



Dear Fellow New Yorker,

I write to update you on the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

During this pandemic, I cannot implore you enough to **social distance** — which means limiting all in-person social interactions as much as possible. Experts agree that staying apart is critical if we want to reduce the strain on our health care system and slow the spread of this virus to save lives.

To that end, I have taken a number of actions:

- Schools in NYC, Westchester County and Long Island are closed. Remote learning will take place, and plans are being developed so that children still can get the meals they need and essential workers have access to child care. (Your local school district will have more details.)
- We are aggressively urging private businesses to consider closing and having employees work from home
- Non-essential state employees, as well as non-essential local government employees, have been directed to work from home.
- Starting at 8pm tonight until further notice, restaurants and bars statewide will be delivery and takeout ONLY.
- Starting at 8pm tonight until further notice, gyms, casinos and movie theaters will all be closed.
- Pharmacies, grocery stores, medical facilities and gas stations will remain OPEN.

We do not take these decisions lightly — they are necessary because of the unprecedented public health crisis we find ourselves in.

[Want updates from New York State on Coronavirus? Sign up for more frequent updates here.](#)

How dangerous is this virus?

Eighty percent of people who contract COVID-19 self-resolve — and may not even have symptoms.

The virus presents a larger risk to the elderly, the immune-compromised and those with underlying health conditions. We are laser focused on protecting these at-risk populations.

Remember: Even if you have no symptoms, you can still spread Coronavirus. Be a good neighbor and take precautions even if you are young and healthy. Those around you may be at greater risk.

What should you do?

All New Yorkers can take simple steps to prevent the spread of this virus:

- Wash your hands regularly — for at least 20 seconds
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your sleeve
- Avoid handshaking
- Don't touch your face with unwashed hands

New Yorkers should also follow our recommendations for **social distancing**:

- Stay home, even if you feel well
- Keep 6 feet of distance from others in public
- Cancel unnecessary travel plans

New Yorkers can call the Department of Health's coronavirus hotline at **1-888-364-3065** or visit [this page](#) for further information.

[Sign up for more frequent email updates on Coronavirus here.](#)

I will be transparent with you. The number of confirmed cases in New York State will continue to go up, and the situation will get worse before it gets better.

But I know that New Yorkers are strong and we will get through this.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Ever Upward,

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo