



Mayor Brindle's COVID-19 Update May 18, 2020



CONFIRMED CASES

- Today, there are 148,039 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New Jersey, with another 835 still under investigation. Currently, the County reports 14,903 cases, with Westfield reporting 14 new cases today (zero on Saturday, 12 on Sunday, and two today, all associated with long term care facilities), for 271 in total. We are obtaining additional details about the timing of these 14 cases to determine if they are newly diagnosed or if they were delayed in being reported to us.
- The cases in Westfield have ranged in age from 13 to 99, and 37 of them have required hospitalization.
- For a more detailed breakdown of statewide numbers, visit the [NJ Department of Health COVID-19 Dashboard](#).

STATE UPDATES

- Today, Governor Murphy spent most of his update discussing the stages of The Road Back, which is the framework he has put in place for New Jersey's re-opening. We recently began to move from maximum restrictions to Stage 1, where some businesses are opening in a way that still provides maximum protection for residents, and also allowed for the reopening of parks and beaches with social distancing.
- The Governor will sign an Executive Order today allowing some additional outdoor recreational areas and businesses to restart their operations on May 22, including batting cages, golf ranges, shooting and archery ranges, horseback riding, private tennis clubs, and community gardens.

Golfers may now tee-off in foursomes, as opposed to in pairs. Over the weekend, fishing charters, other chartered boat services, and watercraft rentals were also permitted to resume.

- A bill was signed over the weekend allowing business owners to sell and deliver cocktails and mixed drinks to help alleviate some of their financial uncertainty.

LOCAL UPDATES

- Our Census completion rate is now at 77%, which is the fifth-highest in the county, and also well above the averages on the county, state, and national levels. I would like to aim for the highest completion rate in the county, so please take the five minutes to complete the form if you haven't already at 2020census.gov.
- As an update to the guidance around dental practices that I addressed last week, the Governor's order last Friday allowing for the resumption of elective medical procedures also includes dental procedures. The language from the order states that "an 'elective' surgery or invasive procedure is defined as any surgery or invasive procedure that can be delayed without undue risk to the current or future health of the patient as determined by the patient's treating physician or dentist."
- With Memorial Day Weekend coming up, I'd like to remind everyone of our virtual celebration. We're asking residents to decorate their homes with patriotic items, place a completed Westfield 300 coloring sheet in their window (available at bit.ly/W300MemorialDay), and tag the photos on social media with #W300MemorialDay. Photos can also be sent to westfield300@westfieldnj.gov.
- We've also received the great news that local country music performer and Sweet Sounds of Downtown favorite Nikki Briar will play a porch concert at an undisclosed location for the Westfield community on Sunday at 4pm via Facebook Live. Just as we kicked off the We Love Local Fund with a porch concert back in March, we will close it out the same way with this final push to raise funds for our local business community. The application portal re-opened today for businesses who have not previously applied for funding, with the final submission deadline being this Friday, May 22.
- The Westfield Public Arts Commission is preparing for its inaugural public art temporary sculpture installation, entitled Art Takes Flight. The project will entail 30 fiberglass butterflies -- one for each decade of Westfield's 300 years -- to be set on concrete pedestals or affixed to trees throughout Westfield this summer. At the conclusion of the exhibit, some butterflies will be auctioned off to fund future public art installations, and some will be permanently installed in our parks.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, this project has taken on additional significance in a time when the community prepares to gradually re-emerge from our homes and back into public life. Walking throughout Town to take in these installations will provide residents with safe and broad access to support the work of local artists whose profession has been significantly impacted by COVID-19.

- Artists interested in participating should submit their concept by May 28 using the form on westfieldnj.gov/publicartscommission. Those interested in sponsoring a butterfly can email publicart@westfieldnj.gov.
- Thank you to residents Bianca and Annika Vesuna, who are in seventh and ninth grade, respectively, and have been making glass tile coasters with inspiring words and messages that they are preparing to sell -- with all funds to be donated to We Love Local and Imagine. You can see their work and place your orders by messaging them on their Facebook (@tilesforsmilescoasters) and Instagram (@tiles.for.smiles) accounts. They are two of the many students in Westfield who have demonstrated compassion and creativity to help their community.
- On this National EMS Week, please join me in extending our gratitude to the Westfield Rescue Squad, comprised entirely of volunteers dedicated to helping us in times of need. Now more than ever, we thank you for your commitment and service.
- As we anticipate the upcoming graduation of the Westfield High School Class of 2020, I wanted to let you know that the Town has been in touch with Dr. Dolan, WHS principal Mary Asfendis, and the WHS PTSO President to offer any assistance and support we can provide for a creative and appropriate way to celebrate this enormous occasion. I look forward to honoring our seniors on this milestone achievement.
- Congratulations to the 2020 college graduates in our community, many of whom are living at home and celebrating remotely amidst these unprecedented circumstances. While these are perhaps not the graduation memories that any of you wanted, or even knew could be possible, this graduating class will be remembered for their resilience in closing out this chapter of their lives during a global pandemic. We applaud your efforts, celebrate your achievements, and anticipate all of the good you and your classmates will do in this world, which desperately needs your engagement, compassion, and commitment.