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April 30, 2021

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Municipal Clerks: Please forward to your Mayor, Governing Body, and Department Heads.

To assist in providing guidance and information we have created a [COVID-19 resource page](#). We will continue to update the page as we get pertinent information and include announcements in our Daily Updates.

I. State Issues

a. COVID-19 Weekly Update

Earlier this week, [Governor Murphy announced](#) that New Jersey will be easing restrictions on outdoor gatherings and indoor catered events. Earlier this week, [Governor Murphy announced](#) that New Jersey will be easing restrictions on outdoor gatherings and indoor catered events. Easing restrictions on outdoor gathering and large indoor catering venue capacity limits will enable schools and universities to hold graduation ceremonies and proms. In addition, beginning May 10, carnivals and fairs are permitted to operate at outdoor amusement businesses' capacity limits, currently 50% capacity. The Governor also issued an Executive Order permitting summer youth overnight, day camps, and youth programs operated by municipalities.

COVID Data for April 29, 2021:

- 2,175 new positive cases for a total of 871,333 confirmed cases
- 208 new confirmed deaths for a total of 22,904 confirmed deaths

- The rate of transmission is at 0.72
- 1,157 cases linked to 263 school outbreaks since August 2020
- 6,905,696 vaccine doses have been administered, including 4,196,179 first doses and 2,959,204 second doses.

Vaccine Information

The Governor noted that the state has reached 62% of its goal of having 4.7 million residents fully vaccinated by the end of June. To encourage vaccinations, the Governor also announced the “Your Voice Your Shot” video contest (see writeup below).

The Department of Health announced that all six of New Jersey’s COVID-19 vaccine mega-sites are now offering walk-in vaccinations. Appointments are not required to get vaccinated. In addition, there is no county residency requirement to get vaccinated at the mega-sites.

As a reminder, anyone 16 and older living, working, or studying in New Jersey is eligible for COVID-19 vaccines. The State hotline, 855-568-0545, continues to assist residents with their COVID vaccination questions, with live agents from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The agents remind residents that there is no out-of-pocket expense to get vaccinated and that the two vaccines are not interchangeable.

As previously reported, New Jersey has launched a [COVID-19 vaccine appointment finder](#) to assist in scheduling vaccinations.

Executive Orders

[Executive Order 237](#): Permitting summer youth overnight, day camps, and youth programs operated by municipalities for the 2021 season. The Executive Order requires all overnight and day camps to follow COVID-19 health and safety protocols outlined in [guidance issued by the New Jersey Department of Health](#).

Your Voice Your Shot Video Contest

Earlier this week the Governor announced the “[Your Voice, Your Shot](#)” video contest that urges New Jersey residents to share why they and others are getting vaccinated. The winning video will be used in the State of New Jersey’s COVID-19 public health campaign. Contest participant’s videos must be original, consistent with NJ Department of Health guidelines, and explain why they or others are getting or have been vaccinated. While videos may be in any language, the content must not be more than 30 seconds long and is subject to other limitations. To enter the contest, participants must share their video on social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or TikTok), tag @NJGov, and include the hashtag #YourVoiceYourShotNJ. The deadline for submissions is May 11, 2021.

Unemployment Information

The [Department of Labor announced](#) the initial weekly unemployment claims were 12,322 for the week ending April 24. This is a 17% increase from the week prior.

Contacts:

- Mike Cerra, Executive Director, mcerra@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x120.

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

b. New Jersey SFY 2022 Budget Update

Over the past month State Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 budget hearings have continued to be held by the Legislature. The Governor's proposed FY 2022 budget includes a full payment to the pension system, a flat increase from the FY 2021 budget to the State, and different funding initiatives for public education and workforce training.

On April 22, Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver testified before the Assembly Budget Committee. Regarding housing the Lt. Governor stated that on March 22, the Murphy Administration had released the second round of rental assistance, stating, "you know what we have to do is operate a lottery. There is no fair way they could develop, devise, or think about that would be fair to everyone who would need rental assistance."

Senator Steven Oroho (R-23) brought up the issue of how the American Rescue Plan funds will be allocated for New Jersey municipalities. Lt. Gov. Oliver responded that the Murphy Administration is still waiting for guidance from the U.S Treasury, which is expected by early May. To be ready for the allocations of these funds, municipalities should have created a DUNS number and registered with the SAMS database. Please see the Federal item below for more information.

We will continue to monitor the legislative hearings as the budgeting process moves forward.

Contact: Andrew LaFevre, Legislative Analyst, alafevre@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x116.

c. Division Issues Information on 2021 Financial Disclosure Statement Filing

The Division of Local Government Services has issued [Local Finance Notice 2021-08](#) providing guidance on filing the 2021 Financial Disclosure Statements. The Local Finance Notice outlines the filing procedures and contains specific step-by-step instructions for successfully filing the financial disclosure statement using the online process.

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

II. Federal Issues

a. President Biden Announces American Family Plan

Wednesday evening, during a socially-distanced address before Congress, President Joe Biden proposed a 10-year, \$1.8 trillion [American Family Plan](#) which includes \$1 trillion in new spending and investments and \$800 billion in tax cuts and tax credits.

For more information, please see the League's [recent blog post](#).

Contact: Paul Penna, Legislative Analyst, ppenna@njlm.org, 609 695-3481, x110.

b. Shuttered Venue Operator Grants

The American Rescue Plan includes [funding for shuttered entertainment venues](#). The Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) program appropriates over \$16 billion in grants to shuttered venues. The application portal started accepting applications on April 24.

Please note: Performing arts centers owned and operated by governments may be eligible to apply.

The League encourages municipal officials to share this information with eligible entities in their towns so they may benefit from this program. If a venue in your municipality meets this criteria we encourage them to [apply for funding](#). For more information, please read the League's [recent blog post](#) on the subject.

Contact: Paul Penna, Legislative Analyst, ppenna@njlm.org, 609 695-3481, x110.

c. American Rescue Plan – Preparation for Municipalities that Will Receive Direct Payments

Last week, the U.S. Treasury [sent a directive for entities with a population above 50,000 that are to receive direct payments of funds](#) stating they should prepare information including a [Data Universal Numbering System \(DUNS\)](#) number and an active registration with the [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) database at SAM.gov to receive the payments. The DUNS and SAM registration process may take several business days to complete and Treasury recommends that eligible entities begin those registration processes if they have not already completed them.

Municipalities that qualify should also gather payment information including Entity Identification Number (EIN), name and title of an authorized representative of the entity, and financial institution information (routing and account number, financial institution name and contact information).

For municipalities with a population under 50,000 residents, Treasury will allocate and pay funds to state governments, and the State will distribute funds to non-entitlement units of local government in proportion to population. Non-entitlement units must have a valid DUNS number to meet reporting requirements under the program. If an entity does not have a valid DUNS number, please visit the [webform](#) or call 1-866-705-5711 to begin the registration process.

Contact: Paul Penna, Legislative Analyst, ppenna@njlm.org, 609 695-3481, x110.

III. 2020 Annual League Conference

a. Conference Certificate Window Closes Tomorrow

The tracking system from the 2020 NJLM Virtual Conference is now closing. 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 expect 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.

IV. Also of Interest

a. Cannabis Survey

With the new law creating a legal marijuana market in New Jersey, the League has worked with the Cannabis Advisory Group (CAG) to develop a survey for New Jersey mayors. The purpose of [this survey](#) is to identify the most pressing challenges and concerns facing their communities in preparation for the sale of both medical and adult-use cannabis and help inform and guide our work with the State Cannabis Regulatory Commission.

We thank CAG for their partnership on this initiative. The [survey is available online](#) should take no more than 10 minutes. The survey closes May 1.

Any questions can be directed to Executive Director Mike Cerra at mcerra@njlm.org.

b. Expanded Earned Income Tax Credit Program

On National Earned Income Tax Credit Awareness Day, the New Jersey Department of Treasury launched a statewide awareness campaign to encourage eligible taxpayers to take advantage of New Jersey's expanded program. Beginning with the 2020 tax filing New Jersey's Earned Income Tax Credit (NJEITC) is increasing to 40% of the federal credit an average of \$882 as well as lowering the minimum age eligibility for EITC from 25 to 21 years of age.

Treasury has created a wide range of [promotional materials that can be found online](#) for any partners looking to help raise awareness about the NJEITC. More information on

NJEITC including eligibility is available at the New Jersey Earned Income Tax Credit [website](#).



New Jersey State League of Municipalities

222 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
Phone: 609-695-3481 Web: www.njlm.org

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