



Weekly Report from Assemblyman Charles D. Fall
February 13, 2021

District 61 News

Questioning Mayor de Blasio During the Local Governments Joint Budget Hearing

As a member of the Cities Committee, I took the opportunity to address Mayor de Blasio on some pressing topics that impact the North Shore, including restoring youth sports and increasing vaccine support on Staten Island throughout the vaccination process. I am hopeful that we will have guidance from the administration and Health Department to safely resume indoor and outdoor sports in the coming weeks.

I also thanked the Mayor for heeding my call to restore the Commercial Leasing Assistance Program back in August which provides legal services for new and existing small business owners. As well as his continued support of the Cromwell Center, providing transparent timelines on the delivery of the St. George Fast Ferry, and for approving my proposal to rename Stapleton Park after the late Reverend Maggie Howard.

[Click here to watch the full conversation](#)



Encouraging and Supporting Low-Income Entrepreneurship on Staten Island

I was glad to join the Center for an Urban Future and the Richmond County Savings Foundation for a panel conversation to discuss the resources needed to better support first-time entrepreneurs from low-income communities on Staten Island. With unemployment rates on Staten Island at 9.4%, up from 3% a year ago, entrepreneurship and self-employment could become an increasingly important pathway for more New Yorkers to earn income and provide for their families during the road to economic recovery.

That is why I proudly secured the MTA Small Business Mentoring Program for an additional 10 years and continue to ensure more public works project opportunities went to Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprises and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises. An economy that is more accessible to all, adds value to not only our local economy but also wellbeing of the individuals and families supported by these successful businesses. While there is more to be done on the state level, our community benefits from organizations like the Minority Women in Business Association of Staten Island, Staten Island Business Outreach Center, and the SI Chamber of commerce that help first-time and low-income entrepreneurs succeed.

[Click here to watch the full conversation and hear about the experiences of Staten Island-based entrepreneurs from lower-income backgrounds and local entrepreneurship experts.](#)



Updates From Albany

Passing bill A.3022 to require the notification of new homeless shelters and public information session in the community where the proposed shelter is to be located.

- This is a chapter amendment to legislation passed last year (**A.7820-A**) relating to community involvement in the siting of new homeless shelters in New York City.
- This legislation would revise notification and posting requirements and would require public information sessions to be held in the community district in which a new shelter is to be located.
- In 2020, the Legislature passed A.7820-A (Fall), which became Chapter 383. This chapter amendment, which is effective on **December 31, 2021**, clarifies the original legislation by revising the notification process required of the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) prior to the siting of new shelters.
- DHS is required to post the process on the DHS website and provide notification to elected officials and the community board of the applicable district and to send yearly notice electronically and physically to federal, state, and local officials requesting potential shelter locations.
- Additionally, this chapter amendment would apply to shelters more broadly and remove the limitation to adult shelters.
- Finally, instead of a public hearing, this charter amendment would require public information sessions to be held in the district in which the shelter is to be located to allow the public to ask questions and provide comments.

The intent of this bill centers on accountability and transparency when community leaders, elected officials, and residents raise public safety, environmental, transportation, and education accessibility concerns. This

amendment is not to prevent homeless shelters from opening to assist women, children, or men with housing needs. In fact, this legislation's full intent is to make sure sites are safe and habitable for those in need and to set a pathway to implementing permanent housing for those individuals and families in need.

I co-sponsored legislation (A.970) which amends the private housing finance law, in relation to the membership of the New York state housing finance agency, the housing trust fund corporation, and the affordable housing corporation.

- The purpose of this bill is to expand the membership of the New York State Housing Finance Agency (HFA) to include one director appointed by each house of the legislature, and to align membership of the subsidiary Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC) and Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC).
- The HFA and its subsidiaries - the HTFC and AHC - are designed to increase access to affordable rental and homeownership opportunities for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers by issuing bonds and providing grants to help finance rehabilitation and construction of housing across the State.
- This bill would facilitate the expansion of membership of the HFA to include Senate and Assembly appointees and the alignment of membership of the HTFC and AHC with that of the HFA.

I decided to co-sponsor this legislation with my colleague, Assemblymember Cymbrowitz, Chair of the Assembly Housing Committee because it ensures legislative representation in the administration of these significant State resources and ensures efficient and accountable operations to bring about affordable housing to those underserved New Yorkers.

Critical Updates, New Policies, and Testing Locations to Protect You and Your Community

1. Staten Island is no longer in the micro-cluster zone, meaning the 4 person per table limit at bars and restaurants can return to the standard 10 person maximum per table once indoor dining reopened, [Friday, February 12](#) at 25% capacity. COVID-19 restrictions that were announced as part of the [phased reopening of the state remain in place](#).
2. **New Yorkers with comorbidities and underlying conditions can begin making appointments at state-run mass vaccination sites beginning February 14, with the first appointments scheduled for February 15.** Excess vaccine supply meant for hospital workers can be used to open eligibility for New Yorkers with comorbidities and underlying conditions. Local health departments will determine how, where and when to schedule appointments in their jurisdictions.
 - To show they have comorbidities or underlying conditions, New Yorkers must provide documentation as required by the facility where they are getting vaccinated which must be either a doctor's letter, medical information evidencing comorbidity, or signed certification.
3. **NYC Schools will welcome back blended learning students in grades 6-8 for in-person learning starting on [Thursday, February 25](#). Middle school staff will return on [Wednesday, February 24](#), to prepare for students' return.** Here are the protocols to keep schools open:
 - **Weekly Testing:** All schools will have 20% of students and staff randomly tested on a weekly basis.
 - **Student Consent:** All students are required to provide consent for testing by their first scheduled in-person learning day. Families can submit consent using NYCSA or a paper form.

- **Staff Consent:** All staff are required to provide consent by the first day they report to their school building. Staff can submit consent using the daily Health Questionnaire or using this paper form.
 - **Situation Room:** The Situation Room remains schools' main points of contact for any possible cases of COVID-19 in school buildings, and will continue to guide schools through any COVID-19 cases occurring in their buildings.
4. **Effective March 15, marriage receptions can be held under limited state guidelines.** Events must be approved by the local health department and there will be mandatory testing of all guests before an event. Capacity at weddings and receptions will be limited to no more than 150 people or no more than 50% of the venue's capacity, whichever is lower. All patrons must be tested prior to the event.
5. Eligible individuals can schedule vaccine appointments by contacting:
- The NYC Vaccine hotline at [877-829-4692](tel:877-829-4692) or [clicking here](#)
 - The NYS hotline at [888-364-3065](tel:888-364-3065) or [clicking here](#)
 - SOMOS, a community health provider at [833-766-6769](tel:833-766-6769)
 - **Eligible individuals will have to fill out a screening form and attest to being in an eligible category.** Anyone who is NOT eligible for vaccination, should not sign up for an appointment. **Click here to find updated vaccine eligibility lists, vaccine locations near you and to schedule a vaccine appointment when eligible.**
 - **Click here for a COVID-19 vaccine fact sheet.**
6. Veterans enrolled in the VA Care system can call and schedule an appointment to get the Covid-19 vaccine. Call [1-877-877-9267](tel:1-877-877-9267). If you are not yet eligible call [877-222-8387](tel:877-222-8387) to enroll.

Attention NYC Veterans

VA New York Harbor Healthcare System is working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other federal partners to provide COVID-19 vaccines to Veterans and VA health care personnel.


At this time, VA New York Harbor is offering the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine to **Veterans 65 years of age and older currently enrolled in VA Healthcare.**

The vaccine is being administered at the following locations by appointment only:

- Manhattan VA Medical Center
- Brooklyn VA Medical Center
- St. Albans Community Living Center
- Staten Island Community VA Clinic

Eligible Veterans must schedule an appointment by calling
1-877-877-9267

Veterans who are not yet enrolled in VA Healthcare may visit www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply/ or call [877-222-8387](tel:877-222-8387) for more information on how to apply.

VA |  U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

7. **Review the State guidelines for travelers arriving in New York State.**

- View the Test-and-Trace corps **COVID-19 Wait Times Dashboard** for estimated wait times for NYC Health + Hospitals COVID-19 testing locations. This wait time information is updated by site staff every two hours.
 - **Use the DOH map to find all State-run testing sites.**
 - **Click here for a full list of NYC Health + Hospitals walk-in testing sites available at no cost to you on the North Shore.**
 - Use the Phone-a-Clinician program with Health + Hospitals, by calling (844) NYC-4NYC. Call to connect with a medical provider free of charge seven days a week from 9 AM - 9 PM.
 - Individuals that are unable to safely isolate at home may be afforded a free temporary hotel room. **Click here to learn more** or call [\(844\) 692-4692](tel:(844)692-4692). **Please click here if you have any further questions.**

Crucial Resources to Support and Aid Your Everyday Needs

1. In observance of Presidents' Day, **Monday, February 15**, the New York City Subway will operate on a **Saturday** schedule with some planned service changes due to scheduled maintenance and repair work. Staten Island local and express buses will operate on a holiday schedule. **Customers are encouraged to visit www.MyMTAAlerts.com to receive email and text message service updates.**
2. The Staten Island Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) has released a 'COVID Supplies and Other Needs Assessment Survey' to assess how they can best assist communities and organizations on Staten Island respond to COVID-19. **Click here to complete their five-minute survey.**
3. Middle school and high school application deadlines have been extended to ensure families have enough time to thoughtfully complete applications.
 - **The High School Application deadline is extended from **Tuesday, 2/23** to **Monday, 3/1**.** LaGuardia registration deadline is extended for families from **Tuesday, 2/23** to **Monday, 3/1**. The audition submission and internal assessment deadline is extended from **Monday, 3/1** to **Monday 3/8**.
 - **The Middle School Application deadline is extended for families from **Tuesday, 2/9** to **Tuesday, 2/23**.**
4. **The Department of Education has also launched the 2021 Citywide and Community Education Council election application**, which is held every two years. **The application process for candidates runs through **February 28**, and voting will take place in **May**.** Education Councils help shape public education in NYC schools and make a difference for their school community! For this year's election, parents of all students are eligible to vote and parents must sign up for an NYC Schools Account to run for a seat or vote in the election. **Click here to learn more.**

5. Need free tax assistance? Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation offers a free tax preparation program that provides NYC residents with assistance filing their returns and maximizing their credits and refunds. Call NAMIC's hotline **Monday – Wednesday 11am – 7pm** and **Saturday and Sunday 9am – 5pm**. Contact Maria Guzman-Colon at taxhelp@nmic.org or [929-415-8745](tel:929-415-8745) with any questions.

NYC FREE TAX PREP

FREE TAX PREPARATION

January 23 - April 15, 2021

Please be prepared with:

- Photo ID
- New York State ID (preferred)
- Social Security cards
- Individual Taxpayer identification Number (ITIN) for all family members
- W-2s for all jobs you held during 2020
- Any other tax-related documents
- Your bank account number and routing number (if you want to direct deposit your refund)

*If you are filing jointly, your spouse must be present with photo ID.

When?
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 11AM - 7PM
Saturday, Sunday 9AM-5PM

How do I sign up?
Book an appointment online at www.nmic.org/taxes

Who is eligible?
People who earned less than \$68,000 in 2020

Additional questions?
Contact us at taxhelp@nmic.org or (929) 415-8745.

NMIC
45 Wadsworth Avenue
New York, NY 10033
www.nmic.org
212-822-8300

In collaboration with:
NYC Consumer and Worker Protection **FREE TAX PREP**

NYC FREE TAX PREP

PREPARACIÓN GRATUITA DE IMPUESTOS

ENERO 23 - Abril 15, 2021

Por favor estar preparado con:

- Identificación con foto
- Su perfil de identificación del estado de Nueva York
- Tarjetas de seguridad social
- Documento Individual Number de Identificación (ITIN) para todos los miembros de la familia
- W-2 para todos los trabajos que tuvo durante 2020
- Cualquier otro documento relacionado con impuestos
- Su número de cuenta del banco y número de ruta de depósito (si desea depositar su reembolso)

*Si estás filiendo conjuntamente, tu cónyuge debe estar presente con una identificación con foto.

¿Cuándo?
Lunes, Martes y Miércoles de 11 AM a 7 PM
Sábado, Domingo 9 AM - 5PM

¿Cómo me registro?
Haga una cita en línea en www.nmic.org/impuestos

¿Quién es elegible?
Personas que ganaron menos de \$ 68,000 en 2020.

¿Preguntas adicionales?
Contáctenos taxhelp@nmic.org o (929) 415-8745

NMIC
45 Wadsworth Avenue
New York, NY 10033
www.nmic.org
212-822-8300

In collaboration with:
NYC Consumer and Worker Protection **FREE TAX PREP**

6. Small Business Resources:

- **Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) provides loans to help businesses keep their workforce employed during the Coronavirus crisis.** The PPP application for all lenders is now open. There are limited funds, so applicants are advised to apply early! **Click here for more information and to find the right application for your business.**
 - In preparation for your application, gather your documentation. For a complete list of required documents and additional PPP information, **click here.**
 - **List of participating lenders:**
 - Lower East Side People's Credit Union- North Shore Branch, for PPP inquiries, email lending@lespfcu.org or apply directly online on their **website.**
 - TruFund, **click here for an application** or email Mark Brazier (English) at MBrazier@trufund.org or Marcos Reyes (Spanish) at mreyes@trufund.org.
- **Free Digital Ordering Program**, food businesses who join Ritual ONE through **March 31, 2021**, will have their commission, credit card processing fees, and subscription fee waived. **Click here to apply.**
- **Join the Staten Island Business Outreach Center for the next Winter Webinar Series, scheduled for February 25 at 3 PM.** **Interested participants can click here to register. RSVP is required.**



- **NYC Restaurant Week To Go' has been extended through February 28!** Help support a local restaurant by bringing home your favorite meal for take-out and delivery. Register your Mastercard to get deals. **[Click here to find out which local eateries near you are participating in restaurant week.](#)**

NYC
RESTAURANT
WEEK®

EXTENDED 'TIL FEB 28

Useful Events and Opportunities

1. The National Council of Negro Women, Staten Island Section, presents their **2021 High School Achievers Award** to students currently attending a high school in New York City or New Jersey who has demonstrated outstanding academic achievement and community involvement. **For more information, email ncnws@gmail.com or chaplain.ncnws@gmail.com.**

**National Council of Negro Women
Staten Island Section**

Proudly presents



**2021
HIGH SCHOOL
ACHIEVERS
AWARD**

Award Eligibility:

- * Currently attend a High School within NYC or the State of New Jersey
- * Outstanding Academic Achievement
- * Demonstrate Community Involvement
- * Obtain a letter of recommendation



For more information, email:
ncnwsig@gmail.com
or
chaplain.ncnwsig@gmail.com

2. Join the FDNY on **Tuesday, February 23** at 6pm for a fire safety education and alarm registration event. **Click here to join the zoom event.**

#GETALARMEDNYC



Working smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms save lives by quickly giving you and your loved ones warning that something is wrong.
Need help protecting your family?
The FDNY and Red Cross are offering you and your neighbors free smoke/CO alarm installations

To learn more participate on;
Fire Safety Education and
Alarm Installation Registration Event
Tuesday February 23, 2021
at 6pm
Staten Island Community Board 1
Join By Zoom
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86445462266>



3. **Join Staten Island University Hospital North Shore Community Summit on **Thursday, Feb. 25** from 2PM- 5PM at **First Central Baptist Church, 117 Wright Street**. Please RSVP to Frank Morisano for a zoom link at fmorisano@northwell.edu if you would prefer to join virtually via Zoom.**

You are cordially invited to attend in person for our first

Staten Island University Hospital North Shore Community Summit

Join us on this *journey* to better our community through relationships, healthcare, and initiatives


Thursday, Feb. 25
2:00-5:00pm

First Central Baptist Church
117 Wright Street
Staten Island, NY 10304

*Please RSVP to Frank Morisano at fmorisano@northwell.edu
If you would prefer to join virtually via Zoom, please notify us for link

 Staten Island University Hospital
Northwell Health

4. **NYC Comptroller Scott M. Stringer will be hosting his annual Trailblazers Program and Award Ceremony in Honor of African American History Month on **Wednesday, February 17, 2021** at 6 PM. This years' virtual event will celebrate educators from across the City who have gone above and beyond for their community during COVID-19. Trailblazers is a public event, **RSVP by clicking here or by calling (212) 669-4466.****


NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER & UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN
SCOTT M. STRINGER & JAMAAL BOWMAN
cordially invite you to

TRAILBLAZERS

PROGRAM & AWARD CEREMONY IN HONOR OF
AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

► Via Zoom & Facebook Live
Link will be provided when you RSVP

WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 17, 2021
6 PM - 7 PM

To RSVP, please visit
<https://trailblazers2021.eventbrite.com>
or call (212) 669-4466

5. **LiteracyINC hosts a Virtual Bee Program every **Friday until February 26**, at 12 PM. During this weekly series parents and caregivers will discuss fun and engaging ways to include early literacy in**

their daily routine. [Click here to register now and for a list of more events by LINC.](#)



Literacy Inc. (LINC) Presents

LINC Virtual Bee Program

Winter 2021 Series

Fridays, January 22 - February 26, 12:00pm

Virtual Bee is a six-part series for parents/caregivers and their babies and toddlers* Join us in this weekly series as we discuss fun and engaging ways for families to include early literacy in their daily routines. Each week will feature a different theme, music and movement, caregiver conversations, and a read-aloud!

Register now: www.lincnyc.org/events

*program designed for 0-3 year olds, all ages are welcome!

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Sincerely,



Charles D. Fall
Member of Assembly

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