we're wrong as well. But we don't trust the number today. I think we could have put an NA up there.

David Matthau, NJ 101.5: Okay, so maybe then in that regard, you know, just talk a little bit about the trend that these numbers are dropping, and it may not be 00, but how significant is this? And how much does it weigh in all of your decisions to move forward in the ways that we're doing? Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Yep, no problem. Let me address a couple of these and then I'm going to ask Dan to pull up a slide in a second. So non-essential retail, as Judy has concluded, and as I think she and I previewed, is going to look the rules of the road, identical, in fact, to essential retail. And so you've got inessential retail, you've got some smaller for instance, not the big chain pharmacies, but the smaller pharmacies that are typically going to be family owned. And in some cases, in many cases, in fact in our state, that's a robust industry where it's tight quarters. So it's the capacity management, wear a face covering, steer clear of people, marks on the floor, perhaps depending on the scale of the operation, Plexiglas, the basic things that we've espoused and we want to continue to espouse. I'll come back to your second question in a second, but people moving through is a positive data point, as opposed to people who are sedentary.

I'll jump to your third question I think, and Judy should come in on this, is new hospitalizations is a hugely important data point that we look at. You know, each day when we show where we are off the peak you'll see total hospitalizations, new hospitalizations, ICU hospitalizations, ventilator use, those are really important data points. You know, I'd put those up there along with the RT, which we have privately looked at a lot, and we wanted to make sure we had that right before we showed that to you all. Spot positivity I think is incredibly important. Anything you want to add in terms of new hospitalizations and/or other data you're looking at?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: I think we've said from the very beginning that there's mild disease, there's moderate disease, and then there's the severity of the illness that requires people to be admitted to the hospital. We're really looking at all stages. That's why the increased testing is so important, so we get an idea of how many people are positive, asymptomatic positive, may have mild symptoms, then those that are requiring hospitalization. We're finding that they deteriorate fairly quickly, so it's important for them to be in the hospital, to know that our doors are open for them, for sure. And that we know just how many individuals are getting a disease that is that severe.

Governor Phil Murphy: I'd throw one other data point on that you and I, as we speak every day that you raise and one we're watching is this children inflammation syndrome. Can we put up the stages chart, and just quickly answer, to take a look at this? This is stage two is in the box, outdoor dining, limited in-person retail, personal care, youth summer. We've signaled on all of those. I don't know that we've done anything yet on in-person clinical research or labs. We've said we want to get to gyms and fitness sooner than later. Motor vehicles will come, I think, sooner than later.

And then the ones on the on stage three that are big nuts that we really are wrestling a lot with right now and want to get to sooner than later are not surprising, indoor dining is probably the biggest, the casinos around that list, other things that are indoors where you've got the data points that are hostile to good health and advantageous to the virus, so indoors lacking ventilation, sedentary, close proximity. Real quick, please.

David Matthau, NJ 101.5: Museums, libraries?

Governor Phil Murphy: Yeah, museums, libraries. I don't know why they're not on the list. They were on the list, but yes, yes. Thank you. Please.

Reporter: A couple for you, Governor. First, the emergency borrowing plan that's up in the Assembly today allows for up to \$5 billion in state general obligation bonds to be issued, and also allows for participation in a Federal Reserve lending program that would permit New Jersey to borrow up to \$9 million. How does your administration currently plan to pay back this debt, and can you rule out that there could be a sales tax hike or a statewide property tax assessment in the future, to pay down the general obligation bonds?

Second, a question regarding federal emergency aid for schools. US Education Secretary DeVos' guidance has been that a portion of the funding meant largely for low-income students be also reserved for private school students. Advocates have asked your administration to reject that guidance, but they say you have yet to answer. Have you made a decision on that as of yet?

And lastly, you addressed restaurant reopenings for outdoor space, but a notice from the AG's Office states that restaurants wanting to expand their footprint to accommodate more outdoor diners need to get a permit and pay a \$75 fee for that? Why charge restaurants that have already lost so much money to move tables out to the parking lot and things like that?

Governor Phil Murphy: I'll leave the second and third questions to Matt. To address again, we've said in the last question that we can't control it at the state level, but we like the idea of creativity at the local level to allow for more outdoor space, as long as it can be done legally, safely, practically, whether it's a sidewalk, a parking lot, a space between buildings, just to allow us to get more outdoors. Again, when the virus is outside, I think it's one-nineteenth as effective, or your chances of having a droplet land on you are one-nineteenth what they are on the inside, something like that. I'll leave it to the experts.

Yeah, this notion of property taxes is kind of laughable. It's the opposite. If we weren't able to get this bonding, and again, the General Assembly is not just considering it, they passed it today, as I mentioned. If we weren't able to get this bonding, in the absence of that, we'd be forced to do the awful of laying off literally, maybe at the state level, 200,000; at the local level, untold numbers of first line workers. Fire, police, EMS, educators, healthcare workers, the very people we need right now, frankly. What would you do if you're a municipality? You'd have no choice but to raise property taxes. So this is nothing. This is not only nothing to do with raising property taxes, this is the one weapon we've got at our disposal to prevent that, in fact, from happening.

And I've heard a few voices, particularly I don't want to get political on the other side of the aisle, raising this that it's in the bond. Guess what? It's boilerplate language that's been in every bond the state has done for decades and decades and decades, and if folks keep raising their voice on this point, I have a response for them. I'm going to read their names alphabetically, for all the votes positively that they took to support other bonding in the past with the exact same language.

Having said that, Matt, on either the last point on AG or the emergency aid for schools, any comments?

Chief Counsel Matt Platkin: Yeah, we've received the advocates' inquiries on the emergency aid. The department is putting together a plan on the federal money. There are several buckets of federal money. When they're ready to speak to it, I know they will.

With respect to the letter that you're referencing, that came out from the Alcohol Beverage Control Division. That was the special ruling that the Governor spoke about yesterday with respect to restaurants that have liquor licenses, if they want to expand to new, contiguous or non-contiguous outdoor premises. There's a review process, an abbreviated one, but that's the standard fee that is charged anytime that they have to submit an application and it's reviewed. And these will be reviewed very quickly, but there's no fee associated with the outdoor dining component to it. It's just if they need to expand their liquor license.

Governor Phil Murphy: So I was confused. It isn't at the AG, it's the ABC and the fee is the application fee which they have to do in any event, right?

Chief Counsel Matt Platkin: Correct.

Governor Phil Murphy: Yeah, this is a big deal. This is a big positive for them. And not only is it, listen, I'm not making light of \$75 but this is a big, good step that we're trying to take to help folks out. Thank you. Sir, do you have anything? Hold on one sec.

Reporter: Is there any update on the MVC agencies? Also is the senior property tax rebate dead? And in regard to the Emergency Bond Act passed by the Assembly, will you be able to make fewer budget cuts or lay off fewer state workers? Will you borrow less money if the federal government sends New Jersey additional aid? And lastly, I know we just touched on this, but can you rule out any property tax surcharge to make bond payments? Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Motor vehicles, we owe you an answer on. We're working that through right now with Sue Fulton who runs it and we'll be back to you, I hope sooner than later on that. And again, Sue is doing something that you'd want as a taxpayer out there for her and her team to do, which is thinking through, how do we reimagine the MVC experience? So taking this period of time when they've been shuttered in their physical presence to reimagine what that looks like. And we've had a whole bunch of meetings on that. I've participated in one big one, and it looks awfully attractive.

Listen, the bonding was passed by the Assembly, which is a huge step. We need the Senate to pass it, and then I sign it into law, God willing, this is all sooner than later. And that's the immediate relief that we need desperately to address what otherwise would be huge \$5 billion plus of cuts or deferrals in the next several months, only, June, July, August, September, never mind what next year would look like. So this is a huge step in the right direction, to be able to put back on the books a whole range of programs, property tax relief, whatever it might be, education funding, there's a whole range of things that we would love to do that unless we get this bonding, we won't be able to do.

The federal money, which we still desperately need, and we're still pounding away on every day, it's and/both as opposed to either/or, depending on when it comes, if it comes. It has to come, but if it comes, when it comes, and the size of that federal cash assistance all matters in terms of answering that question. So perhaps it's a supplement to the bonding, perhaps it's in lieu of, and perhaps it pays down some of the bonding.

The problem is we have no certainty at all on the federal cash assistance, which is why we need the bonding and why the step the Assembly took today is so important. And again, I find these comments about property tax, we have no plans to raise property taxes, and the irony is really, at so many levels, it's too thick to cut through, but at least two levels. Number one, if we didn't do the bonding, that's how property taxes would rise because folks would have no other choice but to offset the cuts that would come their way. And secondly, the chorus of voices who have been talking about this, they have voted for the exact same language, and I'm very happy to read their names either alphabetical or by height, on many occasions over the years, it's the exact same language that's in every bonding that the Assembly and Senate in the Legislature has ever approved, at least for decades. So enough already. Let's not go down the fake news front. Let's focus on what the facts are. Thank you for that. Elise, good afternoon.

Elise Young, Bloomberg: Good afternoon. Is there any word yet on when New Jersey National Guard's members may be returning from the Capitol? And does the New Jersey contingent remain at 85?

And a question from Carly Sitrin at Politico. President Trump is expected to be at his Bedminster club this weekend. Are you concerned about the potential scale of protests there, and in what ways is the state involved in preparing for protests and potential unrest? Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you. The contingent of the National Guard remains at 85. It remains exactly as I think you asked me, Elise, yesterday, it remains exactly the assignment that they're doing, which is protecting federal monuments. I don't know that it's only the Washington Monument, the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, but I believe it's those three. And we've already initiated, I mentioned yesterday, it's not open ended. It's a short-term deployment and we've already initiated conversations to see how and when that ends. And if we have news on that, I will come back to you, but that's where it stands.

You know, I don't think it's appropriate to talk about security as it relates to any of us, and that includes certainly the President. So I think I was going to ask Pat to comment on that, but obviously it's something that we take very seriously, and it is not a first-time visit, so this is a regular reality since he's been President and there's a rhythm associated with this. I think we'll leave it at that. We are sure there will be protests over the weekend up and down the state, as a general matter. I've got no more insight in terms of that specifically. But thank you. Dustin, good afternoon.

Dustin Racioppi, Bergen Record: Good afternoon. Are there more specifics expected on the guidance for non-essential retail? Because I think there's still questions about what kind of salons will be able to operate, whether people can try on clothes in stores, what happens to returned items in terms of being able to put them back out for purchase? And how do you control things like social distancing and capacity in malls?

For childcare centers opening up, what's the administration's plan to make sure inspectors and other workers involved in those reopenings get protected? And will they be tested regularly?

And then, on the peaceful protests, if you just put aside the moral argument, they still violate your Executive Order and by giving your blessing to those protests, how does that not render the Executive Order void, since you're essentially picking and choosing who can adhere to it? And doesn't that welcome a legal challenge to allow other large gatherings?

Governor Phil Murphy: So Dustin, by the way, Dan Bryan, thank you for this. I had forgotten this. Sue Fulton is actually going to be with us tomorrow to discuss the Motor Vehicles Commission, so the gentleman who asked it is gone, but she'll be with us tomorrow. I should have said that earlier. Thank you for reminding me.

I think what we've said, I'm going to ask Judy to come in if she disagrees with this. I think we've said explicitly that the guidance for non-essential retail is exactly the same as essential retail. I believe that's it. So it's the guide. That's the guidance that's out there. Matt, do you agree with that?

Chief Counsel Matt Platkin: Yeah, in the Executive Order signed yesterday, the general parameters for non-essential retail are the same as those in Executive Order 122 on essential retail. I know the department and the Commissioner can speak to it as well as the administration are looking at sector by sector and seeing if additional guidance is necessary for any individual sectors, including some of the ones you mentioned, Dustin.

Governor Phil Murphy: Your second question, Dustin, was on malls.

Dustin Racioppi, Bergen Record: Yeah, just how you'll be able to control things like capacity and social distancing and things.

Governor Phil Murphy: Forgive me if I'm mistaken here, unless the store has an outdoor outlet, we're not there on malls. Do you want to add anything to that? Judy, am I right? Matt, correct?

Chief Counsel Matt Platkin: That's correct. But again, as I said, one of the industries or sectors that we're looking at is malls and when the department advises that they're safe to reopen, I expect we will put out some guidance or the Governor or the Commissioner will speak to the protocols they have to have in place.

Governor Phil Murphy: And before I ask Judy to come in on childcare, I would just say the peaceful protests, I'm not going to say this as a legal matter, but by inference if a protest is legal, I'll make two comments. If a protest is peaceful, I think we're saying essentially that as long as it's peaceful, at least for the time being until we give more guidance, that we are acknowledging and accepting it. And we would ask folks to cover their faces and to keep social distance.

Having said that, the second point I would make, I don't want to speak for Matt, but it's pretty clear and the data is showing us that we are continuing to go in the right direction. And please, we don't reignite this, that we're going to be able to reassess the outdoor gathering numbers at some point, I hope sooner than later.

Judy, anything you want to add on childcare, or Tina? I guess the question is what are we putting in place to protect workers? Is that your?

Dustin Racioppi, Bergen Record: Yeah, you have to have these inspectors go out to certify that these facilities are safe to reopen, right? So will they get regularly tested? Will they get adequate PPE, any other kind of measures in place to protect them?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Well, the guidance for workers for childcare will follow our guidance for employees. There's nothing -- that's already been posted. You can go to our website and you'll see guidance for employees.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you. Give us a minute here as we pack up and remask. Again, Sue Fulton will be our featured speaker tomorrow, Dan, at one o'clock. We'll be here same time, same station, as they say. First I want to thank Judy and Christina, thank you as always for being here. Pat, Jared, Matt, Dan and the rest of the team.

Two things I want to say other than we'll see you back here at one o'clock tomorrow. Two levels of thanks, and at the same time, keep it up. The health numbers, there's just no denying that they're going in the right direction, and they're going meaningfully in the right direction. We watch them like a hawk, no more so than Judy and Tina and their teams. But it's you all that have done this, so thank you and please keep it up. Embrace these new steps that we're unveiling and I hope we'll be able to continue to do so responsibly. Common sense for the common good, meaning not just for yourself, but for your family, friends, neighbors, other participants.

And secondly, on the peaceful protests, it does take a village. We haven't had the run of days that we've had because only one group did the right thing. It's because protesters, rightfully angered, want to have their voices heard and they want to see action. And we completely respect that, and you're doing it peacefully, keep it up. To law enforcement, likewise, faith leaders, elected officials, other folks who were involved in this. We're setting an example, and it's exactly the sort of example as a state that we want to set, most importantly for ourselves, but not just for ourselves, for the nation and beyond. So folks, thank you for that and keep it up. We have to earn this every single day. Thank you all and God bless you all.

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