

MAYOR BARAKA TO UNVEIL REOPENING AND RECOVERY BLUEPRINT FOR NEWARK LATER THIS WEEK; MAYOR ALSO SIGNED EXECUTIVE ORDER FOR CURBSIDE PICKUP POLICY

Newark, NJ – May 19, 2020 – Mayor Ras J. Baraka will release Phase One of the plan to slowly reopen the City of Newark after coronavirus closures, based on recommendations of the Newark Reopening and Recovery Strikeforce and data, which shows the steady decline of new cases in the City. The press conference to do so will take place later this week; more details will follow.

“We are going to reopen gradually and responsibly as we continue to assess the data and avoid the potential for exponential spread of COVID-19.” Mayor Baraka said. “The restrictions we have put in place up to this point have been working. We don’t want to go backwards and lose the gains we’ve worked so hard to obtain.”

Additionally, the Mayor signed an executive order outlining policy for non-essential retail businesses conducting curbside pick-up, and for their customers, in accordance with an earlier executive order signed by Governor Murphy. The order allows customers to pick up goods outside of an establishment from which they have already ordered, but cannot enter the premises to place orders; calls on retail businesses to ensure and enforce social distancing both in and out of their establishment; requires employees working for retail businesses to wear the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including masks and gloves, when delivering a customer’s items curbside; and requiring infection control practices. (Copy of Executive Order attached)

From the onset of COVID-19 making its deadly appearance in mid-March, the City has been tracking the number of cases and locations of those cases. The demographics led to the beginning of testing all senior buildings about a month ago, quickly followed by testing of the homeless, the two most vulnerable populations. Testing is now open to all Newark residents, whether they display symptoms or not.

What You Need to Know:

- On March 14, Newark’s first case of COVID-19 was reported and the first death came three days later.
- Number of new cases and deaths steadily increased and peaked from April 5-11, in which there were 1,241 new cases and 129 deaths.
- During that week, a total of 1,827 residents were tested and 68 percent were positive.
- As Mayor Baraka’s strict enforcement of the stay-at-home order and implementation of “Be Still Mondays” began to “flatten the curve of COVID-19,” the numbers of cases steadily declined.
- Beginning in May, the weekly rate of infection and number of deaths decreased dramatically. From May 3-9, the city reported 593 new cases of COVID-19 and 21 deaths.
- Also during that week, 2,957 residents were tested – including the vulnerable senior and homeless populations – and only 20 percent were positive.
- Even as the number of people tested increased more than 100 percent, new cases decreased by over 50 percent and deaths dropped 84 percent.

For more information on the City of Newark, please visit our website at www.newarknj.gov.