

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MAYOR ANDRE SAYEGH ANNOUNCES FIRST PATERSON CASES OF COVID-19 AND DECLARES STATE OF EMERGENCY IN PATERSON

PATERSON – Mayor Andre Sayegh, Health and Human Services Director Oshin Castillo, and Health Officer Dr. Paul Persaud today identified the first three presumptive positive cases of novel coronavirus, or COVID-19, in Paterson, New Jersey. The individuals are husband and wife - a male in his 40s and a female in her 30s – as well as their 5 year-old child, whose presumptive positive test was confirmed midday on 3/16. The Paterson Division of Health is actively monitoring the parents and child, along with a second child. All are isolating at home until cleared by the Health Division.

The children are not students in the Paterson Public School District or any other school in Paterson.

“Even before these first cases of Paterson residents were confirmed, my Administration has implemented preventative measures to practice social distancing and containment to avoid community spread,” **said Mayor Sayegh**. “We ask that residents remain calm and isolate themselves as much as possible in order to do their part to reduce the spread of COVID-19.”

State and Paterson Division of Health authorities are proceeding with the public health investigation and response activities by tracing close contacts of these family members and taking appropriate public health actions. The investigation is underway and more information will be released when it becomes available.

Mayor Sayegh, in conjunction with the Office of Emergency Management and the Municipal Council, also declared a State of Emergency for the City of Paterson in his second Executive Order in response to the COVID-19 emergency. This allows him to activate our Office of Emergency Management and close non-emergency clinics at the Division of Health, among other items.

In this EO, Mayor Sayegh also announced the mandatory closures/limitations of the following establishments as of 6pm this evening:

Closures:

- bars and nightclubs that do not serve food
- all go-go bars
- movie theaters and shopping malls
- gyms and fitness centers
- barber shops and nail salons

- factories
- liquor stores; and
- non-urgent medical offices, dental offices, physical therapy clinics, chiropractor offices, state licensed cosmetology establishments. Emergency procedures are allowed.

Limitations:

- No congregational services at houses of worship
- Restaurants may remain open for takeout, delivery, and drive-through services only; no sit-down services may be rendered.

Grocery stores, markets, bodegas, and pharmacies remain open.

Additionally, Mayor Sayegh announced the following updates to City Government services:

- Paterson Municipal Court sessions are suspended from March 16, 2020 through March 27, 2020 or until further ordered. The Paterson Municipal Court building will remain open for essential services only such as applications for restraining orders, hearings for defendants that are detained, and matters that implicate public safety. Payments on fines can be made by telephone or online by visiting NJCOURTS.GOV.
- All Library branches – closed to the public (not just programs as announced last week)
- Suspending ticketing for street cleaning, but we ask residents to please still move vehicles so we can keep our city clean and healthy.
- Playgrounds and fields are closed; no group gatherings at parks
- Mayor Sayegh encourages all residents to pay tax and sewer fees online at “Pay Bills” section of website. It only costs \$1.05 to pay via electronic check, meaning it transfers right from your checking account.
- Limited city inspections, with a full list to be posted online later today.

The symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild to severe. People who are older or have existing medical conditions, such as heart, lung, kidney diseases, or diabetes may be at higher risk of serious illness. Common signs include fever, cough, and shortness of breath /breathing difficulties. If you experience any of these signs, call your medical provider. If you feel very sick and are having breathing difficulties and chest pain, please call 911.

Click [here](#) for more information about Paterson’s response to COVID-19.

The NJPIES hotline (1-800-222-1222) is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can accommodate callers in multiple languages.

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