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Looking Forward with a Look Back at New York on PAUSE

The last couple months have been a rather unsettling time for many businesses as New York State has battled COVID-19. Here is a brief overview of the developments that have occurred thus far.

On March 7, 2020, Governor Andrew Cuomo declared a state disaster emergency. Amid growing public health concerns over the outbreak, Governor Cuomo issued the “New York State on PAUSE” executive order on March 20th, and subsequently extended the PAUSE order into May, to keep all non-essential businesses and schools statewide closed for additional time. All essential businesses, including various manufacturing companies in Central New York and beyond, remained open during this period with strict safety procedures in place to keep their workers safe.

In early May, Governor Cuomo outlined a reopening plan that would be based on a regional approach, with regions required to meet certain metrics, such as a 14-day decline in COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths. Businesses considered “more essential” with a lower risk of infection were prioritized, followed by other businesses that were deemed “less essential” with a higher risk of potential infection spread. Phase One of the state’s New York Forward plan included Manufacturing and Wholesale Trade; Construction; Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting; and Retail (curbside or in-store pickup or drop off only).

The Central New York Region, along with the North Country, Finger Lakes, Mohawk Valley, and Southern Tier regions, were all approved to move into Phase One of reopening on May 15.

That meant companies in the approved industries (and all essential businesses) in those regions were required to go to the New York Forward website to review the state’s reopening guidelines and to affirm business compliance with the New York Forward reopening guidance.

Two weeks later, on May 29, the same five regions were approved to begin Phase Two of reopening. Phase Two included Offices; Real Estate; Essential and In-Store Phase II Retail; Vehicle Sales, Leasing, and Rental; Retail Rental, Repair, and Cleaning; Commercial Building Management; Hair salons and Barbershops; and Outdoor and Take-Out/Delivery Food Services.

The Capital Region and Western New York also moved into Phases One and Two, just a few days behind the first five regions, followed by the Long Island and Mid-Hudson regions. New York City began Phase One on June 8.

On June 12, the Central New York, Finger Lakes, Mohawk Valley, Southern Tier, and North Country regions began Phase Three Reopening.

Reopening guidelines apply to both non-essential businesses in regions that were permitted to re-open and essential businesses that were previously allowed to remain open. To access the New York Forward website, please visit <https://forward.ny.gov/>.

We know many of our member companies that were deemed essential and remained open, whether at full or partial capacity, have been meeting the challenges of this difficult time head on. They have been employing best safety practices, communicating effectively with their employees and customers, and using creative solutions to aid the COVID-19 pandemic—and for that, we applaud them.

Over the course of the last several weeks, we have tried to bring you the most up-to-date state and federal developments and connect you with our elected leaders through various digital offerings. We also have started a new online platform to highlight companies that have gone above and beyond in the New Normal, called “Voices of Manufacturing.” For the latest guidelines and updates, please visit our resources listing at macny.org/covid-19.