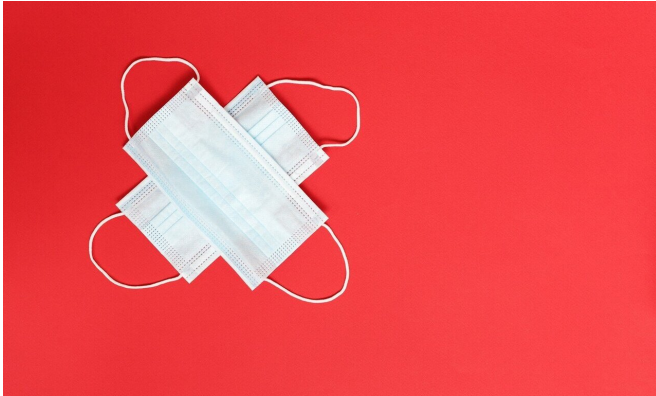


Long Island region of New York to enter new reopening stage

8 July 2020, by Marina Villeneuve



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Colleges and universities with safety plans can soon reopen and professional sports competitions can take place without fans in Long Island as the region enters the state's fourth phase of reopening.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced Tuesday that the available data suggests that COVID-19 is spreading at a low enough rate to allow the 7 million residents of the populous suburbs east of New York City to enter the fourth phase starting Wednesday. The state's online dashboard shows Long Island's percentage of positive tests have remained at around 1% since mid-May while the rate of new hospitalizations has slowly declined to around 0.45 per 100,000 residents.

Cuomo divided the state up into 10 regions under a plan that began to allow more businesses to reopen to the public in mid-May under safety guidance developed by the governor's administration.

The fourth phase also covers media production companies and low-risk outdoor and indoor arts and entertainment. The Cuomo administration is

still deciding whether to allow casinos, movie theaters and malls to open their doors anywhere in New York.

Cuomo has also allowed three additional states—Delaware, Kansas and Oklahoma—to quarantine for 14 days as more individuals are testing positive for COVID-19 nationwide.

Cuomo's advisory now applies to 19 states with a positive test rate higher than 10 per 100,000 residents over a seven-day rolling average, or states with a 10% or higher positivity rate over a seven-day rolling average.

"As states around the country experience increasing community spread, New York is taking action to ensure the continued safety of our phased reopening," Cuomo, a Democrat, said.

Cuomo said he hopes his travel advisory will prevent COVID-19 from spreading at high rates again in a state hard-hit by the pandemic.

New York's testing has turned up nearly 400,000 positive test results since the spring, out of 4.2 million tests of individuals. About 836 people were hospitalized Monday, according to Cuomo's office—up 19 from Sunday, but down from 878 on July 1.

Overall, New York is seeing a smaller share of individuals test positive for COVID-19 even as the state has amped up its testing and slowly reopened its economy. About 600 individuals tested positive for COVID-19 Monday out of nearly 57,000 tested, according to Cuomo's office.

Cuomo said 10 people with COVID-19 died in hospitals and nursing homes Monday. The state's numbers are likely an undercount—about 25,000 people with COVID-19 have died in hospitals and nursing homes since March, while New York City says another 4,600 people likely died of COVID-19.

Also on Tuesday, the Board of Health approved a plan that would allow [child care centers](#) to reopen around the city as soon as July 13.

The centers would have to follow state regulations, including no more than 15 children in a room, masks for employees, and daily health screenings.

Childcare facilities had been closed for all except essential workers since early April.

"This decision is rooted in health as well as equity," Dr. Oxiris Barbot, the health commissioner, said in a statement. "Data show that white and wealthy parents are more likely to have job flexibility or to hire independent caregivers, while these options may not be the same for Black, brown and low-income families. We don't want any New Yorker to have to choose informal or illegal child care; every child deserves a safe place where they can learn and grow."

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