



Dear neighbor,

Can you believe summer has come and gone? My kids, Sam and Gabby, who are starting high school and fourth grade this year, can hardly believe it. As we prepare for the new school year and continue to recover from Hurricane Ida, I wanted to reach out with some updates and resources I hope you'll find useful.

While nationwide rates of COVID-19 are the highest we've seen in months, in New York City we are keeping the pandemic at bay and even seeing some early signs that it's receding, though troubling hotspots remain. Case numbers and hospitalizations are decreasing but the city's 7-day average positive rate continues to hover around 3%. With 60% of NYC's total population vaccinated, we still have work to do – and we know the only way out of this pandemic is through vaccination.

If you still have questions or concerns about the vaccine, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office. Additionally, if you need help scheduling a vaccine appointment or accessing COVID relief, we are just a phone call or email away.

Warmly,  
Dan

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**Hurricane Ida:** Last week, Hurricane Ida brought historic rains to New York City, flooding our streets and subways, and killing 16 people. Following a request from the Governor, President Biden issued a federal disaster declaration, triggering the release of federal aid to New York. New York City Emergency Management has compiled a list of resources for those affected by Ida, which can be found [here](#).

You can sign up for alerts from NYC Notify, the city's free emergency notification system, [here](#) to receive phone calls, texts, or emails about traffic and transit interruptions and other emergencies.

**A New Era in Albany:** Since we last talked, Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul has been sworn in as the first female Governor of the State of New York. This is a historic moment and I look forward to working closely with Governor Hochul on a variety of issues. Having signaled that ethics reform will be a priority for her administration, I hope we can work together to finally overhaul New York's failing ethics oversight body – the Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE). Moreover, when the legislative session begins anew in January, it's clear we have much work left to do to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. I hope we can take decisive action to hold abusers accountable and create a safe environment for all workers.

**Special Session:** Last week, Governor Hochul called a special session of the legislature to address the eviction moratorium and rental assistance. As you may have heard, state agencies have been slow to get money out the door. With hundreds of thousands of people at risk of losing their homes, the Legislature had to act.

That's why I voted to extend the eviction moratorium and suspension of mortgage and tax foreclosures to January 15, 2022, giving our new Governor time to improve and streamline existing relief programs. Knowing how important our local small businesses are, the bill also extends the small business commercial eviction moratorium, giving mom-and-pop shops more breathing room to get back on their feet.

**Rental Assistance:** During last week's special session, we allocated an additional \$300 million in federal funding for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), bringing the total to \$2.6 billion. Furthermore, the Governor has announced that New York is investing \$1 million toward ERAP outreach efforts, adding staff to process claims and help tenants and landlords complete applications.

If approved for the [Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#) you may receive:

- Up to 12 months of past due rent
- Up to 12 months of past due utility payments
- Up to 3 months of future rent

To learn more and apply today visit: [otda.ny.gov/programs/emergency-rental-assistance/](https://otda.ny.gov/programs/emergency-rental-assistance/)

**Small Business Relief:** The COVID-19 Pandemic Small Business Recovery Grant Program, which provides assistance for small and micro businesses and small for-profit independent arts and cultural organizations who experienced a COVID-related financial hardship, has recently been updated to expand eligibility. Passed as part of this year's state budget, the \$800 million program is still open and accepting applications.

Eligible uses of grant funds include business costs incurred between March 1, 2020, and April 1, 2021, such as: payroll, rent, mortgage, property and school taxes, insurance, utilities and pandemic-related expenditures that were necessary to protect workers and customers.

To learn more and apply, visit: [nysmallbusinessrecovery.com](https://nysmallbusinessrecovery.com)

**School Reopening:** If you're a parent, the end of summer also means the beginning of the school year. New York City Public Schools will fully reopen on next week on September 13<sup>th</sup>. While I personally believe that our kids are better off in the classroom with their teachers and peers, it's crucial we bring students back safely. The Department of Education has announced a variety of safety protocols including universal mask wearing, social distancing, staff vaccine mandates, and regular testing.

**Masks:** Near the end of July, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued new mask guidelines, recommending that both unvaccinated and vaccinated people wear masks indoors. With case numbers in New York City exceeding the CDC's recommended threshold for mask wearing, the city now recommends – though is not mandating – wearing masks indoors.

**COVID-19 Testing:** As the highly contagious Delta variant continues to spread, it's important to get a COVID-19 test if you experience flu or cold-like symptoms or have been in contact with someone who was exposed or tested positive for COVID-19.

You can find a test site [here](#) – no appointment necessary. Alternatively, over-the-counter tests may also be available at local pharmacies.

**Vaccination:** All NYC residents are now eligible for [in-home vaccination](#). Anyone who requests in-home vaccination will now have the option of choosing between Johnson & Johnson, Moderna, or Pfizer. You should receive a call within a week of filling out the interest form [here](#).

You can find a vaccination site by visiting or calling:

- The city's website: [vaccinefinder.nyc.gov](https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov)
- NYC Hotline: 1-877-VAX-4NYC (1-877-829-4692)
- The state's website: [am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov](https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov)
- NYS Hotline: 1-833-NYS-4-VAX (1-833-697-4829)