

Governor Phil Murphy

TRANSCRIPT: May 18h, 2020 Coronavirus Briefing Media

05/18/2020

Holding a COVID-19 briefing. WATCH:



Governor Phil Murphy: Good afternoon. I am joined by the woman to my right, who needs no introduction, the Commissioner of the Department of Health, Judy Persichilli. To her right, a guy who's been with us before, the state's former epidemiologist and an advisor every step of the way during the entire coronavirus crisis and challenge, Dr. Eddy Bresnitz. Eddy, great to have you back with us. The guy to my left, again who needs no introduction, the Superintendent of State Police, Colonel Pat Callahan. Director of the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness Jared Maples is here. And a woman who is now two haircuts away from achieving her barber's license, the First Lady of the Great State of New Jersey, Tammy Murphy, so thank you for your help.

Today, I am signing an Executive Order that will allow – I just want to make sure you're paying attention there, Judy. Today, I'm signing an Executive Order that will allow some additional outdoor recreational areas and businesses to restart their operations. This includes batting cages and golf ranges, shooting and archery ranges, horseback riding, private tennis clubs and community gardens. Additionally, we are now comfortable, I say as a non-golfer, allowing golfers to tee off in foursomes as opposed to in pairs. All of this will take effect this Friday at 6:00 a.m. May 22. This announcement adds to those that we've made over the past week as we've taken the first steps to put our state on the road back to restart and recovery.

We have put in place a robust program of testing and contact tracing to help us mitigate any future positive tests for COVID-19, to lessen the chances that any case will contribute to any escalation in the number of cases. We have begun to reopen our economy by focusing on industries and activities in which social distancing can be most readily maintained, and public health and safety can be most readily protected. And

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we have put in place, through partnerships with our shore counties and municipalities, and I can't say enough good things about them, those partnerships, the procedures to allow our residents to safely enjoy a summer along our beaches.

We took all of these steps because the data that we have been seeing over the past weeks has signaled that it's becoming safer for us to dip our toes back into the water, in this case, literally. All of the important metrics, the data we need to see in our hospitals we have seen. The number of patients being treated for COVID-19, as you can see, is down significantly, as is the number of people entering our hospitals. Fewer ICU beds are being filled, and fewer ventilators are in use.

We've been able to cut some of these health crisis indicators by more than 50%, as you can see, since their peak earlier this spring. The strain on our hospital systems has consistently improved, especially over the past two crucial weeks as we began with the reopening of our parks, and they have significantly decreased across the board in every region. I want to sit here for a second, though, and you can see North, Central and South. A red ball means it was up relative to the previous day, a green ball means the number was down relative to the previous day. And Judy would want me to say this, and we're going to tell you this in terms of the overnight numbers, the new hospitalizations have a lot more red than we would like to see. Now we look at those on a rolling average number of days, because you could have a spike in a given day because of an under report, for instance, the day before. So these are not necessarily as stark as they appear, but that is still a fact, that a red ball means it was up from the previous day. And we're going to have one of those days that we'll announce shortly today.

And while we are not nearly out of the woods yet, and thousands of our fellow New Jerseyans remain in the hospital battling COVID-19, as you can see, we are moving forward, carefully, methodically and responsibly. Together, we're moving toward what we all must acknowledge will be a new normal. And truth been told, we've been there before. After the 9/11 attacks, our nation was similarly reeling from the massive loss of life and our seeming innocence. In its place, security measures were put into place that we were not accustomed to. How many of us honestly didn't balk the first time, or the first many times, that we stood at the end of a long TSA checkpoint line, being told that we had to take off our shoes while trying to board a plane?

But today, the practices and protocols put into place after 9/11 are now part of our routines. We expect greater scrutiny when applying for a driver's license, and we're pretty much all adjusted to giving ourselves more time before a flight. In many ways, the aftermath of this pandemic will be similar. Right now, we have to remember to bring our face coverings when we go out to the store. In the months to come it will more and more simply become second nature.

And remember, we are resilient. Getting ourselves to a new normal is never easy, nor is it ever quick, and as in the time since 9/11, our singular goal will be to prevent another attack by COVID-19. The data will continue to determine our dates for taking further steps. As we have been responding to and managing the immediate challenges, we have also been planning for the next steps. Today, I want to walk us through the stages in which we anticipate moving toward this new normal. And as we take each step, we will constantly be reviewing and reevaluating key metrics to ensure we can take the next one. We will be guided by our ability to protect against a new outbreak with testing and contact tracing, clear safeguards in place, and a continued call for all of you to keep doing what you have been doing for the past couple of months, and doing it brilliantly, I might add.

There are things that will remain constant throughout this restart and recovery process. For instance, we will all have to continue practicing our social distancing and staying home whenever possible, especially those who are at higher risk. We all will be encouraged, at the very least, to continue wearing our face coverings when out in public. We will have to recognize the mass public gatherings, large or small, won't be happening anytime soon. We will all have to continue practicing the safe hygiene that has helped slow the spread, cleaning and sanitizing workplaces, washing our hands with soap and water, and staying home when we don't feel well. And we will ensure safeguards on mass transit, whether it be NJ Transit or private carriers, throughout. And if we see a backslide, we will not hesitate. We will take no joy in it, but we will not hesitate to take action.

But we will move forward deliberately. I will speak to each of these stages in greater detail in a moment. But as you can see, we are preparing for a responsible process. Our goal is to protect our workforce. The more direct and regular your contact is with your coworkers and your customers, the greater the safeguards that will be necessary, so stay on this for a moment. As you can see, a significant percentage of our workforce is engaged in a significant amount of contact to coworkers and the public, and 40% have the highest amount of direct public contact and therefore the greatest potential exposure. This is why we are putting a premium on ensuring workplace safeguards that will protect you, your coworkers and your customers and clients. So stay on this just for a minute here.

Again, this is the New Jersey workforce broken down in broad strokes and broad categories. This does not include, by the way, these are folks who are employed in New Jersey, this does not include the approximately million of us who cross a river every day to work, the bulk of them going into Manhattan. You've got about 25% of folks who can easily work from home and are able to do so, and have been doing so. That, if you were to ask me today, that's likely to continue. You've got 35%, about roughly one-third of our workforce that are in sort of low to moderate contact, either with their coworkers or with their customers. That's construction, it's landscaping, it's a significant amount of factory work. And then you've got the hardest nut to crack, 40% of our workforce that have frequent, intimate contact with either coworkers or customers. That's a bartender, a waiter or a waitress in a restaurant, in particular. Particularly, with a particular emphasis on that last group on folks, the hardest nut of all to crack are the folks who are working indoors.

We do not take this lightly, and we fully understand and appreciate the struggle many of you face in the current climate. We are anticipating that some of the jobs which have been lost over the past two months may not return. We experienced this after the Great Recession. But unlike then, today, we have robust job training and apprenticeship programs in place. We didn't anticipate a pandemic when we put them in place, but they will do us an enormous amount of good. And again, for the roughly 25%, that group at the top of our workforce who can work from home and by the way, have basically been doing that throughout, you too should expect to continue with this for the foreseeable future.

But until, and I'm now going to practice, Judy and Eddy, without a license here, until either a proven vaccine is in our midst, or proven therapeutics are widely available, we cannot firmly enter the new normal which eventually awaits us, when life will once again return to all of our workplaces, downtowns and Main Streets. Most importantly, we will continue to be guided by the principle that public health creates economic health. And if we begin to see a backslide in public health, we will have to also pull back on the reins of our restart.

Every consideration will be given to ensure that the safeguards in place give workers confidence that they can get back to work, and customers confidence that they can go back out, as well. This is what our Restart and Recovery Commission in the complementary Advisory Councils, which know firsthand our state's varied economic sectors, are working on. And we will continue to look to the Commission, in particular, for the signals that we are ready to move through each stage. By the way, that Commission has been meeting regularly. I mentioned I spoke with Chairman Ben Bernanke on Friday, former chair of the Federal Reserve, there are subcommittee meetings that have been taking place. We have another full Commission meeting, I believe, Judy, this Wednesday, if my memory serves me. And the Councils, I had several exchanges this morning with members of our councils, they are all up and running.

Now we laid out what the mile posts are on the road back a few weeks ago, and this is where these metrics will take us. As we enter each stage and we can look at this, we will allow businesses and activities to reopen according to their risk level, and the challenges they will face to safeguard public health. However, this will not be everyone at once as we reach a new stage. Even within each stage, we will phase in our restart. And by the way, that's what we've done. So you look at the maximum restrictions on the left, which is where we were. We're now, I think, comfortably in the midst of stage one, by the way, you could see in both maximum restrictions and in stage one, not all of those things happen on the same day. These are groupings of steps that we'll take, again, in a period of time, in a window of time. And then we will step back as we take these steps and make sure the data works. We will aim to move through each stage as quickly as we can. Believe me, there's no, we won't sit on this if we feel the data allows us to move forward. But we will do so with public health firmly in mind and as cautiously as we must.

At the height of the pandemic, we were essentially stuck at stage zero, that's maximum restrictions. Our state was as locked down as much as we could, while ensuring access to essential services and stores. We closed our schools and transitioned our students to remote learning. We prohibited all public and mass gatherings and urged everyone to simply stay at home. Today, we find ourselves in a better place because the steps we took had been effective. The steps you took folks, let there be no doubt, none of us up here had the power to push these curves down. Only the 9 million of you had that power. And because you took this responsibility to heart, they have come down.

Now we find ourselves in what we are calling stage one, as I mentioned. We are opening up businesses in a way that still provides maximum protection for residents, while allowing more of our workers to get back on the job. With the reopening of our parks and our plans to have our beaches and lakefronts open as of Friday, we are all now able to enjoy all that our state's natural resources have to offer again, albeit admittedly, a little bit differently.

I'm sure you've noticed, almost everything we have approved at this point are leaning heavily toward expanded outdoor activities, because the data said we could and best practices note that outside right now is safer than inside. None of our moves have been arbitrary. All of them have been driven by data. And again, I'm going to practice without a license, Judy and Eddy, but folks, the hardest nuts to crack will be indoors, no ventilation sedentary realities. That is going to be our toughest, again, our toughest hill to climb.

And by the way, we recognize that the resumption of childcare services will soon be vital as our workers return to their traditional places of work. What we are working to get to now is stage two, which will be a broader restart of our economy. Should the data continue to improve and keep giving us a green light, we will be able to further reduce restrictions on other businesses, including allowing our restaurants to once again welcome diners, at least first and foremost, to outdoor tables, and potentially – and I say potentially – to a limited number of indoor ones, or to more creative business models, and for some personal care businesses to begin to reopen for their clients.

But again, when we get to stage two, not everything will happen at once. We will continue to responsibly and deliberately give different sectors a green light in steps. So let's just take a moment here and look at those bullet points, if you have a hard time reading that at home. So you've got in stage two, expanded retail, outdoor dining, indoor dining at significantly reduced capacity and with a whole lot of other caveats around that, limited personal care, and ultimately, potentially, museums and libraries. And that's not an exhaustive list. That's to give you some representation of what could be included in stage two.

We look forward to a time when our kids may be able to have limited summer camp and educational experiences. We can plan the reopenings of some of our cultural sites, as I mentioned, and libraries, and we'll be able to put in motion plans for what it will look like when our students return to their schools, and to our colleges and universities hopefully, in some new model, come this fall. Throughout, however, ensuring proper hygiene, sanitation and social distancing will remain our top priorities. This still relies heavily upon all of you out there continuing your hard work and commitment to keeping yourselves and neighbors safe. When you and your neighbor both wear face coverings, when you wash your hands with soap and keep your distance, you keep each of you much, much safer. That's why I'm sitting so far away from my colleagues, not that I don't enjoy their company. It's why I wear, we all wear a face covering here, and why I'll put it back on when we leave, and we all will.

So should we be successful in further driving down the curves over the coming weeks, we can take our step into stage two. And should our progress continue from that point, we can look to stage three, when we can once again allow for shoppers to enter downtown and Main Street storefronts, and for limited gatherings with appropriate safeguards. Along all of these stages, we are working on supporting the resumption, as I mentioned, of additional childcare services, and the scaling up of NJ Transit as our workers return to their traditional places of business. But even then, we must be vigilant. We will not risk lives to a rebound of COVID-19. The protocols that will get us to the new normal, social distancing, proper sanitation and hygiene, face coverings, a strong program of testing and contact tracing, and personal responsibility and compliance, all of that are what allow us to thrive once we get there.

Now, as I've said already, we have moved into stage one. Like each of you, I am anxious to get to stage two. But to do that, we will need to see continued improvement in the data, continued increases in our testing and contact tracing capacities, greater adoption of workplace and customer safeguards, as well as safeguards for our kids, and transit workers and travelers. And we need you to keep doing all that you have been doing so, so well.

Just as 9/11 did, COVID-19 has changed everything. We have to accept that. We have to learn its lessons. We lost 750 New Jerseyans on September 11, and we learned a stark lesson on the need for enhancing the security protocols at our transportation hubs and in our communities. We have now lost, as we'll speak to in a moment, 10,435 of our fellow blessed residents to COVID-19 and with each death, we are given a painful reminder of how much work we have to do to prevent a future outbreak. That is why social distancing will still be the rule of the days ahead. It is why we will still urge you to wear face coverings in public and require them when you enter a store. It is why, when we begin to restart more and more businesses, things like temperature and symptom checks may be more common.

But we will get through this. In fact, we're already on our way. Six weeks ago, when I was asked whether there would even be a summer at the shore, I was optimistic but unsure. And now we have the plans in place and we know we will have a summer. And I am confident that we'll be able to pass each test and move through subsequent stages. We are managing today, and at the same time, planning for tomorrow. This is, after all, New Jersey. We've risen to every challenge thrown our way since our very founding. We have always, and I mean always, rolled with the punches and punched above our weight. Now is our time to shine, now is our time for us to be guided not just by the data, but by our New Jersey values, the values that put communities first.

Now with that, let's turn our attention to the overnight numbers. Yesterday we received an additional 1,735 positive test results for a current statewide total of over 148,000. By the way, Monday, I should say up front, Monday's data is always a little bit sketchy. This may well be catch up on a couple of days' worth, because it's a little bit of a spike relative to our recent days. As you can see, our overall curve continues to move in the right direction. We'll take a quick timeout here.

The daily positivity or spot positivity rate for tests for May 14 stands at 12%. Let's stay here for a moment. Now you may say, wait a minute. You had a big weekend. You were at 22% or 23% just a couple of days ago. So the serology testing has exploded, and that's a recent phenomenon. I think one day alone, it hit 10,000 tests in the state. And again, that is a recent phenomenon. Remember the difference between a spot test, do you have the virus at that moment in time, which is a snapshot, versus a serology tests or an antibody test, which is a movie of your life, still not as reliable as they need to be with, we think, still of mixed utility. But the fact of the matter is, a positive test from a serology tests means that you have had the virus, not necessarily that you have at that moment in time. So Judy and Eddy and team and myself made the executive decision over the weekend that we would exclude the serology testing, because that doesn't really tell us the actual state of play in the State of New Jersey today. We'll only focus on the question, do you have the virus, literally, as of, in this case, last Thursday, May 14? The number is 12%. That is a very encouraging number. That's the number we're going to continue to focus on. We're thrilled with the explosion in serology tests, that will tell us a lot of other stuff, but it isn't nearly as relevant for what the decisions we need to make collectively about what we could begin to open, etc.

Okay, we also see that as a regional matter, and we've been saying this, this is consistent and as you can see, the regions are bunched up, plus or minus, in the 12% to 15% range. The map that we've been regularly turning to puts this in a slightly different perspective. You can see that practically the entire state is now on the lightest shade, meaning the rate of doubling is now more than 30 days in all but Cumberland County, and Cumberland is at the cusp of that. That's really good progress, folks. I hope we continue to see this with a different shade, a different set of stretch metrics, and we can continue to monitor this.

Looking to our long-term care facilities, we're also changing the way we're reporting these numbers to put them into greater context. As you can see, the rate of new cases has decreased, and this is something that we've been working hard toward. This is now in line with the other graphs that we present, which gives you the rate of change as opposed to just the cumulative numbers. And as you can see 28,136 positive test results, that number is not changing. We will assess that number every day in our long-term care facilities.

And, as it relates to fatalities, more than half continue to come from our long-term care facilities, 5,408 as of this writing, which is extraordinary. We also see that this is a seven-day average, which is the same metric we use for the other charts we show you every day. It's beginning to slow but it's still not where it needs to be. And by the way, as we've said, there are some, where depending on how you count employees, residents and how broad a definition you have of long-term care, there's several hundred thousand people's lives we're still trying to save as we speak. And at the same time, we mourn the extraordinary loss of 5,408 lives.

In our hospitals, the number of patients currently being treated for COVID-19 is 3,509. Our field medical stations report 40 patients. This is a breakdown of hospitalizations across regions, those are curves going in the right direction. Here are the hospitalizations per 100,000 residents, per capita, across region. The number of patients reported in an ICU fell to 1,053. Ventilator use is now at 819. Both of these key metrics continue their downward trends.

There were 334 new COVID hospitalizations yesterday. Let's pause on that and just reflect. Those are new entries into the hospital. Maybe it's a little skewed because it's a Monday, so maybe it's over a couple of days, but that's a fact. Those are facts. We're not in the end zone yet. And at the same time, I'm happy to say 190 live patients left our hospitals. These two numbers continue, as I say, to fluctuate day to day, so it's important for us to look at the longer term trend data, and we can see from that we're operating in a much safer zone than we were just a few weeks ago. But it is still not, again, in the end zone yet.

And here are the admittance and discharge numbers from yesterday, broken down by region. That number in the upper left, again, as Judy predicted, this virus has migrated from North, Central, to South, but we're monitoring very closely whether or not it can come back in, even if we bat 1,000 in our reopening and recovery strategies, we believe it can, we don't want it to come back in the back door.

Sadly today, with a very heavy heart, we report another 83 blessed souls lost from COVID-19 related complications. And as I said, with these earlier, our statewide total now stands at 10,435. As we do every day, let's recall a few of those lives who we have lost.

We begin in Bergen County in Ho-Ho-Kus, with longtime resident Joan Swanson. Joan was 89 years old. Look at that smile. Joan grew up in the Bronx, and it was while working as an executive secretary at the Loomis Company that she met her future husband, Carl, with whom she would share nearly 50 years and who she would convince to get his college degree. And with her help, he did, and together they raised two children. Her daughter, Karen, who is in Ho-Ho-Kus and with whom I had the great honor of speaking yesterday, and their son Bill, who lives in Chile. She was a member of both the Community Church of Ho-Ho-Kus and the Ho-Ho-Kus Women's Club, among many other organizations. She volunteered her time for Meals-On-Wheels. She also served as a Cub Scout leader, and she never had a bad word to say about anyone. She loved to read, travel and surround herself with family and friends. Her favorite title was that of mom. And in many ways, she wasn't just Karen and Bill's mom, but she opened her home and heart to all of their friends, too. If they say it takes a village to raise a child, in Ho-Ho-Kus, Joan seemingly raised a village of children. We send our condolences to Karen and Bill and the rest of her family and all the friends she leaves behind. She had a love of life but more importantly, she led a life of love. May God bless you, Joan.

Next up, we remember Pequannock's Michael Porcaro Sr., with a nice catch there, look at that. What a beautiful setting that is. For 27 years, Michael was a member of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 68. But it was his life away from the job site that meant the most. He was a family man, first and foremost. He and his wife Deborah, with whom I had the great honor of speaking yesterday, had been together since they met in high school in 1983, and after getting married in 1995, they moved to Pequannock to raise their son, Michael Jr. Dad was an avid fisherman, he loved taking his motorcycle out for rides, and he loved to kick back and enjoy some quiet time with a good cigar. He will be remembered by those who knew him for his generosity, and also for his sarcastic sense of humor. Besides Deborah and young Michael, he also leaves his sister Rita and his brothers Patrick and Chip. Michael was only 56 years old. May his memory bring them peace in this difficult time, and they are all in our thoughts and prayers. God bless you, Michael.

And finally today, we remember Olive Elizabeth Houghtaling of Neptune. She was the mother of a dear friend of ours and of many of us, Assemblyman Eric Houghtaling. Born in Carney, Olive and her late husband Chester moved to Neptune, where Olive stayed at home to raise Eric and his three siblings. But once they had all grown, Olive still wanted to be around the energy and exuberance of children and took a job with the

Neptune Schools, serving meals to countless children and gaining a measure of local renowned for her sandwiches along the way. I got Pat's attention there. Moreover, the kids helped keep her young and Olive stayed working well into her 80s. She was a longtime member of the Hamilton United Methodist Church in Neptune. Olive was 91 years old. Olive is survived by Bill Sitko as well as by her children, Eric, Russell, Kenneth and Marybeth, along with numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren, and countless friends. God bless you Olive, God bless your memory and to all of her survivors and friends, we send our deepest condolences.

You know, Eric and I had an exchange this morning and he said something to me which is true of so many of the people, almost virtually every family with whom I speak, it's three gut punches. Most importantly, you lose a loved one. Secondly, you can't give them a proper, you can't see them in the last weeks of their lives, because of the rightful restrictions that we have in place. And then if that all weren't enough, you can't give folks a proper send off. I can't tell you how many conversations I've had about memorial services that will come down the road when we're able to congregate safely again, and this is the most recent example of scores with which I've had personal contact, and I'm sure so many of you out there watching have had similar stories.

So Joan, John and Olive will never just be numbers to us, nor will any of those that we have lost. We remember their names, their faces, their families, and the lives they lead. Their stories are the stories of New Jersey, as diverse as our state itself. But just as we mourn those who have lost, we also must celebrate those in our communities who are doing any number of good deeds to help us through these challenging times.

Today, I want to give a huge shout out to the members of the Englewood, Hackensack, Maywood and Teaneck Rotary Clubs, who have all banded together to help provide meals to their area's many healthcare workers and first responders working the testing sites at Bergen Community College and New Bridge Medical Center. Theirs is one of the hardest hit areas of our state, and the support they have shown to the frontlines is tremendous and it's appreciated. So to everyone with the Rotary Clubs of Englewood, Hackensack, Maywood, and Teaneck, thank you and a job well done. I also want to say thank you to the millions of you, who are the reason we can move forward with the plans we have put forward today. It's because of you that the curves have flattened, and I know we can continue to rely upon you to flatten them even further.

As we begin our restart, and as we move through the stages of our recovery, we know that you will be there doing just as you've been doing. As I said, this is not going to be quick. We're going to move deliberately based on data. If there's one thing that I've learned over my more than two decades in business, it's that you have to move forward based on the facts. As we look across the country, we see what others are doing. We see what's working, and also what's not working. We're going to take all these lessons and examples, place them side by side with the data that we see here, and move forward in a responsible way. And together, we'll get to the end of this journey together, stronger, and fairer than ever before.

I meant to say this upfront before I turn things over to Judy, that Eddy, after Judy has her daily report, Eddy's going to spend a few minutes on the Remdesivir reality in New Jersey. And again, Eddy, I want to thank you for being with us today. 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. Good afternoon. Today the department is releasing guidance for hospitals and ambulatory surgery centers on conditions to resume elective procedures. Generally, facilities resuming elective services are required to comply with state and CDC guidelines to protect against further spread of COVID-19. They're required to institute screening of staff for symptoms, and have policies in place for removal of symptomatic employees. They must follow social distancing requirements in work and in common areas. They will require masks for patients, except patients receiving services that would not allow for masking. Additionally, the patient's support person must be masked. When possible, they should establish non-COVID care zones in facilities that serve both COVID-19 and non-COVID patients. They should have an established plan for cleaning and disinfecting prior to using facilities to serve non-COVID patients. Facilities providing COVID-19 care should continue to be prepared for potential surges. Facilities should be prepared to modify presumptions of clinical services in conjunction with surge status, and to repurpose and redeploy staff to Urgent Care roles to the extent feasible.

Ambulatory surgery centers shall not perform procedures on COVID-19 patients. Hospitals can resume procedures based upon their current and potential capacity. They must have sustained downward trajectory within a 14-day period of influenza-like illnesses, COVID-19 infection rates, COVID-19 hospitalizations, COVID-19 emergency room admissions, COVID-19 ICU, critical care and medical surgical bed use. They need to monitor ventilator utilization and ventilator availability on a daily basis. Hospital should have available and staffed ICU critical care and medical surgical beds. They are encouraged to gradually resume full scope of services when possible and safe to do so, based on these guidelines.

Facilities shall establish a prioritization policy for providing care and scheduling of these procedures. Scheduling must be coordinated to promote social distancing, to minimize time in waiting areas, stage appointment hours, and post signs at all entrances, in appropriate languages, about symptoms and precautions. Facilities must also have a plan consistent with CDC and Department of Health recommendations for patient and patient support person use of PPE. They should implement PPE policies that account for an adequacy of available PPE supply, with a minimum of a seven-day supply on hand.

They need policies for staff training on and optimized use of PPE, and policies for conservation of PPE. They must implement disinfection and cleaning protocols and cohort COVID-19 patients and non-COVID patients. Patients should be counseled to self-quarantine following testing until the day of surgery. Facilities must have a process to screen patients for COVID-19 symptoms prior to scheduled procedures. No visitors should be allowed in except for limited circumstances, which includes labor and delivery, pediatric patient surgery, support persons for those with mental illness, those with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Further details on this one will be outlined and the guidance being released at the end of the day.

Before I move to the daily report, I want to acknowledge that this week is National EMS Week, which celebrates the work these providers perform across our communities. Every day, EMS workers save lives, and although the epidemic has placed unprecedented challenges in their way, their commitment has never wavered. On top of the heroes already serving in our state, more than 600 paramedics and EMTs responded from across the country to help New Jersey throughout this outbreak. They're responding to more than 10,000 calls and assisting with transfers of patients from hospitals and alternative care sites. We are grateful for all the EMS providers who put their lives at risk to save ours.

EMS and other front line healthcare workers are proud of our priority populations for expanded testing, along with vulnerable populations, like long-term care facilities. To help long-term care facilities meet the state's deadline for baseline testing by May 26, the department today sent the industry frequently asked questions that will help inform their efforts.

As the Governor reported, our hospitals saw 3,509 hospitalizations, and 1,053 individuals in critical care; 78% of the critical care patients are on ventilators. The Governor reviewed the new cases and deaths reported today. In terms of deaths, the breakdown by race and ethnicity is as follows: White 53.4%, Black 18.6%, Hispanic 19.2%, Asian 5.5% and other 3.3%. There are 527 long-term care facilities in the state reporting individuals with COVID 19.

At the state's veterans homes, among a census of 658, they are reporting a total of 142 deaths of their residents. At our state psychiatric hospitals, with a census of 1,240, 209 patients have tested positive and there are a total of 13 patient deaths at the psychiatric hospitals. As the Governor reported, our overall New Jersey positivity rate is 12%. That concludes my daily statistical report. Stay connected, stay safe, and stay healthy. Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Judy, thank you for everything. And again, you're going to have more, the full guidance on electives by the end of the day, is that right?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Yeah.

Governor Phil Murphy: Okay. And that's effective again, Tuesday, May 26, so a week from tomorrow. Thank you for that. Dr. Bresnitz, it's great to have you with us. Can you give us a quick Remdesivir summary? And thank you, again, for all of your help in the past, and right now in the here and now. Thank you.

Dr. Eddy Bresnitz: Thank you, Governor, and thanks to you and the Commissioner for the opportunity to serve again, to respond to this historic event. Two-and-a-half weeks ago, the Food and Drug Administration granted Gilead Pharmaceuticals an emergency use authorization, or EUA, for the use of Remdesivir, an investigational antiviral agent for the treatment of hospitalized adults and children with severe COVID-19. Now this was based on a National Institute of Health randomized clinical trial in adults that showed that Remdesivir accelerated recovery rates among patients with COVID-19, and a suggestion that mortality might be improved.

Gilead then donated 600,000-plus doses to the US government which are being distributed to hospitals through state governments, based on hospital caseload determined on a weekly basis. Today, New Jersey has received 563 cases, 274 of which have been distributed and another 209 to be distributed tomorrow. And another large shipment is coming from the Department of Health and Human Services by the end of this week. Now, each case has 40 doses, enough for treating three patients for 10 days using 11 of those doses, or six patients for five days using six doses. And all 71 New Jersey hospitals are receiving doses proportionate to the total number of patients with COVID-19, or patients under investigation in the hospital on a given day.

About a week ago, a week ago Sunday, a multidisciplinary Remdesivir Advisory Committee, or RAC, met to develop guidance for the use of the drug under the emergency use authorization. Now this professionally, demographically and geographically diverse membership of the RAC included pediatricians, critical care specialists, infectious disease specialists, pulmonary docs and others, many of whom had actually experience using Remdesivir through participation in Gilead's clinical trials, or under their expanded use program, or their compassionate use program. The RAC, or Remdesivir Advisory Committee recommended a five-day course of treatment on a first come, first serve basis as early as possible in patients with severe disease as defined in the emergency use authorization.

Now, this RAC guidance should inform usage of drug in the hospitals, these have to be hospitalized patients, but it's not a substitute for individualized clinical decision-making by the treating physicians, following hospital policies on the use of restricted drugs. The EUA requires that authorized factsheets are made available to both the healthcare providers and the patients and their caregivers. Under the EUA, and as required by the New Jersey Department of Health, they're required to report specific information on patients who receive the drug, such as patient demographics, serious adverse events, number of doses used, and ongoing unused inventory. We hope to also gather information on patient outcomes.

New Jersey is grateful to Gilead for the donation of this first drug authorized on an emergency basis specifically for treatment of COVID-19, and to the US government for the equitable and timely allocation to New Jersey. Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Eddy, thank you. A big deal and thank you for that update, great to have you with us. Thank you for your enormous help over the past couple of months. So compliance today takes on a little bit more weight because we had particularly good weather on Saturday, Friday and Saturday. So I know Pat, you were, Catherine McCabe, Commissioner of Department of Environmental Protection, we had a lot of us looking at the early sort of shakedown cruises on beaches. We've also had some folks who are non-essential retail who have taken it upon themselves to take some steps, which we note. Any update, Pat, you've got on largely compliance but any other matters you've got? Thank you for everything.

State Police Superintendent Col. Patrick Callahan: Thank you, Governor. Good afternoon. I was updated throughout Saturday and Sunday with regards to beaches and parks, and really nothing noteworthy there. Social distancing was in place and it was relatively uneventful, if I could use those words. As far as the overnight, Newark issued four EO violations as well as closed four businesses. In Paterson, 18 separate individuals were cited for EO violations for failure to disperse in gatherings of 10 or more. In East Orange, five subjects were also cited for failing to disperse. And in Guttenberg, police responded to a large apartment party where the homeowner was charged and arrested on additional charges.

And the only thing I'll add, and I know it came up on Friday, Governor, was with regards to crime. It was a very violent weekend in the state of New Jersey. We had 15 victims of shootings in New Jersey in about a 48-hour span. Two of those tragically succumbed to their injuries. So our ROIC folks are working with our locals to

make sure that we certainly monitor this trend, no nexus to the pandemic, but certainly a tragic weekend in New Jersey, Governor.

Governor Phil Murphy: Pat, thank you. Any analysis on that in the coming days would be great to hear. There are a lot of folks who asked us about this. A couple of things before we will start over here with Elise, but let me say a couple things. Anecdotally there are, there's one overwhelming, Judy, I'm not sure you've heard this as well, Pat and I have heard it, I know. Katherine McCabe has seen it. There's far too little face mask or face coverings going on right now in public places. Again, you have to. If you're inside of a store, you've got to wear them, but I'm talking about at the beach or on the boardwalk or in a park. And that, for us, fair to say, really hard to enforce every person wearing a face mask, but the recommendation is overwhelmingly and very strongly to wear them.

And then secondly, it turns out it depends on the angle of the camera in terms of whether or not it's as good or as bad as something may look. I know at least in one boardwalk shot of Belmar, it looked tough in that line, but when you got a drone shot, or a shot from up top, it actually looked a lot more compliant. But this is something, we've got a big, I'm not sure what the weather is going to be like over the weekend yet, but it's going to be a little bit choppy this week but we've got a big weekend coming up, folks, needless to say, and we're pulling a lot of levers here effective Friday, including a whole series of things that I just announced today. So we need really, and everyone's been extraordinary, but no state has been better than New Jersey, we just need to keep it up. And as time on the clock keeps going and the weather gets better and your cabin fever is up, who could blame anybody for wanting to break free and we get that. We all want to do that too, but please, please, please do it responsibly. Stay away from each other and wear something on your face to protect not just you, but to protect the folks around you. Elise, good afternoon.

Q&A Session

Elise Young, Bloomberg: Good afternoon. You've referred in the past week or so a few times to your borrowing working group. Who's on it? How often does it meet? And how were they chosen?

Governor Phil Murphy: Sorry, I apologize. The what?

Elise Young, Bloomberg: Who is on your borrowing working group?

Governor Phil Murphy: Okay.

Elise Young, Bloomberg: How often does it meet? How were they chosen? Is the group bipartisan? Can you name the individual members? And will its work findings be made public? Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Yeah, please don't -- I'm going to have you do that, actually. Judy's got some news that we both want to report on. There really, there's no working group per se. I apologize if I gave the impression of that. There is borrowing money for the state which, by the way, the irony here is we spent the first 27 months in office doing the opposite, increasing surpluses, rainy day funds, making record pension payments, managing our indebtedness aggressively and refinancing downward. But right now, we have no choice but to borrow, particularly with the federal funding still an open item. We speak, it's a regular course of events. It's certainly topic number one with the Speaker and Senate President and it will continue to be, and I appreciate their support and help.

We had a very good working group, maybe that's what you were referring to. I meant, so that's a standing working group. That's going to be Matt and George and some of their colleagues along with the majority leadership staff in the Senate, as well as the Speaker's team.

Judy and I just were having an exchange on an unrelated, so before we keep going, we'll go back there but Judy, can you give us any update on Kawasaki, which we meant to --

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: We now have 11 cases in New Jersey of pediatric inflammatory syndrome, multi-system pediatric inflammatory syndrome. 11 cases meet the definition. Nine have reported to be positive for COVID-19, six were positive for serology; ages are between 3 and 18. All were hospitalized, seven have been discharged. Two we don't know whether they've been discharged, but seven have been discharged and there's been no deaths.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank God. I also meant to mention a couple of other things. We are together, Mahen, tomorrow at 1:00 p.m., one o'clock here. We have a White House VTC later on today with the President and First Lady, and my First Lady will be joining me. I've also organized a call of Democratic Governors and Speaker Pelosi right after this to go over funding, Elise, which your question triggered. I had a good conversation yesterday, a three-way with Andrew Cuomo and Ned Lamont to talk about our regional approach in varying steps. Again, we're not going to always take in lockstep the same step, but we are communicating at a very high level, both through the Regional Council and directly as Governors and those are several updates that I had meant to give you. Good to have you. Thank you.

Reporter: First question, does the Health Commissioner want to comment on northjersey.com's story from today that cited an audio recording of her saying she can't get one-on-one time with the Governor? Does she think residents should be concerned about that?

Second, Governor, any comment on the scene outside the Bellmawr Gym in Camden County this morning? And considering the reports say police down there did not enforce your stay-at-home measure, any concern that as the state eases into reopening, we'll have a situation where some towns enforce the rules and some towns don't?

Do the crowds on the boardwalks and the beaches this weekend make you worried that crowd control may be difficult –

Governor Phil Murphy: One more, please?

Reporter: Once the summer season begins? Sure. And advocacy group New Jersey Together is calling on you to fire the officials responsible for the delay in action and inaction on releases and testing in New Jersey prisons. Do you want to respond to that?

Governor Phil Murphy: I'll say a couple things, Judy, and turn things to you for any -- I think we already addressed the crowds on the boardwalk and beaches. We just had that conversation, I believe. My big concern is obviously social distancing, everybody being good to each other and cooperative and patient. But my big concern is lack of face coverings. I'm not aware of the request to fire anybody. I'll come back to you on that. Pat can talk about the Bellmawr Gym. We have the best Health Commissioner in the United States of America, and this is the biggest healthcare crisis in the history of our state and of our country and we're doing everything we can. I could not say enough good things about the woman to my right. I don't know where we would be without her. And I suspect in reality, she would probably admit we communicate maybe not just every day. She's probably scratching her head as to the amount of communication we have. We're constantly communicating. She's welcome to add to that. But before, anything on Belmar, the Belmar Gym, Pat?

State Police Superintendent Col. Patrick Callahan: It's my understanding that the owners were issued a summons for that and the clientele there were issued warnings. That was the brief that I got prior to walking in here.

Governor Phil Murphy: I'm also not, as a macro matter, that's not to say that we're not going to take up each one of these cases, because we will. I'm not overly concerned right now that we're going to have the reality that you're referring to with different towns doing different things, because we've showed you earlier in my presentation, and we're giving you a roadmap, that assuming the curves keep improving and the numbers keep improving, we're going in the direction we want to go in that will allow us to take steps like that. Indoor sedentary is hard. I don't want it ever to be said that I didn't say that and we didn't say that. Is that fair to say? If you're inside with no ventilation, and you're sitting like we are now, although we're well separated, we're well distanced, that's gonna be the biggest nut to crack. Anything you want to add, Judy, or you're good?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: I talk with the Governor every day and if that doesn't get his attention, then I text him.

Governor Phil Murphy: She's probably sick of me at this point, I can only say. Sir, have you got anything? You good? Dave, nice to see you.

Dave Schatz, New Brunswick Today: Hi, Governor, nice to see you. As a follow up on the last question, with regard to the situation in Bellmawr, is there a concern? You don't want to go overboard in terms of enforcement, having police arresting people. Obviously you need to uphold your directive and not let people blatantly disregard it. The fact that the gym opened up, people were in there working out, we heard, I mean, wouldn't you want to stop that? Or they've been warned once, will that mean if they go back to the gym tomorrow, do they get a ticket? And are you concerned, Governor, that there's some salon owner, I understand, that has announced that she's going to open June. You know, what do people -- what's your advice to people with regard to this? And how concerned are you that this could spiral out of control?

Governor Phil Murphy: I'm not concerned it will spiral out of control and we will take action. And I think if someone shows up, I don't know this, Matt, to be the case. If you show up at that gym again tomorrow, there's going to be a different reality than showing today. I mean, that's just, we've got to, we can't just -- these aren't just words. We've got to enforce this. But I also don't want to start World War III and I'm not worried about that right now, to be honest with you, because for two reasons. People have overwhelmingly done the right thing and they continue to do the right thing because they're smart. They get what we're dealing with. They look at both the progress we've made and the 300-and-something people, Judy, am I right? Who went into a hospital yesterday. We're still not out of the woods.

And so I believe, for both of those reasons, and the second one is that we're painting a path here, a roadmap. This is not a life sentence. We're going to probably have, I don't want to break any more news today, because we've broken a lot, but we're going to take other steps, I would hope this week, on other areas where folks have been begging us, please help us out. Again, the overwhelming amount of the incomings we take are responsible, well-reasoned, balancing of the issues, both health as well as the economic devastation, etc. Anything you want to say in the Bellmawr?

State Police Superintendent Col. Patrick Callahan: I would just say that, you know, the decisions, jeopardizing of public health and safety, that's where the Governor, that's where every decision is based upon that. Is this in the best interests of the citizens in New Jersey? And when we get to that point, which I think we will in short order, but for now, today's actions at that gym were a violation of the EO, and again, that's a local police department's jurisdiction down there. They, like I said, they issued a summons to the owner.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you. Real quick, Dave.

Dave Schatz, New Brunswick Today: Two more real quick short ones. You talk about the stages and this is big news, obviously, Governor. Do you have any sense at all, not hard dates, but are we going to be moving stage one to two? Will it take us a month or two months? Stage two to three, two months? And last one, for the Commissioner, any reaction to State senator Steve Sweeney's very sharp criticism of putting COVID patients back into nursing homes where there were no COVID patients at the time? And it's not just been Sweeney, but some other lawmakers as well.

Governor Phil Murphy: I would say going from stage one to stage two is going to be assuming that the curves, and Judy and Eddy and others continue to, you know, they're the most important check here. That this is a matter of weeks. I would hope that the reality is again, assuming we make meaningful progress by the time we roll into, I'm just picking this, don't hold me to it, by the time we're in, say mid-June, we're in a meaningfully different place, is my hope. Again, that's dependent upon continuing to make health progress. Any comments on nursing homes, Judy?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: I don't know what specific situations the Senator is talking about, but we did advise long-term care facilities to readmit their residents. Remember, that's their residence, if they had the appropriate PPE, the appropriate staffing and the ability to cohort. That is, to separate COVID-19 patients from non-COVID-19 patients. If the long-term care facility was not able to do that, they should not have readmitted.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you for that. Good afternoon, Ian. Have you got anything?

Ian Elliott, NJTV News: Apologies for the delay, the joys of being a one-man band. Governor Murphy, what is your reaction to this past weekend's beach activity? And how would you respond to business owners who claim that they've had no time to prepare after your nonessential retail announcement?

At the start of the outbreak, you asked workers to file reports if they experienced unsafe conditions and they did. Documents now show 160 workers filed federal complaints with OSHA over allegations of inadequate PPE and exposure to sick coworkers. Will the state investigate and consider action against these employers? Since there's no legal requirement to hold companies accountable for failing to meet CDC guidelines, what's your reaction to the sheer number of complaints?

And finally, with the existing contact tracing that's already in place, to what degree are you focusing on the new hospital admissions? If so, what have you learned about who they are and how they got sick amid all the social distancing? Are they emergency responders or healthcare workers, people going to the grocery store, Executive Order violators? Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Beach activity, I think we were generally, again, I'm not going to say that everything was perfect, but I think we thought it was a decent weekend. It was awfully cool yesterday, so that probably kept social distancing, made it easier for us. But generally okay. Again, masking is not where we want it to be and I don't mean just on the beach, but boardwalk. And we've got to be very careful that we've got distancing, particularly waiting in line to buy beach badges as the obvious one. Nonessential retail, again, curbside pickup as of 6:00 a.m. this morning. We announced that a week ago. I feel badly if businesses didn't feel like they had enough advanced warning, we thought, based on the input, that we were giving them a decent amount of advance warning and I hope that they'll be able to get themselves to the point they need to be.

I don't have a specific answer on the 160 workers who have filed, but we take that very seriously, so I don't want to speak for the Attorney General but that's something we take very seriously. Matt, anything you want to add to that. No, you're good. Judy, any sense based on the county, in-place contact tracing? I do not have a sense of the source of the infections, but I'll ask you.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: I don't have anything specific on the new hospitalizations and the breakdown of them. We usually get that a little bit later.

Governor Phil Murphy: So we'll come back. Mahen, can you make note of that? We'll come back, assuming we get something on that. Thank you. Sir, do you have anything? Please.

Reporter: Governor, you are saying indoor sedentary activities are a challenge. What does this mean for religious services? Will churches, synagogues and mosques be able to fully reopen before the end of the summer?

Governor Phil Murphy: Before the end of the summer? I mean, that's a long – that's three-and-a-half months. So I hope we're in a better place at that point. I go back and forth a lot with faith leaders across the spectrum. Again, it does unfortunately meet the litmus test of indoor, in many cases sedentary, lack of ventilation. We are now on allowing drive-through, fill in the rest of the blank, including faith services, or drive in. That's a step in the right direction. I would hope that we could see outdoor faith services at some point, in a matter of weeks, I would hope. I don't want to marry myself to that, but that's an obvious first step.

And again, with social distancing, remember now we're allowing and we have actually, from the beginning, private prayer of under 10 already occurs, so that's happening. And, you know, social distancing will be a key element to indoor faith, as it will be for restaurants and other indoor activities. I would hope outdoor first, and, you know, a matter of weeks based on, again, if Judy and Eddy and their colleagues continue to advise us that the progress is meaningful and at the right pace, that's going to be the underlying framework for any other steps we take. Thank you. We'll stay in the back and then we'll come back down to Matt to finish us out.

Reporter: Good afternoon. I know some school districts are holding on to hope that they might be able to have a traditional, in-person commencement ceremony in July. And now, with your stages kind of favoring outdoor activities and most commencement ceremonies being outdoors, should these school districts have any hope for July commencement ceremonies?

Are there any instances that are maybe less obvious when people should be wearing masks in terms of compliance? I mean, obviously, people should be when they enter stores, they should have a mask, but are there any less obvious examples that you would like people to know about?

Governor, Commissioner, Colonel, just a fun little question. If you were, you know, a keynote speaker for a class of 2020 commencement ceremony, what would your message be to them during these times, as they transition into the next stage of their lives? Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Should school districts, should students, should moms and dads hold out hope that we can somehow have some form of an in-person commencement? The answer is they should hold out hope. I have that same hope, so I've got nothing to report, but I have the same hope. Less obvious wearing masks, I'll tell you what, when we run, we wear a mask and that is not fun, by the way. I have enough trouble running without a mask, never mind breathing through a mask. But you know, you're chopping through, particularly we did one in Thompson Park a couple of Sundays ago and you're in close proximity with folks. I'd love to see it. Listen, hiking on a trail. Certainly you've got to wear one to go into a store. I'd like to see them on boardwalks, hikes. Judy, what else? Pat? I mean, we want to see that. It's clearly social distancing, soap and water, face coverings are the trifecta here in terms of actions.

I'll leave it to my colleagues. I mean, I would say this commencement year is unlike any, in any of our lives. I mean, this is literally, I suspect, it's something akin to graduating from high school in 1944. It would be probably June of '44, which by the way, was probably within a week or two, if you were graduating that month after D-Day. I mean, it's in that sort of realm. Acknowledging how unusual this is, how much respect we still have for the accomplishment, even though we can't gather in the way that we would otherwise gather. It's a big deal. This is a big deal, whether it's certainly high school, but I'd even say a middle school, an elementary school, certainly a college. We've got a senior in college who would be graduating this Saturday. He's still finishing out some work, I hope mom is checking as we speak here, but this is a big deal. I would want folks to recognize or hear from us that we, even though it's unusual and it's not traditional, it's no less a big deal, and we would want folks to remember that.

I would say, secondly, looking forward, the call to action for public service, I think is at a warlike, you know, World War II level of spirit of public service and public action. And that includes everything from frontline healthcare workers to national service of some kind, law enforcement. I would think this is a time, Pat, to you and your colleagues where you can, people are looking up at their heroes right now. I would think that that would be part of it. Judy, anything you want to add to that?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Sure, I would tell them that this is unprecedented, that they're living through history, and there's going to be books written about this. So, don't waste it. Jump in, do your part and save lives, and consider becoming a nurse.

Governor Phil Murphy: I love that. Spoken by a nurse to my right here. Pat, how about you?

State Police Superintendent Col. Patrick Callahan: I would just add in crisis there is certainly opportunity. If you're 18 years old and going off to college, are you going to be part of the group that brings solutions and you're a problem solver? Or are you going to sit in the wings and be the complainer? I'd hope that they become part of the team that sets New Jersey and the country as the model that we are for the rest of the globe, and that would be my message to them. To not get wrapped around the axle of the challenge, but more so in the opportunity that lies ahead to leave it better than they found it.

Governor Phil Murphy: Eddy, how about you?

Dr. Eddy Bresnitz: Well, this is kind of my second round in government service. My first round taught me one thing which I've said to lots of friends and colleagues, which is, I really believe that everyone, as part of their life experience, should do some sort of government service. I don't necessarily mean uncompensated, necessarily, but any kind of government service for one year, and then you'll understand what actually government means and what it does for you, and how important it is for society to make progress.

Governor Phil Murphy: I love that. Count me in for two years. I love the Israeli model, which is you have a military option or a non-military option. But I love that notion. Thank you for asking. Matt, we're going to close out with you.

Matt Arco, Star-Ledger: Governor, the Labor Commissioner said the department would start processing expanded benefits on May 18 for those who exhausted their regular unemployment. I'm curious if the state has started to yet and how quickly those residents will get the benefits? And you mentioned in your remarks

today about a return to a new normal following a vaccine. Does that mean that some pretty tough restrictions could remain in place as long as, you know, folks like Dr. Fauci are saying a vaccine might not come around for 18 months? Can we be staring down the barrel of 18 months of some of these restrictions?

Governor Phil Murphy: Two good questions. I don't have an answer for you on the Labor Commissioner, but Mahen, the 18th is today, so can we follow up with Matt? Is that okay? We'll come back to you on that. I think, Matt, and I'd ask Judy or Eddy if they have a difference of opinion here. I think the basic prophylactic stuff that we're talking about, the trinity of social distancing, aggressive hygiene, including washing hands with soap and water, face coverings, I think those are with us until that moment, or at least until there's a therapeutic that we know is, it's not for something over here, let's try it for COVID, but it's explicitly for COVID. But what I don't mean, and I hope I'm proven right about this, is that retail stays closed, we don't go back to school. I don't see those scenarios, assuming we continue to make progress.

But we've got to, in each case, we've got to be really careful with how we deal with this. And you know, one, I'll give you a one school example I worry about is someone of an older generation, or someone with a comorbidity who's in a classroom or an administrative capacity, and you've got a lot of asymptomatic kids running around who may unwittingly pass that on. That's something that we can't ignore. We have to take that risk very seriously. That's what I mean. I don't mean that we're going to be in lockdown mode until then, but we're going to need to be minding our P's and Q's, as my dad used to say, through that period. Would you agree? Disagree? You all go with that. Thank you.

So I'm going to mask up here. Thank you all for coming out. I want to thank Judy and Eddy, thank you for coming out of the bullpen, Eddy, and Judy, thanks for what you do every day and have been doing. Pat, likewise, Jared, Matt Platkin was with us today, got a rare day off from answering a question. First Lady Tammy Murphy's in the house. Thank you for the haircut and for everything you do. And again, we'll be back tomorrow, unless you hear otherwise, at 1:00 p.m.

In the meantime, keep up the great work. I mean, extraordinary. Yes, so there's some folks out there, we're not happy about, yeah, but there's very few of you. Overwhelmingly, folks get it. You're smart. We're the smartest state in the nation and we're showing it. Folks are doing the right thing. Again, keep the social distancing. Stay home unless you need to go out. Wear a face mask or a face covering, and just keep doing what you're doing because no one is doing it as well as New Jersey's doing it right now. Let's keep that up and again, we keep that up, we're able to take more steps, and we get ultimately into the end zone. God bless you all, stay safe. See you tomorrow.

Governor Phil Murphy

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