

Mayor Domenic J. Sarno's City of Springfield COVID-19 Situational Update

Wednesday, May 26, 2021

Mayor Domenic J. Sarno, in the best interests of our residents and business community, continues his daily morning meetings with his cabinet heads as they work 24/7 to facilitate and coordinate with all of our local, state, federal, and public and private partners in response to the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic.

Below are the most recent updates as reported from each City Departments.

Mayor's Office

- Continues to coordinate the city's efforts with all stakeholders (state, federal, hospital and medical facilities, public and private partners, etc.) in response of services and relief and recovery measures
- Mayor Sarno announced today that, pending any unforeseen events and due to the City of Springfield and the Commonwealth's transitioning to the full phased reopening of all sectors and industries and the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions in response to COVID-19 positive cases continuing to trend downwards and vaccination rates increasing, this would be the last weekly COVID-19 situational update meeting
- City Hall and all municipal buildings will fully reopen effective June 1, 2021
- Governor Baker files legislation extending certain COVID-19 emergency measures
 - Temporary suspension of certain open meeting law requirements
 - Special permits for expanded outside dining
 - Bill protections for COVID-19 patients
- Mayor Sarno and city officials joined with Spirit of Springfield to announce the Star Spangled 4th of July Fireworks

Health

- City of Springfield's weekly COVID-19 cases:
 - Week of April 18, 2021: 504
 - Week of April 26, 2021: 425
 - Week of May 2, 2021: 265
 - Week of May 9, 2021: 154
 - Week of May 16, 2021: 156
- Total positive cases: 22,388
 - 246 deaths of Springfield residents related to COVID-19
 - 60 deaths reported from long term care facilities

- 186 residential deaths
 - Ethnic breakdown of deaths:
 - 99 White – 40.2%
 - 55 Black – 22.3%
 - 85 Hispanic – 34.5%
 - 7 Asian – 2.8%
- 81% of positive cases are under the age of 50 (as of May 24, 2021)
 - 51% are under the age of 30
 - 30% are between the age of 31-50
- Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) has listed Springfield as moderate-risk (Yellow) for COVID-19 cases
- Announced the continued need and importance of adhering to all public health, personal hygiene and social distancing procedures

Eco Dev

- Continues to review costs associated with COVID-19 response for relief and recovery reimbursements.
- Tracking local, state and national unemployment trends and numbers
 - City of Springfield unemployment rate (2020)
 - 4.8% - March
 - 21.1% - April
 - 21% - May
 - 21.6% - June
 - 16.3% - July
 - 15.3% - August
 - 15.2% - September
 - 13.6% - October
 - 12.8% - November
 - 12.6% - December
 - 12.3% - January (2021)
 - 12.2% - February (2021)
 - 11.2% - March (2021)
 - Commonwealth of Massachusetts unemployment rate (2020)
 - 3.1% - March
 - 16.3% - April
 - 15.4% - May
 - 14.8% - June
 - 10.1% - July
 - 9.1% - August
 - 8.9% - September
 - 8.1% - October
 - 7.7% - November
 - 7.3% - December
 - 7.8% - January (2021)
 - 7% - February (2021)
 - 6.8% - March (2021)
 - National unemployment rate (2020)
 - 4.4% - March
 - 14.8% - April

- 13.3% - May
- 11.1% - June
- 10.2% - July
- 8.4% - August
- 7.8% - September
- 6.9% - October
- 6.7% - November
- 6.7% - December
- 6.3% - January (2021)
- 6.2% - February (2021)
- 6% - March (2021)
- 6.1% - April (2021)
- Continues to review and work on economic development projects across the city.
- Continuing to review funding program for workforce training development
- Reports that revenue from small businesses is down 47%
- Continues to monitor federal relief and stimulus funding measures
- Small Business Administration opens second draw for Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) for qualifying small businesses
- Wells Fargo selects Common Capital to help provide much needed relief for small business
 - \$500,000 to help Western Massachusetts Small Businesses impacted by COVID-19
- Over 19,000 low/moderate jobs lost since pandemic began

Finance

- Continues to monitor all federal and state relief and recovery funding and reimbursement mechanisms
- Continues to review costs associated with COVID-19 response for relief and recovery reimbursements
- Continues to monitor lost revenue and deficit spending – city
 - Over \$9.6 million in lost revenue due to COVID-19
 - \$4.8 million in lost revenue FY21
 - \$40.7 million in total deficit spending related to COVID-19 response
 - \$31.4 million of deficit spending has been eligible for COVID-19 related grants and reimbursement aspects
 - \$9.3 million of deficit spending still being reviewed for relief and reimbursement aspects from state and federal funding sources
- Continues proactive meetings with Josh Norman of GP Strategies to track, identify, and implement relief and recovery reimbursement aspects.
- Continuing to review and monitor all city capital projects to keep them on track to the best of our ability and to extend deadlines if needed
 - 31 Elm St / Court Square Project
 - Civic Center Parking Garage
 - Police HQ
 - Pynchon Plaza
 - Watershops Dam/Pond
 - Ruth Elizabeth Park
- Submitted the FY22 City Budget for City Council to review and approve

Schools

- To date, Sodexo has served 7,598,135 meals to Springfield Public Schools students since the program began on March 12th (meals included breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks)
 - 9 school sites (feeding sites reduced from 18 sites due to return to in-person learning)
 - Reviewing plans to transition the closure of meal sites as students return to in-person learning
- Over 20,000 laptops have been distributed to students for remote learning
 - 10,000 laptops were given out over the summer, including to our homeless students
 - 7,000 laptops were already distributed to our students before the pandemic
- iPads being distributed to Pre-K students
- Plans being reviewed for graduation ceremony to be held outside June 7 – 17, 2021
- School Committee adopts \$501 million school budget

Law/HR/Labor

- Continues to review and monitor all federal and state legislation pertaining to COVID-19

Veterans

- The VA Central Western Mass & VA Connecticut Healthcare Systems are working together to offer COVID-19 vaccinations to VA Enrolled Veterans of all ages
- Veterans Department seeking volunteers for flagging of cemeteries for Memorial Day

Misc.

Food Bank

- Continue Oasis Food Pantry operations on Friday's 10-2pm through John Foley, Sodexo, School Department, Mayor's Office, DPW, SPD and Food Bank of Western Mass – serving families in need with food and milk distribution at Eastfield Mall (by former Sears Building)