

# **BROOME COUNTY COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN**

---

**FINAL - June 2020**

**Broome County Department of Planning and  
Economic Development**



## Contents

Post-Disaster Recovery Plan .....	3
Planning Process.....	3
Current Situation.....	4
Projected Economic Impacts .....	6
Recovery Plan .....	9
Ongoing Recovery.....	14
Appendix - Public Hearing Documents .....	15

## Post-Disaster Recovery Plan

On March 7th, 2020 Governor Cuomo issued an Executive Order declaring a State of Emergency for New York State in response to the threat of COVID-19 (coronavirus). Locally, Broome County Executive Jason Garnar declared a State of Emergency on March 14, 2020. These were accompanied by several orders at the state and county level directing the response of COVID-19.

At the federal level, President Trump declared a nationwide emergency on March 13<sup>th</sup> pursuant to Sec. 501(b) of Stafford Act for COVID-19 and on March 20<sup>th</sup> the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) issued notice of the Presidential declaration of a major disaster for the State of New York (FEMA-4480-DR). This declaration made federal emergency aid available to the state of New York to supplement recovery efforts in the areas affected by the COVID-19 pandemic beginning on January 20, 2020, and continuing.

According to Section 28-B of NYS Executive Law, when a state disaster emergency has been declared, any county, city, town or village included in such disaster area shall prepare a local recovery plan. This plan has been prepared in accordance with this law.

A post-disaster recovery plan is a tool that the local municipality can use to identify the community needs and issues resulting from a disaster event and prioritize actions for mitigating the impacts on residents, businesses, agencies and organizations. This plan will help the County to guide our actions as we transition from the response phase to recovery due this widespread and significantly impactful pandemic. We also recognize that the changing nature and uncertainty surrounding the event will necessitate flexibility and coordination surrounding response and recovery actions into the near future and beyond.

## Planning Process

### COVID-19 RECOVERY TASK FORCE

This Plan has been developed by the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development with the participation of members of the Broome County COVID-19 Recovery Task Force. This group is made up of community stakeholders and government agencies that play a role in recovery activities following a disaster. Individuals were identified that could represent and communicate the needs of their agency/organization, clients and partner agencies. Members of the Task Force include representatives from the following:

- Broome County Executive Office
- Broome County Legislature
- BC Office of Emergency Services
- Broome-Tioga Workforce
- The Agency/BC Leadership Alliance

- Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome
- BC Department of Social Services
- United Health Services
- Legal Aid Society
- YWCA
- BOCES
- Binghamton University
- SUNY Broome
- BC Community Organizations Active in Disaster
- BC Planning
- Local Municipalities
- Local Fire District/EMC
- NAACP

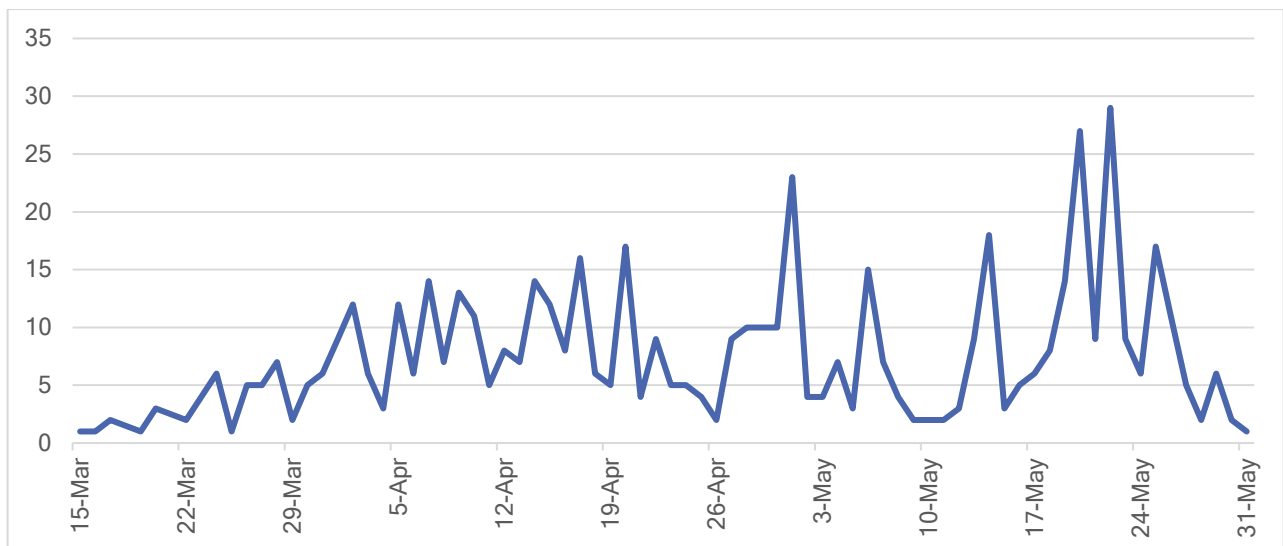
## PUBLIC INPUT

During the planning process information and documents related to the recovery plan were posted on the Broome County website at [www.gobroomecounty.com/planning/recovery](http://www.gobroomecounty.com/planning/recovery). A public hearing was held on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Due to restrictions resulting from the disaster, the hearing could not be held in person and therefore was held via video conferencing (Zoom) and livestreamed via social media (Facebook). A public notice was distributed via a published legal notice in the Press and Sun Bulletin, as well as a media release sent to various local news outlets. A recording of the hearing and transcripts are available and posted on the website.

## Current Situation

As of the date of preparation of this plan (6/3/20), there have been a total of 577 positive cases of COVID-19 in Broome County with 123 currently active. There have been 45 deaths and 409 individuals have recovered. Approximately 12,500 tests have come back negative. New daily cases through the end of May are shown in the chart below.

### BROOME COUNTY NEW DAILY COVID-19 CASES



The Broome County Health Department previously identified the following locations as COVID-19 hot spots during the event:

- Broome County Correctional Facility
- Susquehanna Nursing and Rehabilitation Facility
- United Methodist Homes - Hilltop Campus
- Vestal Park Rehabilitation and Nursing Center
- Willow Point Nursing Rehabilitation and Nursing Center
- Bridgewater Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing

As per Executive Orders issued by the Governor, the economy for New York was ‘paused’ and residents are required to ‘socially distance’. The Broome County Executive has issued Executive Orders to establish day care for essential employees and first responders, banning unnecessary travel, closing County buildings, restricting public gatherings and more. Many towns in Broome County have issued similar orders. The County has issued protective masks to County Employees and has distributed masks to the general public at county parks and through the free lunch program.

Beginning on May 15<sup>th</sup>, Broome County, as part of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council was determined by New York State to meet the designated criteria to begin a phased reopening of the economy. The Regional Control Room is charged with monitoring the established metrics and alerting the State in the event that they no longer meet the established requirements. These include hospitalization rate, death rate, number of new hospitalizations, hospital bed capacity, ICU bed capacity, testing and contact tracing.

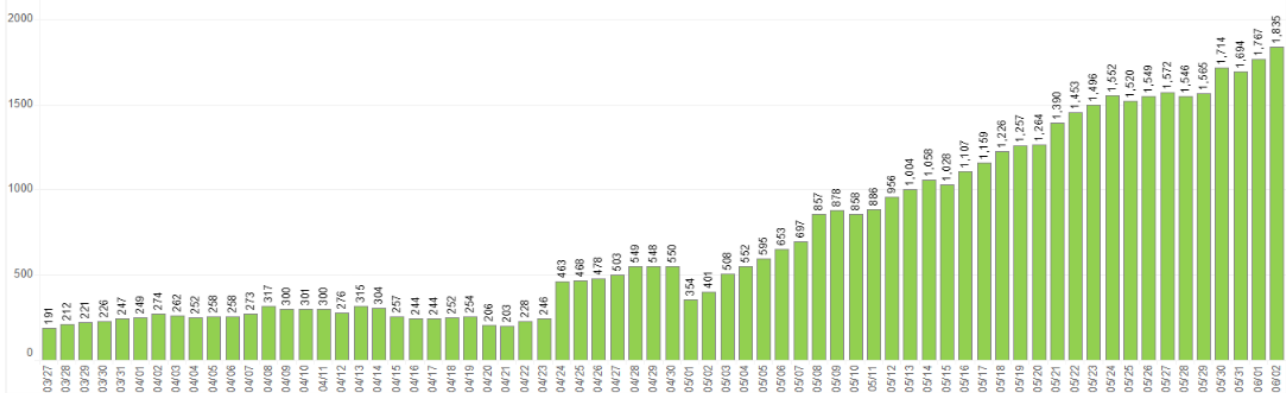
### COVID-19 Early Warning Monitoring System Dashboard - Southern Tier

Report as of: June 2, 2020

Testing/Tracing Targets		New Infections		Severity of Infection	Hospital Capacity	
Maintain 30 per 1,000 Diagnostic Tests	Maintain Required Case and Contact Tracing Capacity	% Positive Tests per Day (7-Day Rolling Avg)	New Cases per 100K (7-Day Rolling Avg)	Gross New Hospitalizations per 100k (7-Day Rolling Avg)	Share of Total Hospital Beds % Available (7-Day Rolling Avg)	Share of ICU Beds % Available (7-Day Rolling Avg)
1,835 / 633	114	0.7%	2.17	0.32	46%	44%
<a href="#">Show Trend</a>		<a href="#">Show Trend</a>	<a href="#">Show Trend</a>	<a href="#">Show Trend</a>	<a href="#">Show Trend</a>	<a href="#">Show Trend</a>

- Select a Region
- Capital Region
  - Central New York
  - Finger Lakes
  - Long Island
  - Mid-Hudson
  - Mohawk Valley
  - New York City
  - North Country
  - Southern Tier
  - Western New York

Maintain 30 per 1,000 Diagnostic Tests



This initial reopening allowed for Phase 1 businesses to reopen with an affirmed reopening plan to demonstrate that they would implement social distancing and other protocols to keep their workforce and patrons safe for the duration of the pandemic event. Businesses in this phase included non-essential construction, manufacturing, agriculture and forestry. Two weeks later, on May 31<sup>st</sup>, the region met criteria to proceed with the Phase 2 reopening, including offices, real estate, vehicle sales, hair salons, outdoor food services, and some retail. The region is currently in Phase 2 and anticipates moving to the final two phases (Phases 3 and 4) in the coming weeks and months.

The regional dashboard for the Southern Tier region provides current data to show where the region stands from the standpoint of meeting the reopening metrics. The image on the previous page shows the region's status as of the date of this report.

## Projected Economic Impacts

While the phased reopening of the economy is underway, the economic impacts of the extended shut-down are anticipated to have long-lasting impacts on the economy from the local level to the global economy. While it is difficult to ameliorate the impacts of the event at the local level due to the wide-spread nature of the event, understanding the anticipated local impacts is critical to implementing the appropriate actions needed to support local businesses, workers, and the public at large through this time.

The New York State Division of Budget contracted with Boston Consulting Group to prepare the [NY COVID-19 Preliminary Economic Impact Assessment](#) on the New York State economy and government revenues. For the Broome County plan, the key takeaways are as follows:

- The total impact on the NY economy will be \$243B over the course of the full recovery to pre-Covid economic levels which is -14% of NY's 2019 GDP
- The economy will recover to the Pre-Covid level in Q1 of 2023, but will still be 7% below where they would have been without the pandemic impact.
- The degree of impact and recovery paths will vary by industry:

Accommodation and Food Service: Recovery path is likely slower than other sectors due to social distancing

Construction: Recovery likely slower than average industry

Finance and Insurance: Impact has been milder, but expect an accelerated shift to digital channels could drive downward pressure on total employment

Healthcare (Ambulatory Services): Likely return of 'pent-up' demand, although social distancing protocols & telehealth shift may impact models and profits

Retail: Shift to online channels may persist and drive store closures. Expect a quick, partial recovery immediately after end of lockdown followed by slower path due to social distancing

Transportation: Likely slower recovery as consumers shift to teleconference vs. in-person and avoiding crowded planes (and buses)

Recovery funding made available so far helps mitigate certain impacts but leaves significant gaps.

- Most funding is aimed at avoiding damage vs. recovering from damage to date. In some cases, Federal funding is being allocated based on existing formulas and not distributed based on COVID-19 impact/economic need
- Economic impacts translate into pressures on government revenue - NY forecasts that tax revenue could decline by \$13.3B in State Fiscal Year 2021.
- Statewide unemployment insurance claims have increased 2,104% and credit card sales have dropped 20%. Removing NYC from these numbers, unemployment claims grew even faster (2,239%) while credit card sales dropped less (14%) in the rest of the State.
- Manufacturing activity dropped to levels not seen since 2000
- COVID-19 is accelerating trends that predate the event such as fewer brick-and-mortar retail branches
- The single hardest hit sector is Arts, Entertainment and Recreation with a 71% drop in hours worked
- Historically, many outbreaks such as Spanish Flu and Mers experienced multiple waves. Risks remain until a vaccine is in hand.

Sienna College conducted a survey of business leaders across upstate. The key findings of their survey are as follows:

1. Majority of Upstate CEOs Say Return to Pre-Virus Economy Will Take Longer than 6 Months
2. Nearly 90% Downgrading 2020 Revenue & Profit Expectations
3. 40% Have Laid off Workers
4. 58% Cutting Back on Buying Equipment
5. 89% Say They Will be in Business a Year from Today



The Agency and the Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce have coordinated the local economic development response and recovery efforts for this event. They have documented the following local impacts:

Local Tourism Impacts:

- 71% of tourism businesses are closed
- 100% of tourism related businesses have seen negative impacts: 34% report 'softening', 41% have had cancellations, and 25% have had postponements.
- 50% of Restaurants, Bars, Hotels/Motels and other Accommodations are closed
- 1/3 of Retail is closed
- 100% of Attractions, Cultural Organizations, and Entertainment (Theaters, Concert Venues, and Performing Arts) are closed
- Hotel/Motel Occupancy is 22% of its 2019 rate
- The estimated economic impact of the losses across this sector is \$8.3M to the local economy

The Agency surveyed local business leaders regarding their needs to recover from this event. Local business expressed the following needs (note that this survey was conducted early in the disaster and needs may be since shifted):

- Business Promotion, 40%
- Financial Assistance, 22%
- Clear Consistent Information, 16%
- Employee Resources 7%
- COVID-19 Supplies 7%

Broome County Planning conducted a survey of stakeholders and service providers in the following areas: Healthcare, Mental Health, Housing and Homeless Services, Education, Legal Aid, Local Government, Food Systems, Economic Development and Workforce Training. The top expected impacts of these groups is as follows:

How much of an issue are the following impacts for you, and/or your clients, right now?	Major Issue Right Now	Expected to Worsen Over Next 60 Days
Loss of revenue	67%	67%
Workforce/Client Anxiety	47%	47%
Inability to pay fixed costs	40%	47%

Stakeholder comments on the Planning Department survey focused on the following:



- Concern about keeping workers and clients safe.
- We need to know that our workforce is healthy and not carriers of COVID in order to safely deliver services
- Residents are seeing increased hostility from landlords during eviction moratorium.
- Mandates of how to do recovery could cause impacts. Backed up work could cause overtime expenses in recovery
- Expect to see increased unemployment, rent and mortgage arrears, domestic violence and custody visitation issues
- We need to move thoughtfully to prevent a relapse.
- If the virus comes back, it will be even more devastating than it is now.
- Concerned that we move too quickly back to 'normal'.

## Recovery Plan

Based on these impacts and needs, two guiding principles have been established moving into recovery phase:

The focus must remain on protecting the public health. Any recovery which loses sight of this will fail to maintain the public trust and may be more vulnerable to future outbreaks.

We should temper expectations for a quick recovery. The economic impacts from this event are deep and widespread. They extend across all sectors and are international in scope. Impacts like this will be long lasting. Any recovery will take an extended period of time.

The following sections outline the items identified as priorities for our long-term recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The intent is to develop effective, resilient strategies that will carry our community through this difficult time and help mitigate impacts associated with uncertainty into the future.

### 1. PROVIDE RELIABLE AND COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION

- Establish one source for information.
- Provide clear and consistent messaging across all platforms.
- Promote 2-1-1 as a source of information for residents.
- Utilize all County information avenues for messaging. This includes:

*Arena and Forum Electronic Message Boards*

*Bus Inserts*

*Social Media Accounts*

*Email Signatures*

*Email Lists*

### *Newsletters*

- Recognize that the digital divide has different impacts based on the geography (rural vs. urban), age (young vs. elderly) and class (poor vs. affluent) of residents. Any communication plan needs to be aware of these disparities in access and be designed to reach all residents. For example, the “poorest of the poor have very limited data plans” and therefore are unlikely to participate in a Facebook live event.
- Research and deploy alternate civic engagement methods to reach all residents.
- Physical distancing will make it impossible to host events and public meetings. We need to find ways to reach residents through multiple avenues. This can include traditional media, physical mailings, Twitter, and Facebook.
- Utilize partnerships with community, ethnic, and faith-based groups that may already have means of connecting with hard to reach groups.
- Be prepared to redirect misplaced blame at the perceived causes of COVID-19 or its transference. If possible, try to discern underlying causes for these feelings and direct questions in a more productive direction.
- Communicate in a regular, predictable manner. One example is weekly briefings that are at a consistent date and time and live streamed for residents.
- Collect and highlight positive stories of community coming together. For example, the YWCA getting supplies from Lowes and Raymond to add COVID-19 protection measures at their downtown Binghamton facility.
- Ensure that all communications are accessible to all residents. This includes close captioning and providing transcripts.
- Adopt a ‘No Wrong Door’ policy for residents visiting public facilities. To achieve this, ensure that highly traveled public places such as the Department of Social Services and Broome-Tioga Workforce are staffed and equipped with enough information and access to resources to help visitors to the fullest extent practical.

## **2. ASSIST WITH PROVISION OF NECESSARY SUPPLIES**

- Work with local governments to assist with the provision of necessary supplies.
- Coordinate donations from the private sector to ensure they reach their intended target.
- Provide access to PPE to seniors and disadvantaged residents.

## **3. AID IN IMPLEMENTATION OF BEST PRACTICES FOR SAFE REOPENING/OPERATING**

- Continue to share information with stakeholders regarding reopening planning and best practices, and to emphasize continued vigilance. Stakeholders include:

*Local Businesses*  
*Local Government*  
*Non-profits*  
*Schools*  
*Daycare Centers*  
*Residents*

- Assist with pooled purchases and consortiums.
- Ensure that County operations are consistently following all COVID-19 recommendations - lead by example.
- Assist local municipalities with development of planning and zoning policies that reduce barriers to businesses looking to implement creative solutions for meeting reopening guidelines such as outdoor dining, outdoor pop up shops, and drive-in theaters. Strategies may include assessing and modifying zoning codes to remove barriers to implementation, expediting reviews, providing guidance for state level policies and policy changes as they evolve, and reduced fees.

#### **4. PROTECT THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM AS THE FOUNDATION FOR A SUCCESSFUL RECOVERY**

- Establish protocols for workplace health practices that begin with employee self-screening and includes prioritized testing to reduce the incidence of transmission.
- Support efforts for telehealth and virtual care. This includes improving broadband access in rural areas.
- Be alert to the impacts of addressing the backlog of health care issues that have accumulated while patients deferred care.
- Advocate for financial support of healthcare providers who are providing care to unemployed/uninsured residents.
- Communicate the importance of continuing to seek medical attention for non-COVID-19 related issues.

#### **5. ENSURE THAT DAY CARE PROVIDERS CAN CONTINUE TO OPERATE**

- Share and promote COVID-19 standards for daycare operations to reassure families that all necessary precautions are in place and that their children are safe. As these families return to the workforce, their children will need childcare and the families will need peace of mind.
- Recognize the importance of summer camps such as Summer Fun, Discovery Center, JCC, YMCA and others as a necessary part of daycare.
- Promote increased income standards of DSS assistance for daycare for families that need assistance.

- Recognize that with fewer daycare centers operating, there are fewer safe places for children to report abuse and neglect.
- Work to address real and perceived dangers of children in day care.
- Recognize that the solution to limited daycare will be multi-faceted. Partial solutions include allowing telework and providing staff with an opportunity to work staggered hours.

## **6. RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

- Promote the *Broome Includes* initiative to ensure access to services for residents in need.
- Take mental health impacts seriously. Encourage businesses, schools, and non-profits to educate all staff members to recognize the impacts of stress on employees, students, and clients. Utilize training programs like Mental Health First Aid to identify individuals in crisis and direct them towards services.
- Be alert to the potential for increased mental health impacts 6 to 8 weeks after reopening. The initial 'sigh of relief' may be greeted by eventual impacts when the full scope of this recovery process sinks into residents.
- Direct residents to social activities that maintain adequate social distancing.
- Maintain resources for substance abuse and domestic violence programming.

## **7. PROTECT OUR MOST VULNERABLE RESIDENTS FROM THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19**

- Ensure that workers do not have to choose between a job and exposure to COVID-19.
- Ensure that public transit continues to meet the needs of and maximizes safety of workers dependent on this resource.
- Take special care to provide socialization programming to seniors who already face issues related to isolation.
- Promote public awareness that diligent efforts to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the state central registry are especially critical during this time. During the pandemic, many children are not in their normal safe spaces, namely school and daycare, thus their entry to the protective system is impacted. Children may be isolated in their home where abuse, neglect, substance abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence and other issues are now going undetected and unreported.

## **8. DOCUMENT IMPACT COSTS ACROSS ALL SECTORS**

- Document the financial costs associated with COVID-19. Examples include PPE, overtime expenses, IT infrastructure related to remote working.

- Document intangible impacts such as the health impacts of increased stress, impacts to education related to distance learning, etc.

## **9. ADVOCATE FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR LOCAL AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS**

- This event has had devastating impacts to the resources of local and county governments. Revenues from Sales Tax and Hotel/Motel Occupancy Taxes will be severely reduced at a time of increased demand for services. Local and County Governments need relief in the following forms:
  - Mandate Relief
  - Increased Financial Support
- Advocate for changes to PPP and other programs to assist businesses with filling open positions.

## **10. COORDINATE COVID-19 RECOVERY EFFORTS WITH LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND STATE PARTNERS**

- Establish a framework for continued coordination of the COVID recovery task force.
- Coordinate regional efforts through the Regional Control Room and other regional entities.

## **11. WORK TO ENSURE AN ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

- Identify businesses that will have staffing shortages as a result of COVID-19 and work to fill those gaps.
- Provide a uniform logo to self-certifying businesses and organizations to help restore consumer confidence in visiting local businesses.
- Provide business mentoring through SCORE and SBDC to struggling businesses.
- Assist businesses with setting up e-commerce operations to diversify their income streams.
- Closely coordinate with the Agency to ensure that efforts are not duplicative and that gaps do not appear in our response.

## **12. HOUSING AND HOUSING INSECURITY**

- Monitor homelessness, evictions, and foreclosures.
- Work to ensure access to credit to finance home buying.
- Promote programs for affordable housing and home improvement such as rental assistance, CDBG, and various home rehabilitation programs.
- Work to ensure compliance with Spiegel Law/educate people about their housing rights.

- Develop Landlord/Tenant Resource Pages on BC website.
- Streamline/coordinate housing referral processes.

### 13. MAINTAIN EFFORTS OVER THE FULL RECOVERY PERIOD AND BEYOND

- Encourage business continuity planning so that the impacts of future shutdowns will be lessened.
- Arrange to provide new and replacement PPE over the full timeline of this event.
- Explore options to improve broadband in rural and underserved areas. Access is essential for remote work, telemedicine, and distance learning.
- Assist local municipalities in implementing creative long-term solutions that will enhance flexibility of local regulations to accommodate present and future uncertainty through this pandemic event and beyond. These may include conversion of active outdoor spaces like minor streets and parking lots for pedestrian/patron use, identifying opportunities for permanent modifications to local regulations when temporary practices have proven successful, and others.

### 14. PREPARE FOR SECOND WAVE/PARTIAL OR FULL SHUTDOWN

- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of our COVID response and address service gaps for any future waves.
- Identify opportunities to improve online provision of services for County services and assist local municipalities with provision of services through shared services (online bill pay, online form submission).
- Making sure our testing and contact tracing are adequate.

## Ongoing Recovery

While New York State and the Southern Tier continue to proceed with the phased reopening of the region's businesses, models indicate that the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic will persist for the foreseeable future. We must continually assess changing conditions and needs and adjust appropriately. Coordination and collaboration in recognition of overlapping response and recovery efforts will be essential for continued mitigation of the negative community impacts that have been identified for this event.

# Appendix A – Public Hearing Documents

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

PRESENTATION - BROOME COUNTY COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN

PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT





# State of New York County of Broome Government Offices

---

Department of Planning and Economic Development  
Jason T. Garnar, County Executive · Beth Lucas, Director

## LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of Public Hearing  
Broome County COVID-19 Recovery Plan

Broome County will hold a public hearing on June 10, 2020 at 5:00 pm via Zoom video conference for the purpose of hearing public comments on Broome County's COVID-19 Post-Disaster Recovery Plan.

A post-disaster recovery plan identifies community-specific issues related to long-term post-disaster recovery and to develop strategies to address those issues. The Plan was developed in accordance with Article 2-B of New York State Executive Law that outlines the requirements for State and local disaster plans. The hearing will provide an overview of the items identified as priorities for long-term recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic event. The hearing is being conducted pursuant to Section 28-a of Article 2-B of NYS Executive Law.

The draft plan and information on how to join the meeting can be found at <http://gobroomecounty.com/planning/recovery>.

Written comments may also be submitted to Beth Lucas via email at [beth.lucas@broomecounty.us](mailto:beth.lucas@broomecounty.us) or by mail to Planning Department, PO Box 1766, Binghamton, NY 13902 until June 12th.

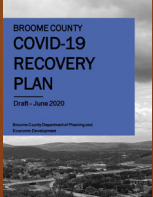
# Public Hearing

## Broome County COVID-19 Recovery Plan

June 10, 2020

1

### Agenda



1. Overview of Plan
2. Opportunity for Public Comment

2

### Recovery Planning Process

March 13, 2020 - Nationwide emergency for COVID-19 declared by President Trump


March 20, 2020 FEMA issued major disaster declaration for New York State

Section 28 of NYS Executive Law - A local municipality shall prepare a local recovery plan when a state disaster emergency has been declared.

3

### Post-Disaster Recovery Plan

- Tool that the local municipality can use to identify community needs and issues resulting from a disaster.
- Prioritize actions for mitigating impacts.
- Help the County to guide actions in transition from response into recovery.



- Preparedness:**
  - Emergency Response Plans
  - Training and Exercises
  - Community Outreach
- Response:**
  - Life Saving
  - Incident Stabilization
  - Property Preservation
  - Evacuation & Mass Care
- Recovery:**
  - Economic Recovery
  - Debris Management
  - Housing
  - Health/Social Services
- Mitigation:**
  - Public Education
  - Hazard Assessments
  - Infrastructure Improvements

4

### New Daily COVID-19 Cases



5

### COVID-19 Recovery Task Force

- Broome County Executive Office
- Broome County Legislature
- BC Office of Emergency Services
- Broome-Tioga Workforce
- The Agency/BC Leadership Alliance
- Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome
- BC Department of Social Services
- United Health Services
- Legal Aid Society
- YWCA
- BOCES
- Binghamton University
- SUNY Broome
- BC Community Organizations Active in Disaster
- BC Planning
- Local Municipalities
- Local Fire District/EMC
- NAACP

6

**Recovery Plan Principles**

-  The focus needs to remain on protecting the public health.
-  We should temper expectations for a quick recovery.

7

**1. Provide Reliable and Comprehensive Information**

-  Establish one source for information
-  Provide clear and consistent messaging across all platforms
-  Promote 2-1-1 as a source of information for residents
-  Highlight positive stories of community coming together




8

**2. Assist with Provision of Necessary Supplies**

-  Local Government Procurement Assistance
-  Coordinate Donations
-  Provide Access to PPE to Seniors and Disadvantaged Residents





9

**3. Aid In Implementation of Best Practices for Safe Operating**

-  Assist stakeholders:
  - Local Businesses
  - Local Government
  - Non-profits
  - Schools
  - Daycare Centers
-  Assist with pooled purchases and consortiums
-  Ensure that County operations are consistently following all recommendations - lead by example




10

**4. Protect the Healthcare System as the Foundation for a Successful Recovery**

-  Establish protocols for workplace health practices.
-  Support efforts for telehealth and virtual care.
-  Advocate for financial support of healthcare providers who are providing care to unemployed/uninsured residents.
-  Communicate the importance of continuing to seek medical attention for non-COVID-19 related issues.

11

**5. Ensure that Childcare Providers Can Continue to Operate**

-  Establish and promote COVID-19 protocols for childcare operations for families' piece of mind as they return to work.
-  Recognize the importance of summer camps as a necessary part of childcare
-  Promote increased income standards for childcare assistance.

12

**6. Recognize the Importance of Mental Health Services**

- Take mental health impacts seriously. Utilize training programs like Mental Health First Aid to identify individuals in crisis and direct them towards services.
- Be alert to the potential for mental health impacts occurring later in recovery process.
- Direct residents to social activities that maintain adequate social distancing
- Maintain resources for substance abuse and domestic violence programming

13

**7. Protect Our Most Vulnerable Residents from the Impacts of COVID-19**

- Ensure that workers do not have to choose between a job and exposure to COVID-19.
- Ensure that public transit continues to meet the needs of and maximizes safety of workers dependent on this resource.
- Take special care to provide socialization programming to seniors who already face issues related to isolation.
- Raise awareness that diligent efforts to report suspected child abuse and neglect are especially critical during this time, without traditional safe spaces.

14

**8. Document impact costs across all sectors**

- Document the financial costs associated with COVID-19. Examples include PPE, overtime expenses, IT infrastructure related to remote working.
- Document intangible impacts such as the health impacts of increased stress, impacts to education related to distance learning, etc.

15

**9. Advocate for Financial Support for Local and County Governments**

- Advocate for Mandate Relief and Direct Financial Support
- Advocate for assistance programs.

16

**10. Coordinate COVID-19 Recovery Efforts with Local, Regional, and State Partners**

- Establish a framework for continued coordination of the COVID recovery task force
- Coordinate efforts with and through the Regional Control Room.

17

**11. Work to Ensure an Economic Recovery**

- Identify businesses that will have staffing shortages as a result of COVID-19 and work to fill those gaps
- Provide logo to affirmed businesses and organizations
- Provide business mentoring
- Assist with setting up e-commerce operations and other technological tools for local businesses.

18

### 12. Housing and Housing Insecurity

- Monitor homelessness, evictions, and foreclosures
- Work to ensure access to credit to finance home buying
- Promote programs for affordable housing and home improvement such as rental assistance, CDBG, and various home rehabilitation programs
- Develop Landlord/Tenant Resources

19

### 13. Maintain Efforts Over the Full Recovery Period and Beyond

- Encourage business continuity planning
- Arrange to provide new and replacement PPE over the full timeline of this event.
- Explore options to improve broadband in rural and underserved areas.

20

### 14. Prepare for Second Wave/Partial or Full Shutdown

- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of our COVID response and address service gaps for any future waves.
- Work to address distance learning and remote working issues.
- Identify opportunities to improve online services
- Making sure our testing and contact tracing continue to be adequate.

21

### Ongoing Recovery

While we proceed with the phased reopening of Southern Tier businesses, the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic will persist into the foreseeable future.

Ongoing recovery will require:

- Continued assessment of changing conditions and needs
- Flexibility in recovery approach to deal with uncertainty
- Coordination and collaboration in recognition of overlapping response and recovery efforts

22

## Public Comment

- List your name (as listed on zoom for organizational purposes) in the zoom chat feature.
- Admin will unmute you when your turn to speak comes up.
- Please state your name for the record. Individuals will have 3 minutes to make their comments.
- You may also submit written comments via email or mail:
  - Email: [beth.lucas@broomecounty.us](mailto:beth.lucas@broomecounty.us)
  - Mail: Broome County Planning  
PO Box 1766  
Binghamton, NY 13902

23

Transcript of the Broome County Covid-19 Recovery Plan  
June 10, 2020 at 5:30pm

Beth Lucas: I'm just going to mute everyone if you could all just stay muted until we get to the public comment portion of the presentation. That'd be much appreciated.

Beth Lucas: Thank you all for attending today. This is the public hearing for the Broome county COVID-19 recovery plan.

Beth Lucas: My name is Beth Lucas, I'm from the Broome County Department of Planning and economic development.

Beth Lucas: We've developed this plan in partnership with other county departments and partner agencies on the line today we have Mike Ponticiello who is the director of the Broome County Office of Emergency Services, as well as the Broome County Executive Jason Garnar. So welcome to them today.

Beth Lucas: So let's get into an overview of the plan. This meeting is going to consist of just a quick overview of the contents of the plan and how we are planning to deal with COVID Recovery in Broome County and it's going to be followed by an opportunity for public comment. For anybody that wishes to comment during that portion, you'll need to enter your name into the chat box of Zoom.

Beth Lucas: We apologize in advance for any technical issues that may arise during this meeting. Unfortunately, everybody's adjusting during the covid 19 changes that that have occurred

Beth Lucas: We hope that we can get to all of you through the public comment period. However, if you do want to make comment, and there are some technical glitches or you can't access zoom you can submit your comments via writing

Beth Lucas: You can send me an email [beth.lucas@broomecounty.us](mailto:beth.lucas@broomecounty.us) or mail your comments to the planning department and that information will be at the end of this presentation.

Beth Lucas: So first I want to just give a quick overview of the recovery planning process and why we are doing this plan.

Beth Lucas: First, as I'm sure everybody knows by now. On March 13 there was a nationwide emergency for COVID-19 declared by President Trump

Beth Lucas: And basically, by doing that he made it so that each state didn't have to go individually and declare their own emergency

Beth Lucas: On the 20th FEMA issued a major disaster declaration for New York State and that declaration gave any of the New York State communities access to any funding that came through FEMA related to the disaster.



Beth Lucas: Section 28 of New York state executive law states that a local municipality.

Beth Lucas: shall prepare local recovery plan when state disaster emergency has been declared. And so that's why we're doing this plan is part of that requirement of New York state executive law.

Beth Lucas: Emergency Management and disaster planning falls into four different categories you have preparedness, which addresses things such as preparing household with emergency kits.

Beth Lucas: So that when a disaster comes, they're able to protect their families or training for first responders prior to a disaster.

Beth Lucas: Following that is the response phase which is after disaster occurs. What are the immediate actions that need to be done to limit the impact of that disaster to protect life and property.

Beth Lucas: You then move out of the response phase, you start to move into the recovery phase. And these are dealing with some of the residual effects of that disaster. How can we basically get back to normal. And in this case, the word normal

Beth Lucas: Is going to be a pretty loosely used term there's going to be a new normal. After we start recovering from the COVID 19 pandemic. And then the fourth phase that you typically have is mitigation and these are the actions you take for the long term.

Beth Lucas: Actions that can help minimize risk to life and property in the long term. So for this event right now we are in the recovery phase.

Beth Lucas: And by developing a post disaster recovery plan, we developed a tool that the local municipality can use to identify community needs and issues resulting from a disaster.

Beth Lucas: And we can prioritize these actions for mitigating impacts. And so the county can then take this plan and use that to guide.

Beth Lucas: The actions that we take during our transition from response to recovery. This disaster is a little different than other disasters such as flooding, whereas in those disasters, you have a short term disaster and matter of hours or days and then you start to move into

Beth Lucas: Response and then a longer term recovery. It's a little more cut and dry. However, with COVID

Beth Lucas: The impacts that we're seeing are the actual response phase is a lot more prolonged. So we find that we're likely going to be moving between response and recovery and there's going to be some overlapping actions that are involved in both of those phases.

Beth Lucas: So this is just a graph showing the new daily COVID 19 cases up through the end of May, as you see, it's highly varied.



Beth Lucas: But the general trend is that it's going down. And so that indicates that we need to really start concentrating on some of the aspects of recovery.

Beth Lucas: To develop the plan. We pulled together the COVID 19 recovery Task Force. It's made up of several members of different community agencies and county departments and a lot of the nonprofits that deal with social services, schools, Economic Development leaders and as well as elected officials and so all of these individuals helped give us information for the plan and develop our recommendations.

Beth Lucas: The recovery, the recovery plan was developed with two major principles in mind first that the focus needs to remain on protecting the public health, that is, above all, the most important priority as we work on recovery.

Beth Lucas: And also that we should temper our expectations for a quick recovery as I just mentioned, this is a prolonged disaster and also the impacts are on a large scale, they're on a large scale basically to the state level to national level in the international level, and there are

Beth Lucas: And so some of the localized impact. They're going to be seen on a broader scale.

Beth Lucas: So now I'm going to go through some of the major categories that were established in the plan for our recommendations.

Beth Lucas: First is to provide reliable and comprehensive information. One of the things that we've learned through this through this event is that people are looking for consistent, reliable, predictable information and so

Beth Lucas: Some of our recommendations involve establishing one source for information that can lead to the other various sources, the various agencies that are out there that can offer assistance. We want to provide clear and consistent messaging and we also want to promote resources such as 211 that can provide one on one assistance and so

Beth Lucas: This first item is probably one of the most important items, because there are a lot of resources out there. We've learned a lot through past disasters such as flooding. So you want to make sure that you're providing those resources to the community.

Beth Lucas: The second item is assist with provision of necessary supplies, and this is something that county has been working on all along. And it's really important to understand that with the initial event, the initial provision of supplies. It's not going to be over. People are going to still need supplies, all through this pandemic until it comes to some resolution and it's still uncertain what that resolution will look like.

Beth Lucas: But third item is aid and implementation of best practices for safe operating. There's a lot of information out there from the CDC

and from New York Forward for businesses and other agencies and organizations, our local health department. And so we want to make sure that that information is getting out there to people and they're able to implement it well.

Beth Lucas: Even if people have the information. Sometimes it is difficult to apply it to your own personal business or your own personal facility. And so, assisting them and helping them develop their plans for their own facilities and their own safe operating practices is also really important

Beth Lucas: Number four is protect the healthcare system as the foundation for a successful recovery and this is also something we've been doing all along.

Beth Lucas: Supporting efforts for telehealth and virtual care is a good way to do that so that people don't have to go into the facilities to get care, they can get it from their homes.

Beth Lucas: But we also want to make sure we're communicating the importance of continuing to seek medical attention for non COVID related issues. We don't want people to fear seeking medical help. So those are a couple the recommendations under that item. The plan also will elaborate these further and lay out some additional items as well.

Beth Lucas: Number five is to ensure that child care providers can continue to operate, we're finding that if you want the workforce to be able to go back to work being able to have childcare is an important component of that. There was a child care crisis prior to this event and this event is only highlighting that issue. And so we need to make sure that, especially in light of the schools closing, as well as many of the summer camps that are associated with schools or that aren't able to implement social distance distancing practices. We need to make sure that people are either having their child care provided for, or we are accommodating people that have unique childcare situation.

Beth Lucas: Number six is to recognize the importance of mental health services and this came out as a really important item in the plan.

Beth Lucas: we need to take these mental health impacts seriously as people are facing difficult times. It's going to create a lot of difficulties, especially for people that hadn't really suffered such hardships before. So it's important that we provide services for these people and make sure they're getting the appropriate assistance that they need. And so programs like Mental Health First Aid that's run through our Department of Mental Health that provides training for agencies whose patrons or clients come in that aren't used to dealing with mental health issues and helps them find the appropriate assistance that they need.

Beth Lucas: We also want people to be aware of the impact mental health impacts that might occur later on in the recovery process as some of the major impacts really start to hit people hard

Beth Lucas: The seventh item is protect our most vulnerable residents from the impact of COVID 19. So this is a pretty broad one. There are certain residents of the community that are more vulnerable outside of a disaster. And these vulnerabilities are only enhanced during a disaster.

Beth Lucas: So we want to ensure that people aren't having to choose between being employed and risking their health and safety. We want to make sure that their workplaces are protecting them because a lot of people can't afford to not go to work.

Beth Lucas: We want to make sure they're able to get to work and that includes ensuring that public transit continues to allow them to do so, we also want to take special care for some of our our populations such as seniors. Many seniors already face issues related to isolation. So we want to just take special care to address that.

Beth Lucas: We also want to make sure we're diligent about addressing child abuse and neglect, normally those issues might get recognized in the school environment, but without those traditional safe spaces, it can become an issue.

Beth Lucas: We want to document impacts across all sectors and really this is just about keeping track of some of those key impacts in our community and noting when there's any dramatic changes in things such as evictions or foreclosures and things like that as well as some of the financial costs, we're seeing, throughout our community for which include additional costs of PPE or overtime expenses or having to add infrastructure. These are things in the community that have tangible costs and tangible numbers and we can track them we can keep track of how our community is doing overtime.

Beth Lucas: We want to advocate for financial support for local and county governments.

Beth Lucas: The impacts that are be seen at the federal and state level of government trickle down to the local governments. Impacts on local businesses can also reduce the revenues that come into the local governments and so these impacts do have a major effect on local budgets and so it's important to keep advocating for programs to assist with this.

Beth Lucas: We want to continue to coordinate recovery efforts, both locally through the Recovery task force that was outlined earlier as well as coordinating with our regional partners through the regional control room.

Beth Lucas: We want to work to ensure an economic recovery.

Beth Lucas: We work a lot with our partners at The Agency and the Greater Binghamton chamber of commerce and we really are relying on them a lot to help inform the local businesses and keep them up and running, keep them informed of assistance opportunities. Some other activities that we want to undertake to help with this economic recovery include identifying businesses that may have staffing shortages to match them up with people

that may be laid off or losing work because of COVID, and making sure that we're filling those gaps with people that are looking for work in our community.

Beth Lucas: We want to help consumer confidence by helping businesses and organizations promote the fact that they're open for business and implementing safe practices.

Beth Lucas: And then we want to also help with technological tools for businesses and provide business mentoring. So these are all ways we can help carry businesses through this difficult time.

Beth Lucas: The other issue that we've addressed is housing and housing insecurity and these are some items that we also had identified prior to COVID 19, but the pandemic has highlighted these issues and enhanced the impact and so things like monitoring homeless evictions and foreclosures.

Beth Lucas: We want to help promote programs for affordable housing and helping people rehab their homes during this difficult time when they might not have the money to do so.

Beth Lucas: And also just by providing landlord and tenant resources to help carry them through this time in stay in their homes and reduce displacement during this time.

Beth Lucas: We want to maintain our efforts over the full recovery period and beyond. And so a lot of the items in this plan aren't only helpful in dealing with COVID 19 but they're also helpful in the long term, to our community. And also, as I mentioned, it's going to be kind of a new normal after this event. And so we need to make sure that the items that we implement are sustainable in the long term for that reason.

Beth Lucas: So things like encouraging business continuity planning to make sure businesses are prepared in the event of an additional wave of the pandemic, or the next pandemic.

Beth Lucas: And exploring options to improve broadband. That was a big issue with distance learning at the schools and so that's a real opportunity, you hate to use the word opportunity and event like this, but it's an opportunity to identify where there are gaps in service because the schools basically know which household had issues during this time.

Beth Lucas: And the final item is that we want to prepare for a second wave at where we might have a partial or full shutdown. We want to keep assessing the strengths and weaknesses of our response and address any service gaps. So if there are services that had to cease during this event. We want to make sure we're addressing the reasons why that happened so that maybe in future events. Or a second wave should it occur, we're able to provide that service and transition easily between remote services from in person services.

Beth Lucas: And then similarly we want to address those distance learning and remote working issues that came up during this past event. And

identify opportunities to improve. So as our recovery continues while we're proceeding with the phased reopening the threat of the COVID 19 pandemic is going to continue into the for the foreseeable future.

Beth Lucas: And so in order to address our ongoing recovery. We're going to have to continually assess are changing conditions and needs. We're going to want to make sure we're flexible in our recovery approach because there's still a lot of uncertainty that's out there.

Beth Lucas: And we also want to make sure we're having coordination and collaboration with all of the necessary agencies and departments, because there's going to be a lot of overlapping of response and recovery efforts as things move forward.

Beth Lucas: So that's the end of our overview of the plan. I want to move into the public comment period. I would just ask that you put your name in the chat box of the zoom chat and if you want to comment and we can unmute you. And then just state your name for the record, and then we'll limit individuals to three minutes. But if there's not a whole lot of people that want to speak we probably don't need to be too strict on that.

Beth Lucas: Right now I see that there is Terraine Jones, one second. And I will unmute you so that you can make your comment.

Terraine Jones: How you doing. Yes, ma'am. Thank you much, first and foremost, I would like to say that It is very endearing and very Motivational that You allow the public to be a part of this. First of all, I thank you for that. I'm an only have three minutes, but I also only have one question. I have a Small business here in town. My business internet based 40 options calm and I tried to center my business around personal improvement. And my only question is for you. How can I help because I would like to be involved. So how can I help

Beth Lucas: Thank you.

Beth Lucas: There are a lot of volunteer opportunities and I would say it probably depends a lot on what your specialty is but

Beth Lucas: I think that one of you. I think your comments very important and that we do need. We do have donations that we do, accept through the county, however.

Beth Lucas: If you're talking about personally volunteering. I think that's a good point that we maybe need to add to our plan, a way to document that. If you call 211 which the United Way runs that service they can match you with volunteer opportunities.

Terraine Jones: Okay.

Beth Lucas: So we don't have anyone else that listed that they wanted to speak. So I'm going to unmute everyone. So if anyone has anything else that they would wish to ask or say then feel free to speak up now.

Legislator Bob Weslar: Okay. Thank you. Thank you for this. Mr Evangelisti and your entire team for doing this over the past month or so. And everyone who was involved. One thing that I was excited by this by reading the plan is the whole notion of No Wrong Door Policy that whole idea of creating a space and time within everybody's workspace to have all the answers, or have them is available to everybody to limit people's Need to travel in order to get the information or to get their services. I think that's that's brilliant. Because it's a good customer service policy. I also like that the mental health aspect is in the forefront moving forward. So I am very, very thrilled with all of this. And thank you very much.

Beth Lucas: Thank you, Bob. Yeah, I will give the Department of Mental Health, a lot of credit is that The No Wrong Door Policy is something that had come from them and they really already have. And I guess throughout this whole plan. We have a lot of departments that do offer a lot of great services.

Beth Lucas: So a lot of what we've done is just have to focus and make sure that people are accessing those great services and that we're supporting those departments and agencies to make sure they can provide the best services they can carry us through this really difficult time so

Beth Lucas: Is there anyone else that would like to say anything before we end with the public hearing

Terraine Jones: Miss Lucas. I didn't want to flood the meeting with comments and questions. That's why I tried to narrow it down to, how can I be involved myself. I'm sorry. This is terrain Jones again. But it seems like nobody else is speaking. I'm not sure how many people are attending. I can't see that. But just to let you know, and Mr. Michael he voiced his opinion and he had something to say. I will forward you my email. So we can keep in touch. And if there's something going on. Well, I can be directly involved to help our community. I know the world is in an uproar. But if I can help our community. I would be more than willing to do so. And if anybody else doesn't have anything to say. Want to reach out to me, Mrs Lucas email is on the screen. At 40 options is where you can reach me as well.

Beth Lucas: Great, thank you very much.

Beth Lucas: Again, you can provide written comments to me via email through the email on the screen [beth.lucas@broomecounty.us](mailto:beth.lucas@broomecounty.us)

Beth Lucas: Or mail them directly to the planning department at Broome County Planning P. O. Box 1766 Binghamton, New York 13902 just in case people are on the phone and not don't have the screen in front of them.

Beth Lucas: Well, thank you everyone for attending and feel free to contact me anytime with your ideas or any additional comments and please look out for the plan once it is finalized.