



## Northeast District Department of Health

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Ends**

Northeast District Department of Health Details Local COVID-19  
Wind Down and Recovery Plans

(BROOKLYN) – As the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) ended on May 11, 2023, the Northeast District Department of Health (NDDH) shared state and local recovery plans and next steps.

The PHE, declared on January 31, 2020, eased certain laws and regulations and provided funding to address the pandemic. The end of the PHE will more directly affect those measures, laws, and funding that were made available to combat COVID-19. Governor Ned Lamont’s declaration of a PHE under Connecticut law also ended on May 11<sup>th</sup>. [Click here to learn about the State of CT plans for demobilization and recovery.](#)

“The May 11th ending of the public health emergency does not mean the end of the COVID 19 virus...it’s here among us and will continue to be a public health priority,” said Linda Colangelo, NDDH Education and Communications Coordinator. “We are grateful to shift from the response phase of this pandemic to a recovery phase. There were many lessons learned, including that vaccination remains the best way to prevent the risk of hospitalization and death from COVID-19. We have made good use of the many tools, strategies, and efforts that were put to use these past three years and we will keep them ready for future events.”

Amanda Gonzalez, NDDH Public Health Programs Manager, joined NDDH in the first year of the pandemic and quickly coordinated data collection and mobile vaccination clinics with numerous community partners. “No one person or agency weathered this pandemic alone, and NDDH was fortunate to have strong partnerships in place with so many important community agencies,” she said. “From our own staff, board members, and Medical Reserve Corps, town leaders, schools, first responders, and emergency management directors to healthcare partners, faith-based organizations, civic groups, the business community, and so many

others...we worked together to keep our residents as safe as possible. We witnessed examples of personal and professional sacrifice everyday and are grateful to have played a part in this extraordinary experience.”

Gonzalez provided details of NDDH plans as they shift to the pandemic recovery phase:

- NDDH will continue to provide COVID-19 vaccinations by appointment and serve as a community link to people needing information and educational resources. Anyone interested in making an appointment for vaccination may call 860-774-7350 x. 128. • The COVID-19 pages on the NDDH website at <https://www.nddh.org/services/emergency-preparedness/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/> have been updated to include the most recent information regarding the end of the public health emergency and the continued prevention and treatment strategies for reducing the risk of COVID-19.
- NDDH has a small supply of COVID-19 test kits available at the NDDH office on 69 South Main Street in Brooklyn for those in need on a first come, first serve basis. • State DPH will make changes to their COVID-19 reporting and data collection to now align with the regular respiratory viral disease season (October thru May). NDDH will have the ability to make that information available to town leaders and other interested parties.
- NDDH will continue to provide respiratory illness prevention strategies through web and social media postings, public health presentations, lectures, displays, and community events.
- NDDH will participate in state and local efforts and exercises to review, assess, and continuously improve public health emergency planning and response.

“We know that most people moved on from COVID-19 quite some time ago, but it’s important to still practice the prevention tips that work - get vaccinated, get the updated booster, use at-home tests, stay home when you’re sick, wash your hands, and wear a high quality mask when respiratory viruses are circulating at high levels in our community,” shared Colangelo. “For those of us working in public health and other healthcare, service, and response industries, COVID-19 was undoubtedly the greatest challenge we faced. May 11<sup>th</sup> brought closure in making us feel as though we finally crossed the finish line of what seemed to be a never-ending marathon. The work still continues, but it feels good and feels right to bring this chapter to a close.”

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