



OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

June 9, 2020

Dear CUNY Community,

As you know, New York City [this week entered](#) the first of four phases of Gov. Cuomo's New York Forward reopening plan. I wanted to take a moment to discuss the practical ramifications of this process for the University, now and for the weeks and months to come.

In order to begin reopening, the city, as with the other regions of New York State, was required to meet [seven health-related metrics](#) involving COVID-19 hospitalizations, testing and contact tracing. The plan's stipulated trajectory prescribes the in-person reopening of educational institutions in the fourth and final phase, but there are important exceptions that could enable other facets of the University, such as research activity, to return sooner, if the city continues to meet all metrics.

Last month, I established two task forces to provide a roadmap for the physical reopening of our campuses and on-site teaching and support services. The Academic and Student Support Task Force is chaired by Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost José Luis Cruz and the Coronavirus Planning Task Force is co-chaired by Executive Vice Chancellor and COO Hector Batista and Senior Vice Chancellor for Institutional Affairs, Strategic Advancement and Special Counsel Glenda Grace. These task forces have been hard at work developing CUNY-wide guidelines that — along with feedback received from various campus-specific groups — will help inform decision-makers as they prepare their college's individualized, unit-level plans for reopening, which will require formal approval by the CUNY's central administration before they can take effect.

As you know all 12 sessions of our Summer Term are being conducted by distance learning, and student support services that are currently being provided remotely — including mental health counseling; advisement; library, enrollment

management, and career engagement services; student life; development; and inclusion programming — will continue to be delivered in the same way until further notice.

The safety of students, faculty and staff continues to be the primary consideration that guides all University decision-making involving the continuity of our operations. This includes decisions involving the fall semester. Because of the fluid and variable nature of the recovery and reopening efforts, no decision has been made yet about the possibility for resumption of on-campus instruction.

We understand that the uncertainty surrounding the in-person reopening of our campuses will require continued patience, but the circumstances demand a measured pace and the utmost prudence. I will continue to keep you informed of every development, and thank you for your dedication and hard work.

Before I finish, please know that I realize that the recent weeks and months have been exceptionally fraught. Just as the city was beginning to emerge from the pandemic shutdown, the murder of George Floyd by police in Minneapolis highlighted to all the pernicious evil of racism as well as the need for cultural and structural change in law enforcement and society. [As I said](#), universities can be the engines of change and badly needed reforms. CUNY is committed to being one of those engines. We are proud to serve one of the country's most diverse university communities, and I am firmly committed to building on that legacy.

Sincerely,

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