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December 31, 2020

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I. State Issues

a. Covid-19 Update

Yesterday, Governor Murphy announced that there were 4,664 new positive cases and an additional 99 confirmed deaths resulting from COVID-19. To date, there have been 472,264 confirmed cases, and 16,931 confirmed deaths. The rate of transmission is at 0.95. The percent positivity for all PCR tests recorded on December 26 was 15.19%. Since August, there have been 546 cases linked to 108 school outbreaks.

The State continues to ask residents to download and use the new [Covid Alert NJ](#), the State's exposure notification smart phone app.

Since our last update, Governor Murphy has issued no COVID-19 related Executive Orders.

Vaccination for COVID-19 began in New Jersey on December 15. The Commissioner of Health Dr. Judy Persichilli is [requesting assistance](#) in sharing key information on the COVID-19 Vaccination Program **including** a [fact sheet on Phase 1A](#) and the current [locations](#) of New Jersey Vaccine Sites, which is subject to change.

On Wednesday the Governor announced:

- Indoor sports may resume on January 2, 2021 with safety protocols in place
- [Extension of the suspension of interstate youth hockey competitions](#) for public and private school and youth hockey leagues through at least January 31, 2021.

- The [deadline for the Senior Freeze property tax](#) relief program has been extended to February 1, 2021.

Also on Wednesday, the Department of Labor [announced](#) that they continue to await federal guidance on the new stimulus benefits unfold. But noted that “according to an email received Tuesday afternoon from the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), states were assured workers receiving federal COVID-19 related benefits would not see a lapse in benefits this week.”

Contact: Lori Buckelew, Assistant Executive Director, lbuckelew@njlm.org or 609-695-3481 x112.

b. Division Issues Local Finance Notice on 2021 Budget Matters

The Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) has issued [Local Finance Notice 2020-28](#) regarding the CY 2020 Budget Deadline Extension and Enforcement.

As we previously [reported](#), the statutory budget deadlines for 2021 have been revised. The budget introduction date has been extended from February 10 to March 30 and the budget adoption date extended from March 20 to April 30. Please note that a budget may be adopted anytime within 10 days of receiving the Director’s certification of approval of the budget.

The Division is advising for budget planning purposes municipalities can use their 2020 CMPTRA and Energy Tax Receipt amounts in their 2021 budget.

The health insurance cap exclusion is based on the average State Health Benefit increase, which is 2.8%. Therefore, there will be no appropriation cap exemption and the levy cap exemption for health benefits will be 0.8%.

We suggest you review this Local Finance Notice with your administrator and chief financial officer.

Contact: Lori Buckelew, Assistant Executive Director, lbuckelew@njlm.org or 609-695-3481 x112.

II. Federal Issues

a. Larger Stimulus Checks Unlikely

As of Thursday morning, Senate Majority Leader McConnell has not posted the CASH Act for a Senate vote. This legislation would provide an additional \$1,400 stimulus check to the previously authorized \$600 for a total of \$2,000. The CASH Act passed the House earlier this week. Despite public pressure from President Trump, and Senate Democrats’ attempt to force a vote by delaying the vote to override the President’s veto of the National Defense Authorization Act, it appears unlikely there will be a Senate vote for further stimulus.

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III. 2020 Annual League Conference

a. Print Your CEU Certificates from the 2020 NJLM Virtual Conference

The tracking system from the 2020 NJLM Virtual Conference is now open. To print your certificates, visit the [Tracking System webpage](#). The system will be available until May 1, 2021.

b. It's Not Too Late!

We hope that the NJLM Virtual Conference allowed you to look back and forward on the challenges of the day, be it the COVID-19 pandemic, social and restorative justice, or how to balance the competing interests in preparing for your 2021 budget. While we hope to be back in-person in Atlantic City in 2021, the virtual conference offers a unique benefit. The content of the approximately 80 programs and 145 virtual exhibitor booths will be available on-demand through October 31, 2021.

Anyone who is registered can simply log in to the [Conference website](#) to view any of the programs or visit any of the exhibitor booths. And for those who did not attend, it's not too late. We will continue to [accept registrations](#) for access to the Conference site. Those who register now will not be able to apply for CEUs but will have full access to all programs and exhibit booths. And please continue to visit the exhibitors who chose to support the 105th Annual Conference by stopping by their booths. You can contact exhibitors directly with any questions or comments by simply using the "Request Information" button on each booth. This will generate an automatic email to the exhibitor and they will contact you with a reply.



New Jersey State League of Municipalities

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