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September 17, 2021

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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 Issues

a. Tropical Storm Ida Update

Earlier this week, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) [announced the opening of Disaster Recovery Centers](#) in Bergen, Gloucester, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, and Passaic Counties.

Representatives from federal agencies, including FEMA and the U.S. Small Business Administration, as well as State agencies including the New Jersey State Office of Emergency Management among others, are available at these centers to explain disaster assistance programs, answer questions about written correspondence, and provide literature about repairs and rebuilding to make homes more disaster resistant.

As a reminder, please visit the League's [Tropical Storm Ida webpage](#) for resources, as well as the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management [Flood Resources page](#) and the [League's Emergency & Public Health Resource page](#) that includes contact information for [power outages](#), and resources regarding [tornado preparedness](#), [weather reports](#), and

many other related topics. The New Jersey Department of Health Office of Disaster Resilience's [Hurricane Preparedness webpage](#) also contains useful resources.

Contact: Paul Penna, Legislative Analyst, ppenna@njlm.org, 609 695-3481, x110.

b. Save the Date on NJDEP Briefing on Climate Change

On Tuesday, September 28 **from 12-1 p.m.**, NJDEP and the League of Municipalities are partnering to provide a second lunch and learn session, this time focusing on the economic impacts of climate change to municipal budgets and planning. More details including the list of speakers and a brief agenda will follow shortly. Please save the date for this informative discussion.

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

II. Federal Issues

a. Federal Budget Update

SALT Deduction Cap & Budget Reconciliation Process Proceeding

Since last week's update, several more House committees met this week to begin the budget reconciliation process for specific items for their committees including Agriculture; Energy & Commerce; Veterans' Affairs; Ways and Means; Transportation and Infrastructure; and Homeland Security.

The Ways and Means Committee markup did not include a repeal of the State and Local Taxes (SALT) deduction cap of \$10,000. Several moderate members have stated they will not support the budget reconciliation package without meaningful changes to the SALT deduction cap. Members of the Ways and Means Committee, including New Jersey's Rep. Bill Pascrell, [issued a statement](#) expressing a belief that a solution will occur.

Full deductibility is vital to the long-term economic health of New Jersey. In 2017, the League passed Conference Resolution [2017-02](#) Urging Congress to Protect the Deductibility of State and Local Taxes and it has remained among the League's Federal priorities since the cap was enacted in 2017. The League adopted League Conference Resolution [2019-14](#) Urging Congress to Restore the Full Deductibility of State and Local Taxes.

If your municipality has not already done so, please consider adopting the sample resolution, available in [word](#) or [pdf](#), supporting legislation that restores full deductibility of state and local taxes.

President Joe Biden held individual meetings with Senators Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona to advocate for the human infrastructure program. Each has raised concerns about the cost and some of the elements of the plan.

Appropriations & Debt Limit

As we noted last week, the federal fiscal year ends on September 30 and Congress is

expected to pass a short-term continuing resolution while considering the 13 appropriations bills.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen [sent a letter](#) to congressional leaders urging them to act swiftly and vote to raise the debt ceiling. U.S. Treasury estimates that the debt capacity will reach its limit by mid-October. There is currently a partisan stand-off as the deadline approaches in the next few weeks.

There has been no appreciable news on either of these topics to report this week. There is much happening and we will continue to monitor and keep you apprised.

Contact: Paul Penna, Legislative Analyst, ppenna@njlm.org, 609 695-3481, x110.

III. COVID-19 Weekly Update

Governor Murphy this week noted that the data regarding COVID transmission rates and testing suggests that the virus is beginning to plateau, but warns that this could change if vaccinations and other mitigation efforts don't continue. The Governor also noted that the state is still awaiting guidance from the federal government on the administering of a booster shot for those fully vaccinated. Department of Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli noted that the public should begin to plan for flu vaccination as an effort to avoid straining the health care system needed to treat COVID patients.

COVID Data for Thursday, September 16, 2021:

- 2,442 new positive cases for a total of 969,062 confirmed cases
- 26 new confirmed deaths for a total of 24,290 confirmed deaths
- The rate of transmission is at 1.05
- 11,876,689 vaccine doses have been administered, including 6,225,718 who have received at least one dose and 5,750,280 who are fully vaccinated. 57% are Pfizer, 39% Moderna, and 4% J&J.

Vaccine Information

As a reminder, the Department of Health is providing access to individuals COVID vaccination records through [NJ Docket, a secure and free smartphone app](#), which is CDC approved.

Homebound residents who have not yet connected with their local health department, or a home health agency, and who need an in-home vaccination should visit www.covid19.nj.gov/homeboundvax or contact the call center at 855-568-0545.

IV. Also of Interest

a. Free Election Law Changes Briefing Webinar

The League, along with the Municipal Clerks' Association of New Jersey, will host a webinar on Monday, September 27 **from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.** with New Jersey

Division of Elections Director Robert “Bob” Giles to discuss recent changes to New Jersey’s election laws in preparation for this November’s elections.

Registration is [now open](#) for this webinar. Because it is a free webinar, CEUs will not be offered.

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

b. League Hosts Free Election Law Changes Webinar for Elected Officials

The League will host a webinar for elected officials with New Jersey Secretary of State Tahesha Way to discuss recent changes to New Jersey’s election laws. This webinar will occur on Wednesday, September 29 **from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

Registration for the free webinar is [now open](#).

c. State Comptroller Webinar on Best Practices for Using ARP

On Thursday, October 7, 2021 **from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** the State Comptroller’s Office will be hosting a free webinar on the Best Practices for Using Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. The webinar will include best practices for compliance, procurement, sub-recipient monitoring, and internal controls when using the American Rescue Plan Act’s Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. To register, email covid.oversight@osc.nj.gov with Local Government Training in the subject line.



New Jersey State League of Municipalities

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