



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF
COMMUNITY SERVICES/CSBG

Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor
Rossana Rosado, Secretary of State

June 2020

Greetings to our Community Action Agencies,

In the midst of the challenges we are facing and working to overcome managing the COVID-19 outbreak, we now face a major changing point not just for New York, but in the history of our country. For the first time since March, our newsfeeds are dominated by a different kind of crisis, but one that is stimulating the same emotions—fear, anxiety, uncertainty, anger, sadness.

As Governor Andrew M. Cuomo has noted, it is the marker of a society that is tired of seeing innocent people killed, a society that yearns for justice, and a society that has the opportunity to reflect, take action and improve. As a woman of color, a Latina, a mother, and as an American, I have been deeply affected by the death of George Floyd. His death and the many other senseless deaths before him, the long list of names mentioned by the Governor, are an indication of large and complex and painful societal problems that must be confronted. I am encouraged by our leadership in New York State to quickly seize this moment to pass nation-leading legislation to drive long overdue police and criminal justice reform.

Our Community Action Agencies function to bring critically important supports to people throughout the State of New York that are vital to the betterment of our communities. While your organization mission statements may vary from one another, you are all united in the goal of providing assistance to the communities we serve. More importantly, you are the voices of those most in need of the communities you serve. In partnering with you, DOS better serves all our constituents. We are grateful for your commitment to serve New Yorkers. We value your feedback, your passion for lifting your neighbors, and the dedication you demonstrate each day.

Thank you for all that you do. It is my hope that this moment will not mitigate the immense unity we have seen in the face of the pandemic, but will be a time for effective dialogue to promote changes that will make an impact. I look forward to our continued partnership in serving the people, the heart of New York.

Sincerely,
RR

Rossana Rosado
Secretary of State

Governor Cuomo signed Executive Order No. 204: Declaring Juneteenth a Holiday for New York State Employees on June 17, 2020. For the full text, click [here](#).

Agency Spotlight: JCEO



Despite the pause of the pandemic, there was one thing that kept going... I mean, *growing*... the vegetables.

The Joint Council for Economic Opportunity of Clinton and Franklin Counties' Mobile Farmer's Market began operating on June 8, 2020. The market consists of two mini-buses converted into stores, lined with bins for fresh produce and salad bars where customers can make their own mix of fresh-cut vegetables. The buses travel weekdays to towns across Franklin County and into parts of Clinton County,

stopping at over 20 locations to sell fresh produce and baked goods.

About 75% of the produce sold comes from JCEO's two greenhouses, which have remained fully operational during the pandemic. One of the greenhouses utilizes a hydroponics system and has the capability to produce 5,000 heads of lettuce each week, 10 months each year. JCEO recently received a grant through Adirondack Health Institute with help from the North Country Healthy Heart Network to add a hydroponics system to the second greenhouse! The agency also received a grant of \$70,223 from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation to help cover operational expenses of the Food Services Program, including greenhouse costs (staffing, supplies, overhead etc.).

Prior to the pandemic, a portion of the crops grown were sold to restaurants and schools to help offset the cost of the program. With these businesses being partially closed over the past few months, the extra produce was distributed to pantries throughout the North Country, including JCEO's new food pantry located at the Saranac Lake High School.

Prior to adding this location, Southern Franklin County was in dire need of additional food pantry services. There were other pantries available two days a week or people needed to travel to Malone, approximately 40 minutes away, to access a pantry. "The partnership we have formed with the school is unique and we are so grateful for their support to be able to provide this vital service in the Saranac Lake community," said Nicole Laurin, Development Director at JCEO.



JCEO received generous support from the community to make the food pantry at the Saranac Lake High School a reality. The schools provided the space and covers much of the overhead expenses. The agency received a \$6,000 grant from The Adirondack Foundation to assist with purchasing shelving, refrigerators, freezers etc. and \$1,100 from Casella Waste Systems to purchase Stewart's milk cards for this site. Casella is also sponsoring a "Children's Area" once the site is fully open to the public when things are more "normal".

JCEO also partnered with Glazier's Packaging/Food Service who received a USDA grant to help provide milk, dairy and produce across the region. The produce boxes include romaine and iceberg lettuce from JCEO's greenhouses. There have been three of these giveaway events between Clinton and Franklin Counties, with one additional giveaway scheduled, and others planned. A drone captured the last event in Franklin County, which had 860 cars drive through!

Congratulations, JCEO! Keep growing!

Office for New Americans Webinars:

Tuesday, June 30, 10:30am – 11:30am

Updates on the 2020 Census & Effective Get-out-the-Count (GOTC) Strategies

RSVP here: <https://forms.gle/HhEY1tNxsneWVpJ77>

The webinar presentation will feature discussion on the latest changes to the 2020 Census operational timeline and the remaining operations, the Census Response Rate Mapper and a brief tutorial, highlights in New York state and areas of focus moving forward, the Census Partnership Engagement Program and resources available for partners supporting the 2020 Census. The webinar will also cover Census messaging that is specifically catered to immigrant communities, how COVID-19 has impacted Census outreach work over the past three months, and strategies for how to continue this outreach in new and creative ways.

Jeff Behler, U.S. Census Bureau's New York Regional Director, and Meeta Anand, Census 2020 Senior Fellow, New York Immigration Coalition, will be presenting.

Link to join the meeting:

<https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/j.php?MTID=m5fb99d0db933e5a0e8cc1ca1fc86e9db>

Meeting password, if requested: ONA2020

Thursday, July 9, 10:30am – 11:30am

Mental Health and self-care first aid toolkit (Primeros auxilios psicologicos y autocuidado)

E-mail newamericans@dos.ny.gov to RSVP for this webinar.

This *Spanish* language webinar will provide exercises that facilitate the understanding of first aid mental health practices used by professionals who support migrants. Some graphics and publications will be shared. These best practices will help provide mental health first aid to the migrant community, who may be particularly vulnerable at this time. The webinar training will be delivered by [IBERO](#).

Here is the link to join the online meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85890945772>

Wednesday, July 15, 10:00am – 11:00am

Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) Food Benefit

E-mail newamericans@dos.ny.gov to RSVP for this webinar.

This webinar will feature provide a training led by [Hunger Solutions New York](#) on the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) Food Benefit, and other food and nutrition resources.

For information on the P-EBT Food Benefit, please visit <https://otda.ny.gov/SNAP-COVID-19/Frequently-Asked-Questions-Pandemic-EBT.asp> or <https://hungersolutionsny.org/covid-19/>.

Here is the link to join the online meeting: <https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/j.php?MTID=mb8f83ebfabc6773b96b8f5a08f3c8a72>.

Reminder: Rapid Appraisal Coronavirus

The Office for New Americans (ONA) is working with the Center for In Situ Policy Research to understand the impact in immigrant communities throughout NYS due to the COVID-19 crisis through a rapid appraisal to gather relevant information about the social and economic repercussions of the coronavirus crisis among the Latino immigrant population in order to identify especially vulnerable communities (hotspots); provide real-world data to assist in developing programs and projects to assist affected communities; justify requests for funding and/or other resources; and better target the delivery of financial support and assistance to those most affected.

In order to carry out this rapid appraisal, In Situ has created a brief online survey, which can be completed confidentially at <https://forms.gle/SjGRBfFczEf46JFo7>.

For further information or questions, email newamericans@dos.ny.gov.

Resources for responding to COVID-19

[Community Action Partnership: COVID-19 Community Needs Assessment](#)

[CAPLAW: Coronavirus Updates for the Community Action Network](#)

Free PPE for Community Based Organizations

The HHS Partnership Center is supporting HHS and FEMA's efforts to make face coverings widely available in order to limit the spread of COVID-19. The face coverings, produced and delivered in partnership with USPS and the National Council of Textile Organizations, are being made available to community-based organizations at no cost (and while supplies last).

Click [here](#) for more information on how to order.



COVID-19 has led to an early summer break and many families are spending more time outdoors. The New York Department of State's Division of Consumer Protection and Division of Community Services asks New Yorkers to follow these safety tips to ensure a safe summer for all.

Water Safety:

Being near water is a summer past-time, but drowning, a "silent killer", is the leading cause of accidental death in children between 1 and 4 years old. Keep these tips in mind while having fun in the water:

- An adult should always supervise young children when in or around water.
- Teach essential swimming skills: floating, breathing techniques and treading water.
- Install a four-sided isolation fence around home pools with self-closing and self-latching gates. The fence should separate the house and the pool area.
- Use life jackets if near natural bodies of water even if you know how to swim.

Grilling Safety:

Did you know that according to the National Fire Prevention Association, July is the peak month for grill fires? Grilling is one of the most popular ways to cook food. Follow these tips to be on your way to grilling safely:

- Charcoal and gas grills should only be used outdoors, away from any structures and not under wooden overhangs.
- Keep your grill clean and remove any grease buildup from the grill and the tray below.
- Have baking soda and a fire extinguisher nearby in case of a grease fire. Never use water to put out a grease fire.
- If using a propane grill, check for gas leaks before use.
- Never leave your grill unattended and keep children and pets away from the grill area.
- If you are using charcoal, let the charcoal cool completely before discarding it in a metal container.

The New York Department of State's Division of Consumer Protection and Division of Community Services wishes you a safe, healthy and fun-filled summer.

The New York State Division of Consumer Protection serves to educate, assist and empower the State's consumers. For more consumer protection information, call the Consumer Helpline at 800-697-1220, Monday through Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm. Consumer complaints can be filed anytime online at the Division website, www.dos.ny.gov/consumerprotection. Follow the Division at @NYSConsumer or www.facebook.com/nysconsumer.



NYS Census Update

As of, June 23rd, 2020, all NYS Census offices have resumed operations to achieve and ensure a complete and accurate Census count of New York State. The first focus for census offices is finalizing the “Update Leave” program—where questionnaires are delivered to households who do not receive mail directly—which is currently at 96% completion. Operations are also focusing on updating safety precautions for completing the count for the homeless population, as well as connecting with colleges and universities to count students through school rosters.

As a reminder, completing the Census is possible through their online questionnaire, filling out the physical questionnaire, as well as calling the call center.

Completing the Census through the phone takes approximately ten-minutes once connected with a representative. The call center is open from Monday-Sunday 7am-12am (Midnight).

For English speakers, call 844-330-2020.

You can complete the Census in over thirty languages. If language other than English is needed, visit the Census website for the direct line:

<https://2020census.gov/en/ways-to-respond/responding-by-phone.html>

Upon calling your direct language line some operators may have a long wait time, so feel free to request a callback when it is your turn.

Answering the census via phone, online, or mail does not impede the data, it’s important to ensure you and your household is counted to ensure your voice is heard.

Contracts

CARES contracts are due Monday, June 29, 2020.

The CARES contract documents have been released and sent to eligible agencies. Please contact your Program Analyst if you have questions.

The Newsletter Team invites everyone to share stories and pictures of interest via email. When sharing photos for the newsletter or DOS social media, please also send a completed Photo Release and Consent form.