

Dear Friends:

Please know that my team and I continue to work around the clock on Coronavirus-related issues and are doing our best to communicate timely updates to you all and our Senate District. While my staff has moved to a remote-working operation to minimize communal contact, we continue to fully operate via phone and email. Please be in touch if you need anything from us.

A number of new statewide measures went into effect last night at 8:00 PM:

- Only those who work in essential services may continue operating. Please [click here](#) for a breakdown of what is included in essential services. To request designation as an essential business, please [click here](#).
- Non-essential gatherings of any size are temporarily banned.

Since we last emailed, measures that I've called for have been implemented, including:

1) **The Governor agreed to provide some additional relief for small businesses.** If you were unable to make your monthly sales tax payment due to the state on Friday, there will NOT be any late fees or penalties.

2) **Woodbury Common has temporarily shut down.** This comes on the heels of my calling on the Governor to mandate such closures. As a result, Woodbury Common closed last week.

3) **Orange and Rockland as well as Central Hudson, will completely waive late fees for customers impacted by the Coronavirus;** this news comes following my outreach to both utilities. Suspending utility fees when many residents and small businesses are experiencing financial hardship is essential so that families can keep the lights on, water running, and homes warm.

Additionally:

- A drive-through testing site has become active at the [Anthony Wayne Recreation Area](#) off the Palisades Parkway; this testing site is by *appointment only* which can be made through the state Coronavirus hotline: 1-888-364-3065.
- New York State's income tax deadline is extended to July 15th to coincide with the new federal filing date.
- All non-critical, elective surgeries are to be postponed. This goes into effect Wednesday, March 25th.
- The State is providing mortgage relief to struggling homeowners impacted by the pandemic by requiring banks to waive mortgage payments for 90 days.
- The State Senate Majority approved mandatory paid sick leave for isolated workers.
- The State is continuing to maximize existing hospitals and build more hospital bed capacity in anticipation for the coming weeks.
- New York State continues to have the most robust testing regiment in the country.
- The State has temporarily halted the collection of any medical and student debt that's owed to the State and referred to the Attorney General's Office.

- Orange, Rockland, and Ulster Counties have all declared states of emergency.
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Many of our local businesses are struggling during this time. That's why I created a [Facebook Event](#) page called "[Open For Business,](#)" to connect residents with local businesses doing take-out and delivery. My staff is continuing to compile a list of restaurants, breweries, bars, etc. that are open, organized by town. I'm encouraging residents to share support using the hashtag **#BuyLocalOrByeLocal.**

Please be sure to [complete the 2020 Census](#) while at home; it takes under 10 minutes and securing essential federal resources can only happen if ***all of us*** get counted. You can also fill out the Census by phone in 14+ languages by calling the numbers listed [here.](#)

What are the numbers?

As of today, there 389 cases in Orange County, 592 in Rockland County and 26 in Ulster County. These numbers are expected to continue rapidly changing as we increase testing.

Community Resources:

- If you know or suspect someone despicably price gouging, please report it by calling **1-800-697-1220** or Local Consumer Affairs at **845-360-6700.**
 - The New York State Department of Health has set up a 24-Hour Hotline Number: **1-888-364-3065** and [informational website.](#)
 - The CDC's Recommendations for vulnerable populations can be found [here.](#)
 - The CDC Guidelines for Childcare Centers and K-12 Schools can be found [here.](#)
 - Online Alcoholics-Anonymous Meetings can be found [here.](#)
 - [Legal Services of the Hudson Valley](#) can help navigate housing/landlord issues: **877-574-8529.**
 - Orange County Department of Health: **845-291-2332**
 - Rockland County Department of Health: **845-364-2512**
 - Ulster County Department of Health: **845-340-3150**
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Important FAQ's:

What are the symptoms?

Current symptoms include mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. If you feel like you are developing symptoms, call your doctor.

How is the virus spread?

This virus most commonly spreads from an infected person to others through:

- Coughing and sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands

How do I protect myself?

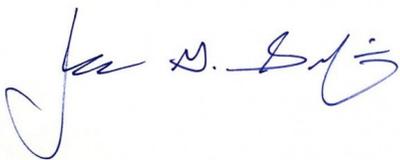
While there is currently no vaccine to prevent this virus, these simple steps can help stop the spread of this and other respiratory viruses:

- Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

My office remains operational if we can be of any assistance: skoufis@nysenate.gov / 845-567-1270.

I will continue to provide you with the most up to date information. Be safe, take care, and know that I'm working overtime to provide our communities with support and financial relief during this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon M. Koufis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "K".