



MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, May 18, 2020

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MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN ANNOUNCES IMPORTANT UPDATES TO BUFFALO'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 EMERGENCY

Mayor Brown's contact tracer recruitment helps to secure Tuesday reopening for Western New York

Buffalo, NY – Mayor Byron W. Brown today announced that more than 250 City of Buffalo employees will be trained in contact tracing, the final and critical metric needed by New York State to approve the gradual reopening of Western New York. Contact tracing is a proven public health tool in the fight against community spread of the deadly COVID-19 virus. Several countries, including Germany, Singapore and South Korea, have used contact tracing and as a result were able to more quickly reopen and experienced fewer deaths and lower rates of infection. Governor Andrew Cuomo today announced that Western New York can begin the gradual reopening process on Tuesday, May 19th, thanks in part to Mayor Brown's swift recruitment of City employees, who are enrolled for contact tracing certification. Western New York exceeded the requirement of 521 people trained in order to be eligible to begin the first phase of reopening.

Mayor Brown stated, "While I am pleased that Western New York has been given the green light to reopen, I want to ensure that we do so carefully to maintain public health and safety. City employees continue to step up to help us reach this important benchmark and I thank them for their unwavering hard work to ensure the needs of residents and businesses are met across the City as we navigate through the COVID-19 emergency together. I continue to stress that even when we reopen, we must continue to wear masks in public and practice physical distancing to prevent the virus from overwhelming our hospitals. Let's continue to stick together, protect one another and stay Buffalo strong."

The contact tracing course is part of an ambitious push by Governor Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who recently announced plans to develop a large-scale statewide program in New York. The program will include a baseline of 30 contact tracers for every 100,000 residents in the state and is expected to have 6,400 to 17,000 tracers statewide depending on the projected number of cases.

Governor Cuomo outlined additional guidelines and protocols for Phase One businesses as they begin to reopen:

- Residential/Commercial Construction:
 - All workers must have masks and wear them when within six feet of another worker
 - Employers must provide masks to all employees
 - No congregate meetings
- Retail Business Owners - Curbside Pickup
 - Employee and purchaser in vehicle must wear a mask, gloves preferred
 - Hand sanitizer must be made available
- Retail Business Owners - In-Store Pickup
 - Requires ordering ahead - pre-arranged orders

- o Social distancing required in store
 - o No more than 50 percent of maximum occupancy
 - o Patrons must wear masks
 - o Store employees must wear masks, gloves preferred
 - o Hand sanitizer must be made available
- Other industries allowed to reopen Tuesday as part of Phase One include Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting.

Businesses can determine their eligibility to reopen and learn more about public health and safety standards by visiting www.businessexpress.ny.gov/app/nyforward. For more information on New York State's reopening phases, visit forward.ny.gov.

Buffalo City Hall remains closed during Phase One

Buffalo City Hall remains closed to the general public at this time. If you are a business eligible for gradual reopening in Phase One and you require assistance or documentation from the City, you must call or email our offices. You can find contact information at buffalony.gov.

The City of Buffalo ready to assist companies eligible to reopen

For businesses allowed to reopen on Tuesday, May 19th, the Office of Permits and Inspection Services will begin assisting companies with any specific permit and licensing needs that cannot be met online at www.buffalony.gov/435/Permit-Inspection-Services starting Tuesday, May 19th. For licenses, call 851-6583 or 851-4951. For permits, call 851-4935 or 851-5033.

The City of Buffalo Zoning Board, Planning Board and Preservation Board will soon begin to hold meetings virtually. For more information, please call 851-5029. The Preservation Board will meet on Thursday, May 28th, the Planning Board will meet on Monday, June 1st, and The Zoning Board of Appeals is set to meet on Wednesday, June 3rd and Wednesday, June 17th.

The City of Buffalo lights up in recognition of EMS Week

Tonight, in partnership with the Buffalo Landmark Illumination Team (BUFFALOLIT), our City's landmark buildings and structures will be lit BLUE to thank EMS professionals on the frontlines of the COVID-19 emergency.

#BuffaloPAUSE challenge bridges youth and seniors for National Older Americans Month

Mayor Brown's innovative Instagram challenge, #BuffaloPAUSE – Powered by AT&T, continues to call on young City residents to stay active and creative while staying home and staying safe! For the Week 5 challenge, Mayor Brown is asking local teens to creatively show their appreciation for an elder in our community. It can be family member, neighbor, teacher or anyone who has positively impacted their life. Use #BuffaloPAUSE on your post by Saturday, May 23rd at 11:59 pm to be entered to win a \$20 Amazon gift card!

To enter the #BuffaloPAUSE challenge, participants must be between the ages of 13 and 18, reside in the City of Buffalo, and have a public profile on Instagram. All entries must take place at home indoors or outdoors following proper physical distancing guidelines. Only one submission per person or from a social media account can win each week. Tag your post with #BuffaloPAUSE on Instagram. Selected winners will be notified via Direct Message (DM) with a link to fill out a form so we can process your gift card. All prizes and awards are funded by AT&T. The challenge runs now through the week of June 8th.

Help local hospitals by giving blood

ConnectLife says one pint of blood can save up to three lives. Mayor Brown is asking healthy residents to donate blood to help maintain an adequate local blood supply. Donating is safe and social distancing measures are in place to protect donors. To make an appointment or if you are interested in holding a blood drive, visit connectlifegiveblood.org.

Connecting residents to COVID-19 testing

If you are interested in getting tested for COVID-19, find the closest test site near you by visiting covid19.buffalony.gov. The map contains a complete listing of all COVID-19 testing sites, with addresses, which are located throughout the City, contact information for setting up an appointment, hours of operation and whether the site requires a prescription by a doctor for testing. Additional locations to provide this vital service can be added to this resource by visiting www.buffalony.gov/SubmitTestSite.

Parking reminder for tonight

Mayor Brown is reminding residents that tonight there is a 6 pm parking switchover, from 6 pm Monday to 6 pm Thursday. The alternate side parking on these streets is critical for emergency vehicle access.

City of Buffalo's Census response rate closing in on the 50% mark

The Census response rate for the City of Buffalo gained ground over the weekend, the response rate as of Monday, May 18th, is 47.3%. The City is still well behind the national response rate of 59.4%, and Mayor Brown continues to push for 100% participation. An accurate count is essential to allowing the City to access hundreds of millions of dollars in federal aid that fund infrastructure improvements, education, critical community programming and much more. Complete your questionnaire at 2020Census.gov.

Looking for work? Local companies are hiring

Mayor Brown continues to encourage residents looking for work to get assistance through the Buffalo Employment and Training Center by calling 856-JOBS. Employment counselors are available for remote one-on-one counseling sessions. To date, 90 residents have been placed in open positions since the beginning of the COVID-19 emergency.

Mayor Brown asks residents to "Stand Out to Salute"

During his new weekly radio show "Talk of the Town with Mayor Byron Brown" on WUFO 1080am/ Power 96.5 on Sunday, May 17th, Mayor Brown announced that the City of Buffalo is partnering with Consumer Beverages and other sponsors to hold Buffalo's "Stand Out to Salute" this weekend. This first-of-its-kind citywide fireworks display pays tribute to those on the front lines of the COVID-19 Emergency.

The fireworks will be set off from different, undisclosed locations across the city so residents can enjoy the display safely from their homes without mass gathering. Mayor Brown is encouraging residents to step outside their homes with members of their household this Saturday, May 23rd, at 9:30 pm, to show their appreciation for the men and women who have sacrificed and are making sacrifices for our health and freedom.

To hear updates on all things happening in the City of Buffalo, tune in to "Talk of the Town with Mayor Byron Brown" on WUFO 1080am/ Power 96.5 on Sundays at 1pm.

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