



## Dutchess County Announces State of Emergency

Poughkeepsie... Based on an increase of confirmed cases of Coronavirus/COVID-19 with three confirmed and an escalation of residents in mandatory and precautionary quarantine, Dutchess County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro declared a State of Emergency for Dutchess County, effective at 2 p.m. today. The State of Emergency expedites the County's sharing of resources and ability to better respond to this rapidly evolving situation.

The State of Emergency is issued pursuant to Section 24 of New York State Executive Law and is enforceable by local, county and state law enforcement agencies. Dutchess, Orange and Ulster counties have each issued emergency orders since confirming multiple cases of Coronavirus/COVID-19 over the past several days.

County Executive Molinaro said, "As Coronavirus has emerged as a pandemic, reaching countries on each hemisphere, we in Dutchess County have prepared for the inevitability we would be touched by this emerging health situation. Today's declaration is the next step in providing Dutchess County the resources necessary to best respond. This declaration does not limit travel, but we urge residents to limit contact with those who are sick and stay home if sick."

County Executive Molinaro is taking the following steps:

- Suspending all large social and community gatherings, including County-sponsored events, to allow adequate social distancing, effective March 13th;
- Suspending all visitation at Dutchess County Jail, effective March 13th;
- Postponing all Civil Service Exams, effective March 13th;
- Suspending all classroom and extracurricular functions for 14 days, including extra-curricular activities, effective March 16th. Schools may remain open to administration, staff, and staff functions. This order does not include private daycare facilities, Head Start or other daycare programs, unless there is a direct need based on school facility logistics; and
- Closing the Dutchess County Office for the Aging's eight Senior Friendship Centers, effective March 16th.

DBCH Commissioner Dr. Anil Vaidian, an infectious disease specialist with more than 20 years' experience, said, "We have long predicted Dutchess County would be affected by COVID-19, and we have put into practice our weeks of planning. We are dealing with an unprecedented situation, but I am confident that steps we are taking today will keep our community healthy and safe. Closing schools and limiting large community gatherings is a preventative measure that is intended to reduce the spread of COVID-19. We continue to ask residents for their cooperation – practicing proper hygiene, disinfection, social distancing and the like – to help mitigate the spread of this virus."

Dutchess County has established a website, [www.dutchessny.gov/coronavirus](http://www.dutchessny.gov/coronavirus), as well as a hotline, (845) 486-3555, to provide residents the most current information regarding Coronavirus/COVID-19.

This is an evolving situation, and County leaders will continue to work to inform residents with the most current information and ongoing updates.

[www.dutchessNY.gov](http://www.dutchessNY.gov)