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July 10, 2020

- I. State
- II. Federal
- III. 2020 Annual League Conference
- IV. Also of Interest

Municipal Clerks: Please forward to your Mayor, Governing Body and Department Heads.

To assist in providing guidance and information we have created a [COVID-19 resource page](#). We will continue to update the page as we get pertinent information and include announcements in our Daily Updates.

I. State

a. COVID-19 Update

Today the Governor announced that there were 367 new positive results and an additional 31 confirmed deaths resulting from COVID-19 since yesterday. To date, there have been 174,628 confirmed cases, and 13,532 confirmed deaths. There are also 1,854 probable deaths associated with the virus.

Of particular concern in recent days has been an increasing trend in the rate of transmission (RT). This dropped from 1.10 on Wednesday to 1.04 on Thursday. Today, the Governor announced the RT again dropped to .98. The Murphy Administration has expressed its objective to push and keep that number below 1.0.

The Governor announced today that the Motor Vehicle Commission is extending the renewal deadlines for licenses/IDs, registrations, inspections, and temporary tags as follows: if expiring between March 1 and May 31, have been extended to September 30. If expiring between June 1 and August 31, they have been extended to December 31.

Since last Friday, the Governor has taken the following actions:

[Executive Order 160](#): Directs U.S. and New Jersey Flags to Fly at Full Staff Starting July 3.

[Executive Order 161](#): Increased Outdoor Gathering Capacity Limit.

[Executive Order 162](#): Extending Public Health Emergency in New Jersey.

[Executive Order 163](#): Requiring Individuals to Wear Masks in Outdoor Public Spaces When They Cannot Social Distance. For more information on this order, please see our [Town Crier blog post](#).

The Federal Labor reported that new unemployment claims fell to 1.3 million in the last week, and almost 18 million American workers are currently receiving jobless benefits.

Meanwhile, in New Jersey, the State Department of Labor (DOL) and Workforce Development reported that more than 47,000 New Jersey workers filed initial unemployment claims during the week ending July 4. This is a 70% increase from the prior week, attributable to two groups, State workers who are being furloughed and those who were laid off upon the end of the school year in June.

See the League's [COVID-19 page](#) for all our resources and communications.

Contact: Michael F. Cerra, Executive Director, mcerra@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x120.

b. Agreement Reached on State Borrowing

This afternoon, Governor Murphy announced an agreement with Senate President Sweeney and Assembly Speaker Coughlin on a state borrowing package to address the financial consequences of COVID-19. The agreement is to authorize the borrowing of up to \$9.9 billion, which would include \$2.7 billion between now and the end of September (the end of the extended fiscal year 2020) and the remainder to be borrowed between October 1 and June 30, 2021 (fiscal year 2021), with the approval of a legislative commission. The "Select Commission on Emergency COVID-19 Borrowing" will be comprised of two Senators and two Assembly representatives that will have to approve each request to borrow with a majority vote. Senate President Sweeny has indicated he and Senator Sarlo will serve on the commission. Assembly Speaker Coughlin will be appointing the two Assembly representatives.

During his daily briefing the Governor noted that the bill does not obviate the need for federal aid nor if, and what, taxes may be raised. It was also noted that the borrowing does not mandate revenue increases to pay for the bond. In response, via a joint press release, the State GOP and the Senate and Assembly Republicans announced their intention to file litigation to prevent the borrowing, which they believe is unconstitutional.

The legislation will be before the Senate Budget Committee on Tuesday, July 14 and the full Senate on Thursday, July 16. We will continue to keep you posted as details emerge.

Contacts:

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Lori Buckelew, Assistant Executive Director, lbuckelew@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x112.

c. Appeals Court Issues Stay on AG Directive Aimed at Increased Police Discipline Transparency

A state appeals court, in response to a request from police unions, issued a stay of the recently issued [Attorney General Law Enforcement Directive 2020-5](#) (Directive 2020-5).

Directive 2020-5 issued by Attorney General Grewal on June 15, required every law enforcement agency in New Jersey to annually publish the names of officers who have been suspended for more than five days or who have been demoted or terminated, along with a description of the circumstances that led to the discipline.

The Directive, which was set to become effective August 31, 2020 is now put on hold until the court can hear additional arguments and issue a ruling regarding the Directive's legality. Oral arguments on the matter have been tentatively scheduled for October 15, 2020.

Contact: Frank Marshall, Esq., Associate General Counsel, fmarshall@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x137.

d. EDA Tax Incentive Task Force Issue Third and Final Report

On Thursday, the task force appointed last year by Governor Murphy to investigate the Economic Development Authority's administration of the State's tax incentive program, released their [Third and Final Report](#). The Report was critical of the EDA's administration of grant programs. Finding a general lack of oversight in the review of applications for Grow NJ tax incentive program, and that some applicants receiving grants should not have qualified for the incentives.

The task force issued 27 recommendations for future tax incentives, should the state enact them. These recommendations include placing limits on total incentive awards, more consistent EDA oversight, and better mechanisms for how awards will reduce state tax revenue.

Contact: Frank Marshall, Esq., Associate General Counsel, fmarshall@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x137.

e. Community Funding to Combat Food Insecurity

Yesterday, Senate President Sweeney, Senator Gopal, and Assembly Speaker Coughlin, joined Governor Murphy when he announced that he will direct moneys from the Coronavirus Relief Fund established from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, to support food banks throughout the State.

New Jersey's Department of Agriculture will distribute \$20 million to the State's six emergency feeding organizations. \$10 million will be distributed before August 2020 and another \$10 million by December 2020.

The Governor also announced that \$390 million of federal funding was allocated to the State. Approximately \$200 million will be provided for food assistance for school children

who receive free or reduced lunch and \$180 million for families that receive benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Visit [The Food Bank of New Jersey website](#) to get more information about funding for your community's food programs.

Contact: Ciara Bradley, Legislative Administrator, cbradley@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x128.

II. Federal

a. Make Local Aid A Priority in Washington

On Thursday, U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, Steve Mnuchin, indicated that talks were being held with Senate Republicans on the next Coronavirus Relief package. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has indicated that he hopes to have a bill ready, when the Senate reconvenes on July 20. Treasury Secretary Mnuchin said that the administration would support another round of tax rebate checks and help for restaurants, hotels and airlines, as well as a "technical fix" to any extension of expanded unemployment benefits, so that workers don't earn more in benefits than they would on the job.

Unfortunately, neither Secretary Mnuchin nor Senator McConnell expressed any support for emergency aid to state and local governments.

On February 24, President Trump asked Congress to authorize \$2.5 billion to fund the Federal response to COVID-19. Half of that total was to be new funding, with the balance to be made available from existing revenue sources. Congress responded by passing the \$8.3 billion Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriation Act on March 5. It was signed into law the following day. That bill included no assistance for state or local governments.

On March 18, Congress passed the \$192 billion Families First Coronavirus Response Act. It was signed into law that night. That bill included no assistance for state or local governments.

On March 27, Congress passed the \$1.7 trillion Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES). It was signed into law that evening. That Act included a \$150 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund, which provided some assistance to cover some COVID related costs for the 50 states, and to any local government with a population of at least 500,000. That limitation denied aid to all 565 New Jersey municipalities and to twelve of the State's 21 counties.

On April 23, Congress passed the \$321 billion Payroll Protection Plan and Healthcare Enhancement Act. It was signed into law the next day. Up until the day it was passed, Congressional negotiators, and our federal partners at the National League of Cities (NLC), were working to include in that bill funding for small and mid-sized local governments, and additional, flexible funding for the States. But the final compromise included no assistance for state or local governments.

And last week, the Payroll Protection Plan was extended until August 8.

All of those bills addressed important priorities. But none of them prioritized the impact of the pandemic on municipalities.

Throughout this crisis, New Jersey's Congressional Delegation has played a leading role in ongoing efforts to send a lifeline to New Jersey municipalities. All local governments, regardless of population, urgently need direct federal funding to continue to fight COVID-19 and protect their residents through the summer and beyond. The citizens of small towns matter just as much as the citizens of big counties, and New Jersey municipal employees contribute at least as much to society as private sector workers.

Please thank Senators Menendez and Booker and your District's Representative in the House for their efforts on our behalf. And please reach out to your business community and to your non-profit service providers. Ask them to join your calls for direct and flexible local aid.

Contact: Jon Moran, Senior Legislative Analyst, jmoran@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x121.

b. Emergency Preparedness Amidst COVID-19

The logistical and social complexities of COVID-19 are converging with what scientists are projecting to be an above-average season for hurricanes, extreme heat, inland and coastal flooding, and wildfires. Additionally, there is growing awareness among city leaders that communities of color and vulnerable populations are disproportionately impacted by both the virus and climate change. In cooperation with several trusted external organizations, our federal partners at the National League of Cities (NLC) have produced a short guide and resource list on [Emergency Preparedness Amidst COVID-19](#) that includes tips on effectively managing sheltering and evacuations, resident communication and preparedness, and improving local response capacity in advance of extreme events.

Contact: Jon Moran, Senior Legislative Analyst, jmoran@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x121.

III. 2020 Annual League Conference

a. Delegate Registration

[Delegate registration](#) will open on August 1. We encourage everyone to preregister online and have their conference credentials mailed to them in advance. This avoids delays and lines onsite in Atlantic City.

b. League Code of Conduct

The League intends to maintain a welcoming professional atmosphere in all aspects of the Annual League Conference. To that end, conduct that violates the [League Code of Conduct](#) is not tolerated by the League, anyone who witnesses it, or is subjected to it. Everyone who participates in the Annual League Conference is required to adhere to this code.

c. Conference Center Preparations

We are busy making arrangements for this live event including education and exhibits with the full expectation that by November the State will permit important gatherings of government officials like the Annual League Conference. The League is taking measures along with our partners at the Atlantic City Convention Center and all related service providers to follow CDC and NJDOH guidelines to create a safe and healthy conference. A healthy conference environment is our top priority for 2020 and with that, we are dedicated to providing an educational, informative, productive, and collaborative conference. Sanitization protocols that comply with CDC guidance are ready for public spaces, meeting areas, food service, and transportation. Venue layout will take into account social distancing, and preregistration will eliminate waiting lines.

d. Unauthorized Hotel Reservation Services

Every year there are unauthorized firms soliciting housing and hotel reservations from attendees at the Annual League Conference. We assure you that the only firm authorized to handle our conference housing reservations is AC Central Reservations. This information is on the top of the official conference housing form sent to all municipal clerks and posted on [our website](#).

Using unauthorized reservation services creates real problems for you and the conference as a whole. You cannot be assured your credit card information is secure and your room reservation may not actually be made. Using unauthorized services means your room will not be part of the official conference housing block so you won't get emergency housing information (which happened in both 2011 and 2012), nor will there be adequate shuttle bus services to your hotel.

As always, the League is available to answer your questions on any aspect of the annual conference and we strive to make your participation both enjoyable and highly productive.

Contact: Michael F. Cerra, Executive Director, mcerra@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x120.

IV. Also of Interest

a. Upcoming National League of Cities Learning Opportunities

TELE-TOWNHALL | Taking Care of Your Community: Addressing Collective Trauma in Times of Crisis | Tuesday, July 14, 1:00 PM ET

Community leaders and mental health experts will examine the psychological impact associated with collective trauma and despair. Join us to discuss ways government leaders can talk?publicly?about the mental health toll and burden related to the coronavirus and racism pandemics. Learn how to harness?community resources to address low-level distress and acute mental health conditions.?Expert panelists will provide science-backed strategies to encourage a public health approach to mental health, with a focus on addressing stigma, impacts on vulnerable communities, and ways to advance equity. [Register here](#).

WEBINAR | Contact Tracing and Testing: City-County-Corporate Collaborations | Wednesday, July 15, 2:00 PM ET

The COVID-19 crisis has created an unprecedented need for cities, counties, and the private sector to work together to provide contact tracing and testing services in their jurisdictions. Resources and training might differ throughout the country; however, collaboration is vital for effective contact tracing and testing to protect the public's health. Join to hear from city, county, and corporate leaders about their joint efforts to mitigate COVID transmission among their residents so that communities can safely reopen. This webinar will also cover important considerations around vulnerable populations including people of color and hard-to-reach communities. [Register here](#).

WEBINAR | Cities at a Crossroad: Charting a New Economic Course During COVID | Thursday, July 16, 11:00 AM ET

Today's simultaneous COVID health pandemic, economic recession, and social justice crises are rapidly changing the economic landscape. This webinar will examine the changing economic landscape, how local leaders can adapt to the new environment and offer some ideas for economic growth. [Register here](#).



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