



Mayor Brindle's COVID-19 Update August 25, 2020



CONFIRMED CASES

- Today, there are 190,021 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New Jersey to date, with another 310 currently under investigation. Union County has reported 17,010 cases in total, with Westfield reporting no new cases in the past week, keeping our total at 361 since our first reported case in March.
- Our Regional Health Department has provided some additional context around their contact tracing efforts. Of the 21 most recent cases they investigated in Westfield, they found the following:
 - 6 cases had positive household contacts
 - 6 cases had no known exposure
 - 5 cases did not return the call
 - 1 case had a known exposure (social exposure)
 - 1 case refused to participate in the interview
 - 1 case associated with travel
 - 1 case still under investigation
- For a more detailed breakdown of statewide numbers, visit the [NJ Department of Health COVID-19 Dashboard](#).

STATE UPDATES

- Governor Murphy presented his revised budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2021, the details of which can be found here: https://www.nj.gov/governor/docs/fy2021_budget_glance.pdf.
- Alaska, Arizona, Delaware, Maryland, and Montana have been removed from New Jersey's travel advisory list. Anyone traveling to New Jersey from the following 31 states and territories should self-quarantine for 14 days: AL, AR, CA, FL, GA, GU, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, MN, MS, MO, NE, NV, NC, ND, OK, PR, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VI, WI.

LOCAL UPDATES

- Don't miss Field of Dreams Thursday night in Tamaques Park with the Grain & Cane food truck on site. Tickets for the Westfield 300 Summer Movie Series are free but require advance registration at <https://bit.ly/W300MovieSeries>.
- Yesterday, we posted an exciting Request for Proposal (RFP) on our website to secure an operator for a bar, restaurant or cafe inside the North Avenue train station building. This underutilized asset is owned by the Town and presents a phenomenal opportunity to drive Town revenue while filling the demand for a neighborhood bar and jumpstarting our downtown economic development efforts. We envision this area, which currently hosts the Westfield Farmer's Market and the beloved Christmas tree and Menorah lightings, to ultimately become an enhanced public plaza that will serve as a central gathering place for events large and small.

We have watched as other towns have successfully converted similar buildings, including the Boxcar Bar & Grill in the Short Hills Train Station, Mama Rosina's in the Bound Brook Train Station, and the Woodbury Station Café, and have heard from residents, time and again, that there is a market for a friendly, casual, welcoming local gathering place in the heart of the downtown. The Town is able to secure a "Special Concessionaire" liquor license permit which allows for the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages on property owned or controlled by a municipality, county, or state agency for only \$2000/year, which is the cost of the licensing fee to be covered by the operator. This special permit does not count as one of the Town's ten liquor licenses that are all privately held. Considering the most recent private sale of a retail consumption liquor license in Town was \$950,000, this is a significant opportunity for the right operator.

The operator will be required to cover all costs of the station renovation as well as pay monthly rent and expenses once the venue opens, which we expect to be September 2021. We will require that the historic 1892 station, which includes both indoor and outdoor space, must be historically preserved with all plans to be carefully reviewed by the Town Historian, the Town's Historic Preservation Commission and the Town Planner. I encourage everyone to look at the RFP advertisement for additional information, found at <http://bit.ly/RFPNorthsideTrainStationResauranttBarCafe>, and help spread the word to attract potential operators.

Thank you for once again doing your part to ensure our community stays safe and healthy. I can assure you that while so much of our day to day lives have been put on pause, our efforts to ensure our town comes out of this pandemic economically strong and vibrant are moving full steam ahead.