



Mayor Brindle's
COVID-19 Update
June 3, 2020



CONFIRMED CASES

- Today, there are 162,068 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New Jersey, with another 854 still under investigation. Currently, the County reports 15,911 cases, with Westfield reporting no additional cases yesterday or today, keeping our total at 276. I am saddened to report the death of an 84 year-old female, associated with a long-term care facility, bringing our total number of fatalities to 42. I would like to remind the community that these deaths are not just numbers, and each of these residents has left behind grieving loved ones who were unable to hold proper funerals or memorials. Please know that we do intend to publicly honor all of the lives lost in Westfield to COVID-19 at the appropriate time.
- For a more detailed breakdown of statewide numbers, visit the [NJ Department of Health COVID-19 Dashboard](#).

STATE UPDATES

- Governor Murphy focused his update today on the recommendations received by Manatt Health to improve quality, safety, and resilience within New Jersey's long-term care system, and best address mitigation against future outbreaks. The New Jersey Department of Health is prepared to implement key recommendations in the near term by accessing at least \$10 million from the Coronavirus Relief Funds to do so. The main recommendations from Manatt Health to improve long-term care facilities statewide include:

- ☑ Strengthen emergency response capacity
- ☑ Stabilize facilities and bolster workforce
- ☑ Increase transparency and accountability
- ☑ Build a more resilient and higher quality system

The Governor's full announcement can be found at <https://westfieldnj.us20.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ed1755f93623ba9b7c6ac1def&id=7d4797dfd7&e=26607fcb12>

- The Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control will be issuing a special ruling to allow liquor license-holders to apply for a one-time permit to expand their premises for service. Local ordinances must be complied with and municipal approval will be a requirement.
- The Governor plans to sign an Executive Order that will allow restaurants and bars to begin offering in-person, outdoor dining on Monday, June 15. Tables seating individual groups must be six feet apart, and other safety and sanitization protocols must be followed.

LOCAL UPDATES

- Improvements continue in Mindowaskin Park, with the paving of Park Drive expected tomorrow, weather permitting.
- Even as we maintain our ongoing social distancing best practices, it's important to remember that the work of our many Town Boards and Committees continues through virtual meetings in order to maintain progress on multiple fronts. Earlier this week, the Board of Health and the Planning Board had their monthly meetings, and next week both the Board of Adjustment and Town Council will also meet online. These meetings continue to be open to the public via Zoom. In addition, all agendas and minutes are always available on our website and shared via social media. You can also subscribe to receive these documents through email at www.westfieldnj.gov/townupdates.
- At this week's Planning Board meeting, we heard from Topology, the consulting firm hired earlier this year, as they presented the findings of their extensive study on how our municipal lots meet the criteria as a non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment. This follows the March 10 resolution passed by the Town Council to direct this study by the Planning Board. What we heard from Topology was a thorough evaluation of the inefficiency, noncontributory, and environmental arguments about the qualification of these lots for this designation. These findings reaffirmed the opportunities for us from a revenue and from the tax perspective, as we look to deliver on the key findings of our Master Plan Reexamination.

I encourage you to review the study, along with all of our redevelopment information on our website, which we will continue to update as we receive the related studies on the Rialto and Lord & Taylor properties. For additional context, there is also a Letter to the Editor in our local media outlets this week from Planning Board Vice Chairman and Former DWC Executive Director Michael LaPlace, whose career and diverse experience in municipal planning is a tremendous asset to us as we look to leverage these underutilized areas now more than ever for the future of our downtown.

- In closing, I want to thank the community for the outpouring of care and concern, and most importantly for the demand for systemic change and action, in the wake of the killing of George Floyd. I hosted our first meeting of the Human Relations Advisory Committee last night, which I anticipate to be an instrument for bringing about change in the race relations process we need and desire in our community.

While I know many residents are attending protests and marches to show their solidarity with the #blacklivesmatter movement, which I support, I remain very concerned about risks to public health and implore you to take all precautions when in public. Continue to social distance when possible, wash your hands, and wear a face covering in public to keep our progress on track for reopening and economic recovery. If you feel that you have been at risk for exposure, please make an appointment at the Kean testing center to confirm a diagnosis before potentially exposing others.

Stay well and safe everyone. I remain optimistic that there are brighter days ahead.