
According to a recent update from New York Governor Cuomo the rate of infection of COVID-19 has increased at a rapid pace despite the effort to "flatten the curve" by putting New York state on PAUSE which included measures such as requiring that 100% of the workforce must stay home, excluding essential services among other measures. After the PAUSE was put into effect, the rate of infection from COVID-19 was supposed to slow. However, the rate of infection has accelerated exponentially. This will have detrimental impacts on hospitals, the capacity of patients that they can care for, and the amount of equipment like ventilators and personal protective equipment they will have access to. Currently, New York state accounts for at least 37,000 cases of COVID-19; this is a much higher reported level of infection than anywhere else in the country. Earlier last week, it was estimated that NY would hit its apex, or peak amount of cases, in about 45 days. Since then, it has been estimated that the apex will occur in NYS in 14-21 days. That would put the highest volume of cases occurring in mid to late April. “We haven’t flattened the curve, and the curve is actually increasing,” Mr. Cuomo said. “The apex is higher than we thought, and the apex is sooner than we thought. That is a bad combination of facts” said Governor Cuomo. (https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/24/nyregion/coronavirus-new-york-apex-andrew-cuomo.html)

In a recent address President Donald Trump, said that he wants the nation to "open up" by Easter (https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/24/politics/trump-easter-economy-coronavirus/index.html). This seems highly unlikely and extremely dangerous if the apex for COVID-19 isn't expected until late April in New York State. The apex nationally could take much longer to reach. On the other hand, it does give people a tentative or aspirational date to look forward to potentially ending the social distancing guidelines and start getting things "back to normal." However, an article prepared by Nicholas Kristoff in collaboration with epidemiologists provides an interactive model that allows the user to compare the effects of an early reduction of social distancing with extended isolation on infection rates. The article reports that “Dr. Larry Brilliant, an epidemiologist who is a veteran of the eradication of smallpox and is now the chairman of an organization called Ending Pandemics, warned that if Trump sends everyone back to work by Easter, “I think history would judge it an error of epic proportions.” (https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/03/25/opinion/coronavirus-trump-reopen-america.html).

For more updates on COVID-19, its effects on our community, and resources, please refer to the Wells College COVID-19 community updates page (https://www.wells.edu/news/updates-covid-19-campus-community). For Cayuga County information use this link (Cayuga County COVID-19 response).