Department of Health Provides Update on COVID-19, 1,215 Positives Bring Statewide Total to 32,284

On April 19, 2020, the Pennsylvania Department of Health today confirmed as of 12:00 a.m., April 19, that there are 1,215 additional positive cases of COVID-19, bringing the statewide total to 32,284. All 67 counties in Pennsylvania have cases of COVID-19.

The department also announced that electronic and probable-cause deaths are now being reported, causing a reporting increase of 276 new deaths among positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 1,112.

"We have been working to reconcile our data with information from several different sources, including our NEDSS reporting system and our county and municipal health departments," Dr. Rachel Levine said. "This is the cause of the increase in deaths we are reporting today. This work takes time and so the increase in deaths today reflects the culmination of that effort, which will continue moving forward. The majority of these deaths did not occur overnight."

Dr. Levine stressed that mitigation efforts such as social distancing are working and that the goal of the department is to continue to provide as much data as possible in a timely manner.

County-specific information and a statewide map are available **here** https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx. All people are either in isolation at home or being treated at the hospital.

"COVID-19 cases and deaths continue to rise in Pennsylvania, so now is not the time to become complacent," Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine said. "We must continue to stay home to protect ourselves, our families, and our community. If you must go out, please make as few trips as possible and wear a mask to protect not only yourself, but other people as well. We need all Pennsylvanians to continue to heed these efforts to protect our vulnerable Pennsylvanians, our health care workers and frontline responders."

There are 126,570 patients who have tested negative to date. Of the patients who have tested positive to date the age breakdown is as follows:

- Less than 1% are aged 0-4;
- Nearly 1% are aged 5-12;
- Nearly 1% are aged 13-18;
- 6% are aged 19-24;

- 39% are aged 25-49;
- 28% are aged 50-64; and
- Nearly 24% are aged 65 or older.

Most of the patients hospitalized are aged 65 or older, and most of the deaths have occurred in patients 65 or older. There have been no pediatric deaths to date. More data is available **here** https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx.

In nursing and personal care homes, there are 4,450 resident cases of COVID-19, and 479 cases among employees, for a total of 4,929 at 368 distinct facilities in 35 counties. Out of our total deaths, 462 have occurred in residents from nursing or personal care facilities. A county breakdown can be found **here** https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Cases.aspx.

All non-life-sustaining businesses are ordered to be closed and schools are closed statewide through the remainder of the academic year. Currently the entire state is under a stay-at-home order.

Statewide - The Wolf Administration has since noon, April 18:

- **Issued Gov. Wolf's remarks on recovery planning** https://www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom/governor-tom-wolf-covid-19-remarks-april-17-2020/

For the latest information for individuals, families, businesses and schools, visit "**Responding to COVID-19**" on https://www.pa.gov/guides/responding-to-covid-19/

The Wolf Administration stresses the role Pennsylvanians play in helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Cover any coughs or sneezes with your elbow, not your hands.
- Clean surfaces frequently.

- Stay home to avoid spreading COVID-19, especially if you are unwell.
- If you must go out for a life-sustaining reason, please wear a mask.

Updated Coronavirus Links: Press Releases, State Lab Photos, Graphics

Daily COVID-19 Report
https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx

Press releases regarding coronavirus
https://www.media.pa.gov/Pages/Health.aspx

Latest information on the coronavirus
https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx

Photos of the state's lab in Exton
https://www.flickr.com/photos/governortomwolf/sets/72157713388961802/ (for download and use)

Coronavirus and preparedness graphics
https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Social-Media.aspx (located at the bottom of the page)

Community preparedness and procedures materials
https://www.pacast.com/m?p=17885

Map with the number of COVID-19 cases
https://www.google.com/maps/d/embed?mid=1lpLPPrltIuVkwFtXhoWdWEA4B1DvNmne

All Pennsylvania residents are encouraged to sign up for AlertPA, a text notification system for health, weather, and other important alerts like COVID-19 updates from commonwealth agencies. Residents can sign up online at http://www.ready.pa.gov/BeInformed/Signup-For-Alerts.

Source: PA Department of Health Press Release, 4/19/2020

Gov. Wolf Unveils Plan for Pennsylvania's COVID-19 Recovery

On April 17, 2020, Governor Tom Wolf announced a Plan for Pennsylvania https://www.governor.pa.gov/plan-for-pennsylvania/ that will provide citizens and businesses relief, allow for a safe and expedient reopening, and lay a road to recovery from the challenges and hardships created by the 2019 novel coronavirus.

"I asked for you to close schools and businesses, cancel large events, stay at home, all in an effort to simply keep our friends, our neighbors, our families, our coworkers, alive," said Gov. Wolf. "I will be forever grateful for your courage, compassion, and speed. Despite uncertainty, Pennsylvanians acted collectively, not because of any order, but because we care deeply for each other. Now I am asking again for you to believe in our Commonwealth."

Relief for Pennsylvanians

The Wolf Administration has taken broad and far-reaching actions to help meet the short- and long-term needs of individual Pennsylvanians in the face of this unprecedented pandemic. Ensuring that Pennsylvanians from all walks of life have access to the resources they need has been and will continue to be a top priority of the governor.

Food Insecurity

- Worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to ensure that individuals in need of food no longer need to complete cumbersome paperwork and income verification to prove they are eligible for or in need.
- Extended Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) certification periods for six months to prevent SNAP case closures.
- Begun to issue emergency allotments to all SNAP households for March and April 2020, increasing the current monthly allotment.

- Lifted burdensome requirements for the State Food Purchase Program to provide flexibility in determining eligibility.
- Partnered with United Way PA 211 to make available a comprehensive list of COVID-19-specific food resources.
- Launched a partnership with Operation BBQ Relief and the Salvation Army to deliver more than 700,000 meals to all corners of the commonwealth.
- Boosted food bank supplies by directing $2.6 million to charitable food programs through the Neighborhood Assistance Program.
- Procured 750,000 shelf-stable meals through the Defense Logistics Agency to food banks and senior home-delivered meal programs.
- Worked to ensure that free school meal programs are transitioned into take-home or community distribution programs to meet food and nutrition needs of students.
- The PA Department of Transportation (PennDOT) has repurposed staff to provide additional workforce capacity for food banks across the state struggling to attract volunteers.

Student Loan Debt

- Federal student loan borrowers are automatically being placed in an administrative forbearance, temporarily stopping monthly payments through September 30, 2020. Payments can still be made if borrowers choose.
- The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) is notifying borrowers that forbearance for the American Education Services (AES) and commercial loan portfolio is available upon request through September 30, 2020.

Individuals Who Have Been Furloughed, Laid Off, or Have Reduced Hours

In addition to regular state Unemployment Compensation (UC) benefits, which provide roughly half of an individual's full-time weekly income up to $572 per week, the federal CARES Act expanded UC benefits through several new programs:

- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) expands benefits to gig-economy workers, independent contractors, and self-employed individuals who are otherwise ineligible for UC.
- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (FPUC) provides an additional $600 per week, on top of regular UC benefits, to all UC recipients.
- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) provides an additional 13 weeks of UC benefits to individuals who exhaust their regular 26 weeks of benefits, for a total of 39 weeks of coverage.

Individuals Who Are Uninsured or Underinsured

- Announced all major health insurers providing comprehensive medical coverage in the commonwealth will cover medically appropriate COVID-19 diagnostic testing and associated treatment for consumers and have committed to waive any cost-sharing for the testing.
- In addition, many auto and homeowners insurers are giving money back to drivers who are spending less time on the road and placing moratoriums on canceling policies amid financial hardships.
- Made telehealth the preferred delivery method for medically necessary health care services for physical health, behavioral health, and substance use disorder services and explained that telephone only services may be used where video technology is not available. All Medical Assistance services delivered via telehealth are being reimbursed at the same level as in-person services.
- Established a 24/7 mental health crisis line that received more than 1,300 calls in the first 10 days.

Students and Families

In this time of unprecedented school closures, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has worked with Intermediate Units (IUs) throughout the commonwealth to develop and implement continuity of education plans to ensure seniors graduate, students can be promoted to the next grade, and all students continue to have access to remote learning through the remainder of the academic year. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has:

- Coordinated with rural communities to provide access to roving wifi buses to meet the internet and remote learning needs of students without internet access.
- Partnered with the statewide leads for PBS to offer communities with limited internet access use of free instructional programming that is being broadcast by all of Pennsylvania's PBS affiliates.
- The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) has worked with local communities to identify and stand up child care facilities for children of health care workers, first responders, and other essential employees to ensure they can continue to respond to the COVID-19 disaster while knowing their children are being cared for.
- Coordinated with rural communities to provide access to roving wifi buses to meet the internet and remote learning needs of students without internet access.

Relief for Businesses

Pennsylvania's businesses are in an unprecedented position, many shuttered across the state to protect against the spread of the deadly coronavirus, others changing their entire business plans around to help meet the many needs of people across the state.

Many businesses have had to furlough or lay off employees, and others that have relied on in-person transactions have had to move to remote platforms overnight. While the needs are varied among the business community, the severity of the impact of the coronavirus on the overall economy is, and will remain, unforeseen for some time.

The Wolf Administration has worked diligently with federal, state, and local government partners, the business community, and other critical external partners to ensure businesses can avail themselves of all the tools available to offer a modicum of relief in the face of this crisis.

Department of Revenue

The Department of Revenue (DOR) has extended tax filing deadlines to assist with short-term liquidity for businesses. DOR has also worked to reduce or suspend enforcement actions, including liens filed will be reduced; bank attachment actions will not be taken; license inspections, revocations, and citations will be limited; and tax clearance requirements will be the more lenient debt collector standards. DOR is also providing flexible terms for new payment plans allowing up to $12,000 for up to one year.

Department of Community and Economic Development

The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) made more than $60 million available for small businesses through the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority (PIDA) COVID-19 Working Capital Access Program.

Although the funds were depleted in four days and the department received more than 900 applications, we are looking at ways to recapitalize the program given its need as a bridge to federal stimulus funds.

DCED has also allowed for three-month loan payment deferrals for loans administered by the department.

Banks and Mortgage Servicers

In alignment with federal CARES Act, Pennsylvania banks and mortgage servicers are implementing 60-day foreclosure moratoriums and 180-day forbearances on all federally backed loans. In addition, there is now a 120-day moratorium on evictions from properties with federally backed loans.

The PA State Treasury, the PA Department of Banking and Securities, and the PA Housing and Finance Agency have come together to develop a series of relief recommendations and are working collaboratively with banks and other creditors to push for broad flexibilities and relief actions to assist businesses and consumers across the state.

Federal CARES Act

With the passage of the federal CARES Act, businesses of all shapes and sizes will be able to access billions of dollars in federal resources to assist with everything from payroll support, more favorable loan terms, and fully refundable tax credits for businesses that are trying to keep workers employed while keeping their doors are shut to the public.

Relief for Health Care Systems and Providers

The Wolf Administration has undertaken every possible effort to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus and ensure our health care system, and the providers that make up its fabric, can withstand the ramp-up, surge, and aftermath of this deadly pandemic.

While hospitals and health systems have been promised significant financial aid from the federal government, many are facing financial strain now and need relief before those dollars become fully available. The Wolf Administration has taken steps to provide that immediate relief.

- Established the Pennsylvania Hospital Emergency Loan Program (HELP) to provide up to $450 million from the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PennVEST) in critical working capital bridge funding at a very low interest rate to Pennsylvania's hospitals.
- Spreading the word about the federal government's expansion of the Accelerated and Advance Payment Program for Providers and Suppliers, which provides necessary funds when there is a disruption in claims submission or processing. The expansion of this program extends to a broader group of Medicare Part A providers and Part B suppliers. The federal government announced that they have approved over $51 billion for providers across the country in the first week of the expansion program.
- Worked closely with the General Assembly to transfer $50 million in state funds to purchase medical equipment and supplies for hospitals, nursing homes, and emergency workers to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Worked with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to allow for payments for direct-support providers to assist people with

disabilities in hospital settings where they may need support beyond that provided by hospital staff.

- Signed an Executive Order that allows the state to transfer personal protective equipment (PPE) and supplies between health care facilities should it become necessary as the coronavirus pandemic worsens to ensure that all health care providers have access to PPE and critical supplies and that if supplies need to be redistributed to meet the needs of communities hardest hit by the virus, it can be done efficiently and as quickly as possible.
- Supplied over 1.8 million N95 masks, 136,000 gowns, 912,000 procedure masks, 730,000 gloves, 990 goggles, and 147,000 face shields to health care workers.
- Waived requirements to allow for retired medical professionals to quickly reactivate their licenses in order to bolster the capacity of the health care workforce.
- Worked with medical schools across the commonwealth to allow Graduate Medical Trainees (GMTs) to obtain their GMT licenses upon graduation.
- Extended license renewal deadlines, and waived additional administrative requirements for new and temporary health care licensees, so that practitioners do not have to worry about their license status during the emergency.
- Working to limit the scope of potential liability for health care providers resulting from the care of patients during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Contracted with ECRI, an independent, nonprofit health services research organization, to enlist experts in the field of infection control to help protect those in the state's long-term care facilities.
- Collaborating with the Jewish Healthcare Foundation to support personal care homes and assisted living residences to provide information about infectious disease management protocols and resident care requirements.
- Partnering with university health systems to staff a phone line designed to answer specific COVID-19 related questions for these facilities and to provide real time support.

Businesses across the commonwealth have pivoted from current business models to manufacture or produce personal protective equipment (PPE), gowns, masks, and other critical supplies meant to assist individuals and communities in responding to COVID-19.

Reopening Pennsylvania

With new case counts showing that these aggressive efforts have flattened the curve, the governor and his administration will begin to plan for a reopening process that protects Pennsylvanians and helps to stabilize the economy. The administration will work with economic and public health experts to determine the metrics used for safe reopening by taking a regional, sector-based approach.

In consultation with Team PA, the Department of Health, the Department of Community and Economic Development, the Department of Labor and Industry, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, and others, the administration will develop guidance for businesses, local governments, workers, customers, and others and guide a safe reopening process.

Standards

- Our approach will be data driven and reliant upon quantifiable criteria to drive a targeted, evidence-based, regional approach to reopenings in Pennsylvania.
- We will put forth guidance and recommendations for employers, individuals, and health care facilities for assured accountability as we reopen.
- Reopening necessitates that adequate personal protective equipment and diagnostic testing are available.
- Reopening requires a monitoring and surveillance program that allows the commonwealth to be deploy swift actions for containment or mitigation.
- Protections for vulnerable populations must remain steadfast throughout the reopening process, such as limitations on visitors to congregate care facilities and prisons.
- Limitations on large gatherings unrelated to occupations should remain in place for the duration of the reopening process.

Recovery for Pennsylvanians

Developing a recovery framework and programs that make a difference for the people of Pennsylvania is paramount. That framework must include, at a minimum:

- Fair, family-sustaining wages for all Pennsylvanians.
- Expand worker protection for workers following Department of Health orders or guidance from health care providers to isolate and quarantine.
- Expand paid sick and family and medical leave policies.
- Expansion of safe, affordable, and high-quality child care.
- Strengthen the Unemployment and Workers Compensation Insurance systems.
- Funding and flexibility to support continuity of education and continued active distance learning (including planned instruction and enrichment) for all students, including a focus on equity and students with special needs.
- Accountability and transparency for spending and dispensation of federal, state, and local resources to address the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Expand student loan forgiveness and repayment programs, particularly focusing on debt relief for individuals who are the front lines of responding the COVID-19 disaster.
- Expand rapid re-employment programs to support laid off workers and businesses impacted by COVID-19-related business closures.
- Accountability and transparency for spending and dispensation of federal, state, and local resources to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recovery for Businesses

While the plan for long-term recovery still lies ahead, there are already lessons learned from this disaster that allow us to put markers down for where we need to go once the disaster subsides. There is still much we do not know, including when businesses can begin to reopen safely. But the broad contours of a policy agenda in the future must include the following:

- Developing an evidence-based state innovation strategy that allows Pennsylvania to attract the best and brightest people and companies.
- Vigorous financial support for small businesses, both short term to limit the number of businesses that would otherwise have to close their doors for good while we shelter in place, and long term as small businesses restructure and recover in a post-COVID-19 economy.
- Economic development incentives to attract companies willing to create and retain good-paying jobs.
- Investments in our manufacturing industry who has risen to the challenge of meeting some of our most pressing and immediate needs, including tax credits for manufacturers who convert or retrofit their facilities or operations in order to produce personal protective equipment to help with the COVID-19 response.
- Investment, upgrade, and extension of Pennsylvania's broadband network to ensure all Pennsylvanians have access to the internet. This includes resources for students/families/workers and/or incentivizing businesses to expand access to broadband to support remote learning and job search activities.
- Investments in our diverse agriculture industry, robust food processing sector, farmers markets, and the many industries that support a safe food supply. While this industry is life-sustaining, it has suffered a severe disruption in its supply chain, and recovery must ensure the certainty and future of Pennsylvania's agriculture industry to continue to produce a safe, secure food supply.
- Support for non-profit organizations.

Recovery for Health Care Systems and Providers

The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a light on the fragmentations within our health systems. Pennsylvania has banned together to support and equip our hospitals and medical professionals with the tools they need to respond, but our recovery is dependent upon long-term policy change. A policy agenda to support the health and recovery of Pennsylvania's residents must include:

- Health care coverage for all Pennsylvanians that is affordable and transparent, and a system that allows for choice in coverage.
- Ensuring the protections of the Affordable Care Act are in place at the state level, to ensure that people with pre-existing conditions, including Pennsylvanians recovered from COVID-19, can obtain full coverage and not worry about lifetime or annual caps on coverage should they need further care.
- Making sure that patients who seek out in-network care aren't surprised with a bill for treatment by an out-of-network provider at an in-network facility.
- Requiring transparency in short-term limited duration insurance products and protecting consumers who need to fill an unexpected gap in coverage.
- Continue to cut bureaucratic red tape and make it easier for new Pennsylvanians, including military spouses, with an out-of-state occupational license to work. Greater flexibility is needed in licensure requirements for a broad set of out of state practitioners interested in providing care in Pennsylvania.
- Continued telehealth expansion and adoption of telehealth as a primary mode of health care delivery for physical and mental health services as well as substance use disorder treatment. New telehealth policy should be inclusive of accessible modes of communication such as telephonic delivery when other means are unavailable. Additionally, telehealth services should be reimbursed at the same rates as if the services were delivered in person.
- Significant increases in housing services and investment in low-income housing development to reduce the number of Pennsylvanians unable to be safely discharged due to lack of shelter and to promote health and wellness in community settings.
- Continued prioritization of home and community-based services to reduce congregate placements for children, individuals with disabilities, and seniors.
- Increased and more formalized role for community-based organizations in health and wellness activities and health care delivery. This pandemic has made clear that health does not begin and end in the doctor's office, let alone in a hospital, and Pennsylvania's community-based organizations have an important role to play.

For more information on the **Governor's Plan for Pennsylvania** visit www.governor.pa.gov/plan-for-pennsylvania/.

Source: Governor Wolf's Press Office, 4/17/2020

Senate Republican Leadership Disappointed by Lack of Specifics in "Plan" for Recovery from COVID-19

Citing an ongoing lack of specificity and transparency, Pennsylvania Senate President Pro Tempore Joe Scarnati (R-25) and Majority Leader Jake Corman (R-34) called the Governor's "plan" for emerging from COVID-19 public health crisis disappointing.

"We hoped to see a real plan from the Governor today to move Pennsylvania forward from the damage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We have said from the beginning that any recovery plan should include transparency, common sense, clear standards and benchmarks to advance, and the input and cooperation from all branches of government. None of those principles were addressed by Governor Wolf today, and Pennsylvania will be worse off as a result.

"Senate Republicans sent the governor a clear, fair, and safe plan to get more Pennsylvanians back to work in those regions and industries where we can do so without making the COVID-19 crisis worse. Our plan relies on nationally recognized standards and experts, as well as the judgement of local officials who know their communities best and are in the best position to respond to local challenges.

"Pennsylvania ranks fifth in the nation in the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19, but we rank first in the number of new Unemployment

Compensation claims filed. Our system has slowed to a crawl and our families are suffering as a result.

"We remain open and willing to work with Governor Wolf on a real plan to that puts Pennsylvania first. It is imperative that Governor Wolf prioritizes working with the legislature, as well as with local leaders within our counties, above working with select governors from other northeastern states. We are tired of hearing his rhetoric that he wants to work with us, while at the same time making unilateral decisions. It is far past time for him to abandon his go-it-alone approach and come to the table to work with the General Assembly on real solutions."

Source: Senate Republican Communications, 4/17/2020

House Sends Martin's Local Government Emergency Bill to the Governor

On April 14, 2020, the House of Representatives approved a bill sponsored by Senator Scott Martin (R-13) that includes emergency measures to help local governments respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The bill was sent to Governor Wolf to be signed into law.

Senate Bill 841
https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billinfo/billinfo.cfm?syear=2019&sind=0&body=S&type=B&BN=0841 would take a number of steps to ensure local governments can continue to operate during the coronavirus pandemic. The bill would:

- Allow local governments to provide greater flexibility on property tax deadlines.
- Permit local governments to conduct remote meetings.
- Give notaries emergency authorization to notarize documents remotely through the use of communications technology.

In addition to providing emergency provisions for local governments, the bill also reauthorizes the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council, which is responsible for collecting and analyzing data about the cost and quality of health care in the state and making recommendations to reduce the cost of care.

The panel would be responsible for preparing a report on the effect of the COVID-19 disaster emergency on healthcare facilities, including expenses and lost revenue during the crisis to determine additional financial assistance.

Under the bill, local governments would be authorized to extend deadlines for property tax discount rates to any date up until August 31. The legislation would also allow local governments to waive any fee or penalty for late payments of property taxes if paid in full by the end of the year.

"The COVID-19 crisis has affected everyone throughout the state, and our local governments are no exception," Martin said. "The provisions of this bill give local taxing bodies more flexibility they need to help local taxpayers who are struggling financially due to the COVID-19 crisis."

Senate Bill 841 also extends the ability of notaries to conduct business remotely in order to meet the needs of local governments and individuals. A notary public would still be required to confirm an individual's identity and reasonably identify records, and an audio/visual recording of the notarial act and all related interactions would be required.

The legislation would allow members of local governments to participate in meetings and conduct other business remotely during the governor's disaster declaration. Additional requirements are included to ensure transparency of remote meetings, including provisions for public notice and posting minutes.

Additional time would also be allowed for businesses to contribute to educational scholarship programs in order to earn tax credits.

Source: Senator Martin Press Release, 4/14/2020

Residual Waste General Permit WMGR123;

Proposed Modifications and Renewal

The Department of Environmental Protection proposed modifications to, and renewal of, Residual Waste General Permit WMGR123. The base general permit authorizes the processing, transfer and beneficial use of oil and gas liquid waste to develop or hydraulically fracture an oil or gas well.

Commentators are strongly encouraged to submit comments using the department's online eComment tool at http://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment or by e-mail to ecomment@pa.gov.

Written comments can be mailed to the Policy Office, Department of Environmental Protection, Rachel Carson State Office Building, PO Box 2063, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 17105. Use "General Permit WMGR123" as the subject line in written communication.

Questions regarding General Permit WMGR123 can be directed to Chris Solloway, Division of Municipal and Residual Waste, Bureau of Waste Management, at csolloway@pa.gov or (717) 787-7381. Additional information can be found on the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

Source: Pennsylvania Bulletin, 4/18/2020 http://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pabull?file=/secure/pabulletin/data/vol50/50-16/545.html

Climate Change Advisory Committee Virtual Meeting

The Department of Environmental Protection's Climate Change Advisory Committee meeting scheduled for 10 a.m. on Thursday, April 30, 2020, will be held as a virtual meeting. Individuals who wish to join the meeting may do so remotely. Information will be provided on the committee's **webpage** https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/climate/Pages/CCAC.aspx.

Individuals interested in providing public comments during the meeting must sign up prior to the start of the meeting by contacting Lindsay Byron at lbyron@pa.gov or (717) 772-8951. Additional information can be found on the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

NOTE: The committee will hear a presentation on the public health impacts of climate change as well as an update on the Act 129 Energy Efficiency Program.

Source: Pennsylvania Bulletin, 4/18/2020 http://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pabull?file=/secure/pabulletin/data/vol50/50-16/544.html

PA Infrastructure Investment Authority Funding Recipients Can Request Payment Deferral For Up to 3 Months

In response to the unprecedented financial strains on local governments, authorities and individual borrowers, the **PA Infrastructure Authority** https://www.pennvest.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx has available up to a **temporary three month payment deferral** https://www.pennvest.pa.gov/Pages/deferral.aspx for funding recipients.

Recipients must be in good standing, who are not current under a loan workout or other forbearance are eligible.

Click here for all the details and how to apply https://www.pennvest.pa.gov/Pages/deferral.aspx .

For more information on the PennVEST COVID-19 Relief Efforts or deferment process, please contact Denise Zern, Loan Servicing Specialist by sending email to: dzern@pa.gov or call 717-783-6747.

Visit the **PA Infrastructure Investment Authority website** https://www.pennvest.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx for

information on available water infrastructure funding opportunities.

Source: PA Environmental Digest Blog, 4/15/2020

Pennsylvania's Unemployment Rate at 6.0 Percent in March

On April 17, 2020, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) released its employment situation report for March 2020. <u>The March unemployment and jobs surveys collected data that referenced the week from March 8 – 14 before many necessary coronavirus (COVID-19) - related business and school closures occurred in the second half of the month</u>.

Pennsylvania's unemployment rate was up 1.3 percentage points over the month to 6.0 percent in March. The national rate rose nine-tenths of a point to 4.4 percent. The commonwealth's unemployment rate increased by 1.9 percentage points from March 2019 while the national rate was up six-tenths of a percentage point over the year.

Pennsylvania's civilian labor force – the estimated number of residents working or looking for work – declined by 19,000 over the month from February's record high level. Resident employment was down 104,000 while unemployment rose by 85,000.

Pennsylvania's total nonfarm jobs were down 40,400 from February's record high to 6,069,200 in March. Jobs were down in 10 of the 11 industry supersectors. The largest volume supersector decline was in leisure & hospitality which fell from a record high level in February.

Over the year, total nonfarm jobs in Pennsylvania were up 14,500 with gains in six of the 11 supersectors. The largest volume 12-month change among supersectors was an increase of 12,800 jobs in education & health services.

Additional information is available on the L&I website at www.dli.pa.gov.

Note: The above data are seasonally adjusted. Seasonally adjusted data provide the most valid month-to-month comparison.

Source: PA Department of L & I Press Release, 4/17/2020

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