



County of Onondaga
Office of the County Executive

J. Ryan McMahon II
County Executive

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Media Release

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County Executive McMahon Declares State of Emergency; Schools to Close End of Day Friday, March 20th through End of Day April 13th, 2020; All Extra-Curricular Activities Cancelled Immediately

No confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Onondaga County

SYRACUSE, N.Y. – County Executive McMahon declared a State of Emergency in Onondaga County effective today in response to the COVID-19 outbreak in New York State. As of March 14th, 2020, there are zero confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Onondaga County.

The County Executive also issued a Declaration of Emergency effective Friday, March 20, 2020 at 4:00 P.M. through the end of day Monday, April 13, 2020 requiring all public and private schools in Onondaga County to close. This declaration will be revised to require schools to close on Wednesday, March 18 should a positive case of COVID-19 be identified in our community prior to Friday, March 20. This is a fluid situation and the return date could be altered depending on the most up to date data and facts available.

County Executive McMahon also announced that any absence of a student that stays home beginning Monday will be considered a legal absence. In other words, should a family decide to keep their child or children home immediately, they will not be penalized for doing so.

The decision for closing Friday, March 20 is multi-pronged. First, and foremost, there are zero confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Onondaga County. Secondly, families need time to develop plans for childcare, meals, etc. For many children in our community, breakfast and lunch are the only hot meal they receive. These are just some of the factors that must be taken into account when deciding to close schools.

County Executive McMahan also issued an additional Declaration of Emergency, effective immediately, cancelling all extra-curricular school activities for any public and private schools located within Onondaga County. This includes, but is not limited to, field trips, after school activities of any kind, sports practices and games, and clubs. This declaration is in effect through end of day April 13, 2020.

Finally, County Executive McMahan reminds community members that we all have a responsibility to each other. This means when you're at your local grocery store, be mindful to purchase only the supplies you need. He also reminded people that should they have symptoms to call their primary care doctor first. If they do not have a primary care doctor, they can call the recently established Upstate University Hospital COVID-19 Triage Line at 315-464-3979. Those who may need a higher level of assistance or additional resources are also encouraged to call 211 – our community resource line.

County Executive McMahan will continue to provide updates via Facebook Live daily.

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