

SGCDC

Spring Garden CDC's Covid-19 Neighborhood "Navigation" Guide February 5, 2021 Update

Back by popular demand is the Covid-19 Neighborhood Navigation Guide. **A lot has happened in the interim. We'll start with the good news first**, and there is some good news, despite the pandemic. We live in a great community!

Hats off to our **hardworking intrepid business owners** who have been staying afloat during these rough times through hard work and creative thinking. **See below.** And thanks to their **loyal patrons** for continuing to support them.

Thanks also to the **incredible generosity of neighbors and the Electricians Union** who, along with other donors, provided **over 550 meals for community families** in need over the winter holidays, and **over 500 toys and gifts**. The SGCDC and SGCA distributed them to low-income families in and near Spring Garden through SGCDC's extensive network of contacts in our public and affordable housing community; and Bar Hygge provided meals that residents bought to donate to the cause.

The SGCDC again provided **cheerful holiday lighting** on our Commercial Corridors, in the Roberto Clemente Playground, and at the Green Street Dog Park, and holiday storefront displays. **Brad Jamula** created an imaginative structure in the Playground for residents to decorate for the holidays and leave letters to Santa.

In this Guide, **read how residents can help local businesses** including for Super Bowl Sunday and for Valentine's Day. The Guide will also deal in depth with various aspects of the virus, including getting the vaccination. **Some good news on the virus as well: Virus infections and hospitalizations are, at least for now, beginning to decrease. However, this is not the time to let down your guard! See the reasons, below.**

How Local Businesses Are Coping with the Virus and Covid Restrictions After the Holiday Ban and the Winter Virus Surge

To avoid a surge in new cases during the holidays, in November 2020 the City banned indoor dining again (after reopening it in September) and reinstated restrictions on other businesses and institutions through the end of the holidays.

The City Allowed Indoor Dining Again, Starting Saturday January 16, 2021, But Only at 25% of Seating Capacity, With Parties of Up to 4 People, and Only from the Same Household; But Some Restaurants Will Not Be Participating Yet.

See the attached list and/or contact other restaurant(s) to learn if or when they will be hosting indoor dining.

Many Restaurants Still Offer Outdoor Dining in Streeteries, Patios, and Outdoor Cafes, Many with Heaters; and All Those That Have Remained Open Also Offer Takeout. Pretend you're in Europe, where outdoor winter dining is more common, and even chic. Bundle up and enjoy a hot meal outdoors at your favorite restaurant, or order takeout. See the attached list. **Please continue to support our local restaurants to help them survive the pandemic!**

Some Restaurants Have Gotten Creative with Their Offerings During the Period Without Indoor Dining:

Bar Hygge has installed five cozy 4-person wooden huts ("Hygge Huts") with heaters, in compliance with all City regulations in the streetry area in front of the restaurant for winter outdoor dining. They have become extremely popular, so you need to book early. Email Julie@BarHygge.com for a reservation at one of their "Hygge Huts" or call 215-765-2274. You can also still eat outdoors at one of their outdoor café tables. **Bar Hygge has also opened an online Wine Shop. Shop online and pick up your purchase at the door.** Click [here](#) to order and for pickup hours. Check their Facebook page and website www.barhygge.com for their latest offerings.

Thirsty Dice is Offering Zoom Game Nights for Groups of Any Size, Large or Small. We have tried the games, and they are great fun. **They are also still offering their Comfort Crates and Wine for takeout or delivery.** In addition, they have also partnered with Haven Board Game Rentals for a **new Thirsty Dice Game**

Rental Service. Pick up and return rental games at Thirsty Dice, 1642 Fairmount Ave., 17th St. side. Call them at 215-765-2679 or check their website for more information and to order at www.thirstydice.com. Also, check their Facebook page for their latest creative offerings.

Don't Forget to Order Takeout from a Local Business for This Sunday's Super Bowl Game (February 7, 6:30 PM) But Please, Per Dr. Fauci - - Avoid Super Bowl Parties Except with Your Immediate Family. Check restaurants' social media for specials. **Purchase a Thirsty Dice Super Bowl Comfort Crate, see their website above. Or a Party Box at South Restaurant for \$59.95,** or other comfort food, and their signature cocktails. Preorder now to pick up before the game. Visit www.SouthJazzKitchen.com to order or call 215-600-0220.

Valentine's Day is Just Around the Corner; It's a Great Time to Buy a Valentine's Gift or Meal at a Local Business, Including These and Other Great Establishments:

Beautiful Valentine's Day Flowers, Arrangements, and Plants at Plants Etc.

A Variety of Great Gifts at Ali's Wagon

Creative Jewelry and Pottery at The Neighborhood Potters

A Takeout Valentine's Meal or Outdoor Dining Meal at A Local Restaurant

A Basket of Goodies at Tela's Market & Kitchen

Board Games, Rental Games, Comfort Crates, Wine from Thirsty Dice

Craft Beers from Stone's Beer & Beverage Market

Wines and Craft Beers from Bar Hygge

A variety of Gifts, Books, and Other Items Ordered Online at Eastern State Penitentiary, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Barnes Foundation

Gift Certificates at all local restaurants, shops, markets, salons, exercise studios, and cultural Institutions

Membership in one of our Great Cultural Institutions

Books at Book Haven

Groceries and Gift Cards at Klein's, Old Nelson, Tela's, Museum Market

Delicious Keto Desserts at DessertCrazy

A Massage or Beauty Treatment at a Local Salon

A Gift from Fairmount Hardware/General Store

An Art, Jewelry, Sculpture or Pottery Gift, Cerulean Arts Gallery & Studio

Some Restaurants are Closed Temporarily, but Plan to Reopen in the Late Winter or Spring; Some May Have Pop-Up Events in the Meantime: They include St. Stephen's Green, Jack's Firehouse, Urban Saloon, A Mano, Cicala, Clementine's Stable Café, and McCrossen's, among others. Check their social media for re-openings and pop-up events.

WarmDaddy's was originally scheduled to open in November 2020 at 1410 Mt. Vernon St., at the former site of Marc Vetri's Alla Spina; but it won't open until 50% indoor dining occupancy is allowed by the City.

Status of Other Philadelphia and PA Businesses and Institutions, Current Restrictions:

- Click [here](#) for the current restrictions on Philadelphia businesses. In addition to requirements for mask wearing, social distancing, barriers, and handwashing, the general restrictions for many Philadelphia businesses are listed below. For further information/additional guidance on best practices and specific recommendations for each activity, see the link above.

Indoor dining is limited to 25% of the stated fire code occupancy for seated dining. Colleges can resume in person classes. Theaters and performance venues can open but are limited to 10% of maximum occupancy, including staff. Gyms and exercise studios may not exceed 10% of total occupancy or 10 persons per 1,000 square feet if total occupancy is unknown. Casinos, bowling alleys, movie theaters, etc. are limited to a maximum of 10 total staff and patrons for every 1,000 square feet of public and non-public space

in the facility and cannot allow eating, drinking, or smoking on-site.

Personal Service Providers, including Barber shops and salons are advised to schedule appointments only, no walk-ins, to symptom screen customers before making appointments, and to use face shields, additional barriers, and even eye protection for some services. For more guidance on these activities, see the link above and search for “Personal Service Providers.”

Museums are limited to a maximum of 10 total staff and clients for every 1,000 square feet of public and non-public space in the facility. **Religious Institutions’** indoor gatherings may not exceed 10% of maximum occupancy, even with masks and safe distancing. If maximum occupancy is unknown, 10 persons per 1,000 square feet are permitted. No more than 250 persons are permitted. No food is permitted indoors.

The School District of Philadelphia Has Announced the Return to Hybrid Classes Starting February 22, 2021 with teachers and staff to return Monday February 8.

The fear is that students are falling further and further behind, as the pandemic continues, especially students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Hence, the desire to get them back to an in-person learning environment. Stay tuned for further announcements. The teachers’ union has instituted an arbitration contesting the use of window fans to ventilate 1000 classrooms lacking air flow. The Philadelphia Federation of Teachers is now telling members not to report to school on Monday, due to safety concerns.

The Virus Numbers and Statistics

The U.S. Continues to Exceed Frightful New Virus Milestones, Weekly, with 26.7 million infections as of Feb 4, 2021 (Over 863,000 of those cases were in PA, and over 111,000 of those were in Philadelphia), 456,000 dead, and With New Variants Coming in, see below. Check out these extremely concerning statistics:

The U.S. Has Had 25% of the World’s Infections but Has Only 4% of its population.

In Los Angeles County, 1 in 3 residents have been infected since the start of the pandemic.

January 2021 was the deadliest month of the pandemic, with over 97,000+ deaths, of the 440,000 deaths so far. The daily death rate

remains stubbornly high, at over 3000 per day, despite falling daily infection counts and the arrival of multiple vaccines.

While infection rates and hospitalizations have, thankfully, been decreasing recently, this is not the time to let down our guard, including because of the new variants of the virus coming into the country, see below, until a critical mass of the population has been vaccinated.

The Vaccines, How They Work, Why the Chaos, Uncertainty, Delays, and Lack of Supplies, When/Where Can I Get the Vaccine, Immunity Issues, the Mutations/Variants

When and Where Can I get the Vaccine in the bizarre and complex vaccine distribution system, see below.

Two Covid-19 Vaccines Have Been Authorized for Emergency Use, Another Has Just Applied For FDA Emergency Use Authorization, and Two More Will Soon Be Applying for Authorization in the U.S., What Are They and How Do They Work?

In December 2020, the FDA authorized two Covid-19 vaccines for emergency use, first **Pfizer-BioNTech's**, and then **Moderna's**. Both have shown to be approximately 95% effective in preventing the disease in adults, at least for some period of time, and for some versions of the disease (see variants below), after the requisite 2 doses. Both were originally said to require 2 doses, with Pfizer's 21 days apart and Moderna 28 days. Both are mRNA vaccines ("Messenger RNA"). Traditional vaccines put a weakened or inactivated germ into the body to trigger an immune reaction. In an mRNA vaccine, in a simplified explanation, the vaccine teaches the body's cells how to make a protein or a piece of protein that triggers an immune response. Fortunately, scientists had been researching the possibility of an mRNA vaccine for many years. It is not a new technology. The news media have reported on the early work of a Penn scientist Katalin Kariko, a Hungarian immigrant, who was scorned, doubted, and demoted for her research in this area. It's a good thing she and others persevered because it was her and her colleagues many years of work, in difficult conditions, that ultimately enabled the rapid development of mRNA vaccines after the pandemic began. Without the early research, it would have taken far longer to develop a vaccine.

Johnson & Johnson also has a new vaccine, for which FDA emergency use authorization has just been applied, which is said to be 66% effective overall, but 85% against severe symptoms. And, starting 28 days after the shot, researchers have not yet found one case of a vaccinated person who needed hospitalization or died. **It also only requires one dose and can easily be transported and stored, which some think may be a game changer to get more people vaccinated.** It uses a different technology than Pfizer and Moderna (a type of adenovirus gene to deliver genes that produce the same proteins). **The company applied for emergency use authorization on Thursday February 4, and the FDA panel will meet on the issue on Feb. 26. Authorization may be granted in March.** Also, **Novavax** (made in the U.S. but tested in the UK) was shown to be 89.3 % effective in the trials, with 2 doses 21 days apart. **Novavax** also does not rely on the mRNA technology but rather injects coronavirus proteins into the patient. It has not yet been authorized for emergency use. **Astra Zeneca** also has a vaccine (which requires 2 injections) that has been approved for use in the EU for all ages, but some EU members are limiting it to those under 65 years of age because of a lack of data on its effectiveness in older age groups. It appears that the Astra Zeneca vaccine may not be authorized in the U.S. until the Spring. **In the UK, studies showed that, even spacing the Astra Zeneca 2nd dose out for 3 months, it produced a 76% efficacy result.**

Experts Advise to Take the First Authorized Vaccine That Is Offered to You, for a few reasons, including: 1.) They point out that at this stage, there is no point in comparing efficacy rates for the different vaccines to “choose” which one to get, because the data sets are derived from information and circumstances that are constantly changing, and the current rates may not be comparing apples to apples. 2.) All of the authorized vaccines protect against hospitalization and death. 3.) To stop the spread of the COVID-19, the mutation that causes it, and the resulting economic fallout, we all need to be vaccinated as quickly as possible. 4.) If you are offered the J&J vaccine, there are some upsides including the one-and-done dosage, seemingly fewer serious side effects, and easy storage and handling that may make the J&J vaccine easier to distribute, especially in rural areas and those that lack access to specialized ultracold freezers.

Initially, the Vaccine Was Being Allocated, Delivered, and Administered at the State and Local Level, and Federal Partners, Had No National Plan, But Changes Are in the Works: The Federal government is contacting and paying for, and providing, the vaccine. Sadly, the vaccines’ rollout, although authorized as early

as December 2020, has, like the pandemic response overall, suffered from the lack of a coordinated national policy and inadequate supplies. Vaccines have been purchased by the federal government and shipped to states and cities in varying amounts pursuant to an allocation plan. The vaccines were then administered locally, based on priorities determined at the local level, see below. Apparently, however, the federal allocations were made weekly, leaving local jurisdictions without the ability to make long term plans. **Under the new Administration, supplies are increasing, and some supplies are being sent directly to health care providers, see below.**

Administration of the Vaccine in Philadelphia: Until recently, the vaccinations have been under the jurisdiction of the Philadelphia Health Department, to be administered under the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) and Philadelphia’s Vaccine Advisory Committee (“VAC”). Phila has submitted a distribution plan to the CDC. **But under the new Biden Administration, vaccine shipments will now go directly to some pharmacies and other health care institutions, to increase the speed of vaccinations. See e.g., the Federal Retail Pharmacy Covid Program, below.**

Will I need to Pay for the Vaccine? No, you will not be charged. The federal government is covering the cost of the vaccine, including through arrangements with insurers.

Who Decides Who Gets the Vaccine? Who gets vaccinations, when and where, depends on the priorities developed by state and local authorities.

Who is Currently Eligible for the Vaccine in PA and Phila? As the vaccine is still in short supply, the City and the State have created tiers of eligibility of those entitled to receive the vaccine. Supplies are increasing under the new Administration, but for now the tiers are as follows:

Pennsylvania Vaccination Priorities: As of February 4, 2021, PA is currently vaccinating PA Tier 1A (Philadelphia has its own set of priority tiers and vaccination plan - see below). In PA, the first tier, 1A, includes Covid-19 facing health care workers, long-term health care facilities, persons 65 and older, and persons 16-64 with a list of high-risk medical conditions.

Philadelphia’s Vaccine Priorities Are Similar to the State’s, but residents 75 and older are in the 2nd tier, 1B, and there are more people in the first tier. Phila is

not yet vaccinating those in the 65 and older group. As of February 4, Philadelphia is working to vaccinate Philadelphia Tiers 1A and 1B. Click for the [Pennsylvania](#) and [Philadelphia](#) vaccination priority tiers and current status.

The Disappearing Federal Stockpiles: The prior Administration announced that they would release the federal stockpile of vaccines that had been held back for 2nd doses, to speed up vaccinations. However, it turned out that the stockpiles that were to be released were non-existent and had already been exhausted. States and Cities were left with many clamoring for the vaccination, with drastically insufficient supplies.

Will I Get to Choose the Vaccine I get, the Pfizer-BioNTech or the Moderna, or another vaccine, if authorized No, as of now you do not get a choice.

Where Can I sign Up for the Vaccine, and When and Where Can I Get Vaccinated? There is, as yet, no efficient system in Philadelphia to sign up to get an appointment for the vaccine. Philadelphia finally has a registration link for the vaccine. **Click [here](#), to register with the Philadelphia Department of Health to receive information about available vaccinations for your respective distribution group, and, they are now saying, a link to how you can make an appointment.** To date, Philadelphia has administered over 109,000 first dose vaccinations and over 40,000 second doses.

The City Also Has a Hotline for Those Without Internet to Make Appointments. 215-685-5488. We imagine the line will be swamped with calls.

Where are Vaccinations Being Offered in Philadelphia and Nearby Areas?

Philadelphia Will be Opening 6 New Mass Vaccination Sites Soon, and the first has already opened at the Convention Center, on February 3. We will advise as this rollout occurs. If the system works, and you are eligible and have registered with the City, you should get a notice from the City.

We are told that Walgreens still has appointments for Tier 1A and 1B eligible individuals. Go to their website [here](#). New appointment times are added regularly. You will need to register for an account and complete a short questionnaire to find available appointments. ***But as vaccine supplies are still scarce, at least for now, it will take constant effort to snag an appointment there or at other sites.***

In its New Federal Retail Pharmacy Program, in Phase I, the Federal government will be shipping an initial 1 million doses of the vaccines directly to 6,500 pharmacies throughout the country, starting on February 11. In subsequent phases, they plan to ship to 21 “national pharmacy partners and networks of independent pharmacies, representing over 40,000 pharmacies.” Pharmacies have been the mainstay for flu vaccinations for years. We will try to provide information on any pharmacies near us that get shipments. **The plan is to vaccinate over 100 million people in 100 days through this program. The pharmacies have been selected by the CDC. *It is not clear if or which PA pharmacies will be included in the first shipments.***

Some Rite Aid and ShopRite Pharmacies in the City will have the vaccine the week of February 8, as will Walgreens, apparently through a different allocation system, to be administered by appointment to those over 75, in addition to health care workers and other essential workers. As noted, those who sign up on the City’s notification link will supposedly be advised when the pharmacies are ready for their group. **Also, the Fairmount Health Center, 1412 Fairmount Ave., a federally funded health clinic, will soon have the vaccine for its eligible patients.**

Some Wegmans Pharmacies outside of Philadelphia and are currently taking appointments, but they are extremely hard to get. You can find their appointment site [here](#).

What Else Can I do to Get the Vaccine, if I Qualify? Check local pharmacies’ websites regularly. Check with your doctor and hospital. You can also look for appointments in other jurisdictions, for example, surrounding counties; but some have criticized the practice, except in areas where there is a lot of skepticism about the vaccine and vaccine supplies could go unused.

Philadelphia Says it Expects to be Vaccinating the General Public at its Nearly 10,000 Pharmacies in April and May.

Can Children and Young Teens Get Vaccinated? No, not yet. The Pfizer vaccine has only been authorized, for emergency use, in individuals 16 years and older, and the Moderna vaccine for those 18 years and older. The vaccines have not been tested for use in younger people. And it has been difficult to get volunteers in that age group for further testing. Most children and teens are not yet eligible anyway, as they are in Tier 2, which will not be open for some time.

Should/Can Pregnant Women Get Vaccinated? The World Health Organization (“WHO”) initially recommended against vaccinating pregnant women with the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, unless they were at risk of exposure or of having a severe case, because the vaccines were not tested on pregnant women. However, they have since reversed that advice and have joined with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists which advises that it is safe for them to get vaccinated. *Follow the advice of your health care provider.*

What About the PhillyFightingCovid Site? This is a Private Group, With No Medical Expertise, and the City Has Recently Cut All Ties with It; Use the City’s Registration Site, Above, Instead. Inexplicably, the City had initially partnered with this group, led by a 22-year-old Drexel grad student, with no medical staff, to run a vaccine registration website and provide mass vaccinations for individuals in the first tiers. A scheduled mass vaccination at the Convention Center by the group was chaotic, in part, as more appointments were made than vaccine available. Many individuals in their 80s and even 90s, with confirmed appointments, and who had struggled to get there, were left without a vaccination. It has also been reported that vaccines were being administered by unqualified individuals. The group had also announced that it would be a for-profit organization, and it was reported that they also planned to sell data. A recent report alleged that the founder left the vaccination site taking with him, for whatever purpose, leftover supplies of the vaccine and provided them to friends and family. A City Council investigation has been launched, and it is promising tighter oversight over those administering vaccines for the City. City contracts will now be required. The owner has denied the allegations.

What if I Got My First Shot from PhillyFightingCovid? The City is supposed to notify all those who got their first shot from this group when and where they can get their second shot.

When Does Immunity Start and How Long Does It Last? A recent Pfizer study showed that immunity started 7 days after the 2nd dose. It is not clear when immunity kicks in with the Moderna vaccine but probably no longer than a few weeks. Recent studies have said that those who were infected may have antibodies for at least 6 months, but little is currently known about how long immunities last from an infection or from the vaccine, including against the new variants.

Will the Current Covid Vaccines Protect Against the New Virus

Mutations/Variants? There are currently 3 known variants of the Covid-19 virus, the UK, Brazilian, and South African, and a 4th “variant of the variants”. All but the 4th have now been found in the U.S. They are:

- B.1.1.7 (“The U.K. Variant”) was originally discovered in the U.K. There is evidence that this variant is as much as 50% more transmissible and more quickly spread among a population, but no evidence to date of increased severity of illness or risk of death. As of writing, there are 611 known cases in the US, including 12 in PA. It has been detected in at least 33 states. It is predicted that it will become the dominant strain in the U.S. Some health officials warn of a “Category 5 hurricane” from this new strain.
- 1.351 (“The South Africa Variant”) was originally discovered in South Africa, though it shares some mutations with the U.K. variant. Five cases have recently been detected in the US - two in South Carolina and three in Maryland.
- P.1 and P.2 (“The Brazil Variant”) The P.1 variant was detected in four travelers from Brazil to Japan. It appears that this variant may have additional unique mutations that may affect its ability to be recognized by antibodies. The CDC has reported 2 cases of P.1 found in Minnesota.
- A new “variant of the variants”, E484K, has now been found in the UK. It is feared that has the potential to escape antibody protection. Little is known about it yet.

As noted, not much is known at this time about whether the existing and new vaccines protect against the variants, and to what extent. **However, in mass vaccinations in Israel, the Pfizer vaccine was found to be effective against the U.K. strain. Both Moderna and now Pfizer are also working on booster shots to protect against the variants. The existence of variants is detected by gene sequencing, something the U.S. has fallen behind on compared to other countries.**

Can I Still Contract or Spread the Virus Even if I Got Vaccinated? A perfect vaccine would 1) stop you from acquiring the disease altogether, 2) stop onward transmission, and 3) stop symptoms. The vaccines were tested to see if they could prevent serious illness and symptoms, and death. There is no clear answer yet on

the issue of transmission, but researchers believe that in some cases, you can still spread the disease to others even if you have been vaccinated. **Pfizer is currently conducting tests on the issue of transmission of the virus by vaccinated individuals.** The vaccine also takes a while to provide immunity, even after the second shot. You can still contract it while your body is building up immunity. It is also not 100% effective, although some of the vaccines are close. So, for all these reasons, even if you are vaccinated, you should still wear a mask and avoid gatherings until more information is available, and a critical mass of the population is immunized.

How Many People Need to Be Vaccinated to Get Back to Normal? Doctor Fauci says that 75-85% of the population needs to be vaccinated to return to our normal way of life. So far, we have vaccinated only 2% of the U.S. population.

Should Providers Hold Back Vaccines for the Second Shots? Many (including the White House) are advocating that providers vaccinate as many people as they can now with the first shot, to provide some level of immunity, and not hold back vaccine for the 2nd shot. The White House is promising a more rapid distribution of the vaccine, to provide the 2nd shots.

What Age Groups Are Spreading the Virus? Some recent studies claim that those in the age group 20 to 49 are responsible for spreading as much as 72% of the infections and should potentially be vaccinated sooner. Current models provide for older individuals to receive the vaccine first.

State and Local Governmental Covid-19 Responses

Philadelphia COVID-19 Restaurant and Gym Relief Program: The Philadelphia Department of Commerce is offering grants of up to \$15,000 to restaurants (which had offered indoor dining before the November restrictions), gyms, and businesses whose primary business is indoor exercise. The program is designed to provide relief to those businesses that were most heavily impacted by the November 2020 restrictions, which included the temporary prohibition of indoor dining. For more information, or to apply, click [here](#).

Philadelphia is Offering a 3rd Round of Rent Relief for those Who Applied in Rounds 1 and 2 But Were Not Accepted. Certain conditions apply. The deadline to apply is February 12. Click [here](#) to apply. Phase 4 will open in March.

Download COVID Alert PA to receive alerts about whether you have had a possible exposure to someone who has tested positive. You can download the app directly from your app store or wherever you add apps to your device.

First Time Unemployment Claims Last Week Were 779,000, The Lowest Point in Two Months, But Still Historically Higher Than Any Time Pre-Virus. The new weekly number is about four times higher than the pre-crisis level, but the overall number is far better than the peak of almost 7 million during the stay-at-home orders starting back in March 2020.

PA Is Enacting Legislation That Could Provide Grants of up to \$50,000 to Small Businesses, Mostly in the Hospitality Industry, That Have Had a 25% Decrease in Revenues.

PA Will Also Once Again Offer Grants of up to \$50,000 to Small Businesses Under the PA COVID-19 Small Business Assistance Program, if Funded in the Latest Federal Relief Package.

A List of Grants for Women-Owned Businesses Can Be Found [Here](#).

The Public Utility Commission Ruled That Shutoffs for PUC Regulated Utilities (PGW and PECO) Could Begin Again as of November 9. Individuals who qualify as “protected customers,” based on income, can avoid shut off until March 31. Click [here](#) for more information and for links to assistance programs. If you do not qualify based on income, you can still get help. The PUCs order requires 10 days’ notice before sending a 10-day termination letter. During that time, you can ask for a payment arrangement or ask for a medical certificate and a 30 day hold on any shutoff (regardless of income) if someone in the household has a medical condition that will get worse with the shutoff. E.g., a diabetic who needs to refrigerate insulin. The PUC also has a winter moratorium for service shutoffs through March 31 for individuals of certain income levels; but this does not indicate that service, once shut off, will get turned back on.

Comcast is Increasing Internet Speeds on Its Free or Low-Cost Service for Low Income Residents (Internet Essentials), To Aid Homebound Students, and Postponing Fees for Heavy Data Users. The updates go into effect March 1.

Federal Covid-19 Responses

Second Round of “PPP” Paycheck Protection Program: The U.S. Small Business Administration (“SBA”) recently reopened the “PPP” Program both for first-time applicants and a new second draw program that allows businesses that received an earlier PPP loan to apply for a second loan, if they have experienced greater than 25% decrease in income. Both rounds of loans are forgivable if the money is spent for eligible payroll and some other business-sustaining expenses. For more information, visit the SBA’s PPP website [here](#).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) Has Extended the Federal Eviction Moratorium Until March 31. The problem with moratoriums, however, is that the debt does not go away, it just keeps accumulating.

The Biden Administration Has Proposed a \$1.9 Trillion Covid Relief Package. It includes another \$1400 in stimulus checks for those who earned less than \$75,000 in 2020. **A group of 10 Republicans proposed an alternative \$618 billion package,** that would lower the amount to \$1000, and make the cutoff income level far lower (resulting in 29 million fewer individuals eligible for stimulus). The Administrations package includes much-needed aid to state and local governments who have been hard hit by the pandemic. The alternative proposal had no State and local aid. The Administration is proposing \$170 billion for schools, but the alternative proposed \$20 billion. The Biden plan includes a national \$15 an hour minimum wage; the alternative proposal did not deal with the issue. The federal minimum wage is currently at \$7.25 an hour. The Biden package seeks \$400 per week additional unemployment benefits through September 2021, including many who typically do not qualify for unemployment vs. \$300 through June 2021, and proposes \$160 billion for vaccines and testing, to launch vaccination centers, purchase more rapid tests, expand lab capability, and provide PPE. Congress passed \$4 trillion in Covid-19 aid in 2020.

In Light of the Above Opposition, the Biden Administration is Pursuing a Non-Bipartisan Passage of its Covid Relief Bill, Through the “Budget Reconciliation Process”, which Requires a Simple Majority. But they have indicated a possible willingness to compromise on some issues. Per the new Treasury Secretary, Janet Yellen, without a significant relief package, the Country “could be mired in the Covid crisis for years”. ***The Senate passed a budget resolution bill Thursday Feb. 4, with the Vice President casting the tie-breaking vote. On Friday, the House***

passed the budget resolution, making passage of the Covid relief one step closer.

President Biden Has Signed the Following Executive Orders, Among Others, to Begin to Deal Effectively with the Spread of the Pandemic and Its Effects:

Requiring Masks to Be Worn in All Federal Buildings and Properties, Including Parks and To Encourage Mask Wearing Across America.

Pausing Student Loan Payments During the Pandemic.

Requiring Masks to Be Worn on All Forms of Public Transportation, Including, Trains, Planes, Buses and Airports.

Invoking the Defense Production Act to Ramp Up Production of Covid Supplies.

Expanding Food Assistance Programs Through a 15% Increase in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Allowing the States to increase SNAP Emergency benefits and student food benefits.

Ordering Federal Agencies to Identify Actions They Can Take Under Existing Authority to Provide Pandemic Relief

Imposing Strict Travel Bans on Non-U.S. Citizens Seeking to Enter the Country From the UK, 26 European Countries, Brazil, and South Africa.

The CDC Also Now Requires Anyone Flying into the Country to Provide Proof of a Negative Covid-19 Test, No More Than 3 Day Before Departure.

Masks, and Other Health Issues

With Some More Transmissible Variants Now in the U.S., Some Health Experts Are Advocating Double Masks - - For Example, a Cloth Mask and a Surgical Mask. N95 masks are even better, but, while still in short supply, those supplies should be reserved for health care professionals. Some doctors have also pointed out that, if worn properly, N95 masks are uncomfortable to breathe in for more than short periods of time. Some suggest trying KN95 or KF94.

New Reports Advise That A Newly Discovered Side Effect of the Virus May Be the Development of Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes. Health experts don't know why, and it's not clear if it would be a permanent side effect. Just another reason you should not let down your guard.

Despite the Surging Virus, and Hospitals Overburdened with Covid Patients, Some Are Making it a Point of Honor to Flout Restrictions as a Political Statement, and in the Name of "Freedom". For example, dozens of Michigan restaurants have stayed open, in defiance of the regulations, and draw patrons from far away who wish to make a political statement. In the meantime, Michigan hospitals are at capacity and some have been required to spend scarce funds to hire travelling health care workers and house them in hotels.

A Common-Sense Way of Staying Safe While in A Car with Non-Family Members. To reduce airborne transmission while driving, if the passengers are not from your immediate family group, open all the windows or at least one in the front and one in the back.

Chemotherapy Treatment in the Age of Covid: To avoid at-risk cancer patients contracting the virus while receiving chemo treatments in a hospital or an outpatient setting, Penn Medicine has been providing patients with the ability to administer chemo at home. Nurses go to the patient's home, set up the system and administer the first injections. After that, the patient wears a backpack which provide the chemo infusions, while they are free to go about their lives.

Returning to work after an exposure or positive test – no retesting is required or recommended after following a prescribed procedure: The Philadelphia Department of Health, along with other government and medical bodies, are recommending the following procedure for returning to work. **TESTING:** If experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, an employee should be tested as soon as possible. After an exposure to someone else with COVID-19, an employee should immediately quarantine while monitoring for symptoms, but does not need to be tested unless symptoms develop. **QUARANTINING:** After a possible exposure or if experiencing symptoms, one should quarantine for a minimum of 10 days. **RETURNING TO WORK:** An employee who tests negative and/or does not experience symptoms after 10 days of quarantine may return to work. An employee who tests positive and who notices improved symptoms during a minimum of 10 days of quarantine after symptom onset and 24+ hours without a

fever (without the aid of a fever reducer) may return to work without any further testing. Some severe cases of illness will require a longer quarantine period, if symptoms have not improved. For CDC Guidance on Quarantining, click [here](#). For Phila Department of Health Guidance on Returning to Work, click [here](#).

Have Your Doctor Arrange for Testing if You Think You Have Been Exposed or Find A Free Testing Site in Philadelphia at www.phila.gov/testing.

Help the City Trace Your Contacts if You Have Tested Positive and Stay Anonymous if You Want: Click [here](#).

Eli Lilly's Monoclonal Antibody Drug, "Bamlanivimab," Designed to Kick-Start an Immune Response to the Disease, Has Cut Hospital Stays by Covid-19 Patients By 70%, When Combined with Etesevimab, Another Monoclonal Antibody.

In November 2020, the Supreme Court Upheld the Affordable Care Act ("ACA") Against a Challenge of Unconstitutionality by the Trump Administration.

President Biden signed an Executive Order Opening Up Enrollment of ACA health insurance coverage for a 3 Month Period Starting Feb 15. Enrollment is typically limited to November 1 through December 15.

Other Countries, How Are They Doing?

The U.K Has Been on Another Tight Lockdown, as a Result of the New More Contagious UK Variant. But there is some evidence that the UK's mass vaccination campaign is beginning to blunt the pandemic there.

Russia's Sputnik V Vaccine is 91.6% Effective Against Symptomatic Covid and 100% Effective Against Severe Covid, Per A Preliminary Lancet Report.

Recreation, Events, Cultural Institutions

The Philadelphia St. Patrick's Day Parade, Which Would (as Reported) Have Been in its 250th Year, Has Been Cancelled: The next Parade will be March 13, 2022.

The May 2021 Broad St. Run Has Been Postponed Until a DATE TBD in the Fall of 2021. The 10-mile run, a tradition for 40 years, which was cancelled in 2020, was postponed this year on account of Covid, to the fall of 2021. Stay tuned.

Eastern State Penitentiary to Reopen in March 2021. You can still support them by becoming a member. Also, view interesting online content, make a purchase at their online store, and/or participate in their First Tuesday speaker program, the very informative **“Searchlight” Series, the First Tuesday of Every Month, 6 PM to 7 PM, by Zoom or on Facebook.** Visit their Events site [here](#) for more information.

The Philadelphia Museum of Art reopened January 8 with new hours, Sat., Sun., Mon. 10AM to 5 PM, Fri 10 AM to 8:45 PM. Pay what you wish Fri. 5 PM to 8:45, Advance ticket purchase recommended. **The Barnes Foundation** is open Friday to Monday, 10 AM to 5 PM. **The Rodin Museum** is closed through Spring 2021, and **Perelman** is currently closed.

The Dilworth Park Rothman Ice Rink is Open Until February 28, 7 Days a Week. 1 S. 15th St. (West side of City Hall). Sled skating is available for children with disabilities. Click [here](#) for more information and hours. **The Rothman Orthopaedics Cabin in Dilworth is Also Still Open for Food and Drink in a Cozy Atmosphere, with Festive Lighting, an Open-Air Layout, and Heaters.** Click [here](#) for more information. **Stroll the Wintergarden at the Greenfield Lawn, at Dilworth Park, 1 S. 15th St (West side of City Hall),** with whimsically crafted reindeer topiaries, festive lights, a rustic arbor, and seating. Adults can purchase warm mulled wine at the Chaddsford Kiosk. Click [here](#) for more information and hours.

All of Our City’s Cultural Institutions Have Been Hit Hard by the Pandemic Restrictions; Become a Member, and/or Make a Donation, if You Are Able, to Help them Weather the Pandemic: In our area, they include Eastern State Penitentiary, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Rodin Museum, the Barnes Foundation, Please Touch Museum, the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, and the Franklin Institute. Become a member now!

Financial

Stimulus Payments: Legislation providing for \$600 in additional stimulus payments for those earning up to \$75,000 a year was passed in December 2020. Click [here](#) to check the status of your payment. ***If you did not get your payment, or received less than the full amount, you can claim it on a 2020 tax return as a Recovery Rebate Credit.***

Free Online Income Tax Filing Services: The IRS has also teamed with several income tax preparers to provide a free online filing service for those who made less than \$72,000 a year in 2020. Click [here](#).

Local Businesses – Ongoing Offerings

The Following Restaurants are Currently Offering Outdoor Dining:

Bar Hygge	1720 Fairmount Ave.	215-765-2274
Bishop's Collar*	2349 Fairmount Ave.	215-765-1616
Fare	2028 Fairmount Ave.	215-763-5500
The Green Room*	1940 Green St.	215-241-6776
Juno	1033 Spring Garden St.	267-639-2892
Kelliann's*	1549 Spring Garden St.	215-563-6990
La Calaca Feliz*	2321 Fairmount Ave.	215-787-9930
Little Pete's (has a tent)*	2401 Pennsylvania Ave.	215-232-5001
Zorba's*	2230 Fairmount Ave.	215-978-5990

* = also offers reduced capacity Indoor Dining.

Takeout Food:

All of the restaurants listed above, but call them to be sure; Plus:

The Better Box	1519 Spring Garden St.	267-858-4143
Bishop's Collar*	2349 Fairmount Ave.	215-765-1616
City View Pizza*	1547 Spring Garden St.	215-564-1910
Engimono Poke & Deli*	2319 Fairmount Ave.	215-454-6669
Engimono Sushi*	1811 Fairmount Ave.	267-273-0303
Fairmount Pizza*	2000 Fairmount Ave.	215-763-4000

Green Soul	1410 Mt. Vernon St.	215-660-9600
Ipho*	1921 Fairmount Ave.	215-763-7777
I-Tea*	1537 Spring Garden St.	215-665-8886
Kansai Sushi	1822 Spring Garden St.	215-568-0888
King of Tandoor	1824 Callowhill St.	215-568-0750
LaScala's Pronto*	1501 Spring Garden St.	215-751-0200
Luigi's Pizza Fresca*	2401 Fairmount Ave.	215-769-8888
Mangia Macaroni	1543 Spring Garden St.	215-563-1690
Old Nelson	1500 Spring Garden St.	267-519-2239
Pete's Famous Pizza	2328 Fairmount Ave.	215-765-3040
Rybread	1711 Fairmount Ave.	215-769-0603
Sakura Japanese Cuisine	1521 Spring Garden St.	215-569-3838
Santucci's Pizza*	656 N. Broad St.	215-763-4448
South Jazz Kitchen	600 N. Broad St.	215-600-0220
Stockyard Sandwich Co.	1541 Spring Garden St.	215-977-9273
Tela's Market & Kitchen	1833 Fairmount Ave.	215-235-0170
Thirsty Dice	1642 Fairmount Ave.	215-765-2679
Umai Umai	533 N. 22 nd St.	215-988-0707

* = also offers reduced capacity Indoor Dining.

Coffee Shops

Coffee Cream and Dreams	1500 Fairmount Ave.	267-225-7602
The Daily at the Divine Lorraine	(Fairmount Ave. side)	
OCF Coffee House	2100 Fairmount Ave.	267-773-8081

These local Businesses Provide To-Go Beer and Wine, and Some do Delivery:

Bar Hygge	1720 Fairmount Ave.	Growlers and Wine to go	215-765-2274
The Bishop's Collar	2349 Fairmount Ave.	6 packs of beer	215-765-1616
City View Pizza	1547 Spring Garden St.	6 packs of beer	215-564-1910
Fairmount Pizza	2000 Fairmount Ave.	6 packs of beer	215-763-4000
Fare	2028 Fairmount Ave.	Craft beers and 6 packs	215-763-5500
The Green Room	1940 Green St.	Craft beers and 6 packs	215-241-6776
Kelliann's Bar & Grill	1549 Spring Garden St.	Craft beers and 6 packs	215-563-6990
La Calaca Feliz	2321 Fairmount Ave.	Craft beers and 6 packs	215-787-9930
Old Nelson	1500 Spring Garden St.	Craft beers and 6 packs	267-519-2239
Parkway Deli	2200 Spring Garden St.	Growlers and 6 packs	267-758-6785
Stone's Beer&Beverage	1701 Fairmount Ave.	Beer distributor	215-763-9789
Thirsty Dice	1642 Fairmount Ave.	Beer & "boozy shakes"	215-765-2679

Ice Cream and Shakes (including “Adult Shakes”)

Thirsty Dice 1642 Fairmount Ave. (17th St Side) 215-765-2679

Baked Goods, Keto:

DessertCrazy 1925 Fairmount Ave. 267-764-1411

Groceries:

Klein’s Supermarket 24th & Fairmount Ave. 215-232-1120

Old Nelson 1500 Spring Garden 267-519-2239

Tela’s 1833 Fairmount Ave. 215-235-0170

Sal’s Produce Plus 676 N. Broad St. 215-763-7186

(currently seafood only, order must be placed via phone in advance)

These Local Salons and Barber Shops are Now Open:

Civil Barbers 1631 Wallace St. 215-660-9556

Classic Barber 1517 Spring Garden St. 215-567-6166

Halo Salon at the Philadelphian 2401 Pennsylvania Ave 215-232-2660

Ou Salon 2323 Fairmount Ave. 267-930-3299

Shear Excellence 2019 Fairmount Ave. 267-519-9708

Shear Perfection 1535 Spring Garden St. 215-568-5009

SNIP Philadelphia 2052 Fairmount Ave. 215-232-7647

Sulimay’s Salon & Barber Studio 2333 Fairmount Ave. 215-763-4448

You Can Buy PPE at:

Fairmont Hardware 2011 Fairmount Ave. 215-765-5820

Fairmont Pharmacy 1900 Green St. 215-567-0364

Luz Marina Montano Fashion Design – 1914 Fairmount Ave. 267-972-7328

designer cloth masks (\$12 each of 5 for \$50) www.mmontano.com

Parkway Pharmacy 2401 Pennsylvania Ave. 215-642-2422

These Gyms and Fitness Centers are Now Open.

Anytime Fitness 1640 Fairmount Ave. (RSVP online) anytimefitness.com

BPM Fitness 1808 Spring Garden St. (Call for appt.) 215-515-2110

Culture Philly Gym 1415 Melon St. (Call for appt.) 267-607-5883

J’aime Fitness 2102 Brandywine St. (1-on-1 training) 610-357-6675

Lumos Yoga & Barre online & outdoor (Call for appt.) 215-787-0700

Retro Fitness 1500 Spring Garden St. (Walk ins) 570-591-1209

Yoga Habit outdoor classes (Book Online) yogahabit.com

Gifts, Plants, Other:

The Neighborhood Potters, 2034 Fairmount Ave., is open for curbside pickup and in-store shopping by appointment. They will also ship your purchase. Find terrific gifts there for family and friends. www.sandiandneil.com, 215-439-0893.

Ali's Wagon	2017 Fairmount Ave.	www.aliswagon.com
Bookhaven	2202 Fairmount Ave.	215-235-3226
Cerulean Arts	1355 Ridge Ave. (Appt online)	ceruleanarts.com
Fairmount Hardware	2011 Fairmount Ave.	215-765-5829
Plants Etc.	2313 Fairmount Ave.	215-236-3060

Physical Therapy, Health: Call to Schedule an Appointment

Jefferson Health	2100 Spring Garden St.	215-955-9555
Vybe Urgent Care	1500 Spring Garden St.	267-768-8288
Wallace and Nilan	1714 Fairmount Ave.	267-606-6923
Wellpoint	2014 Fairmount Ave.	267-687-5655

Bicycle Repair and Accessories:

Fairmount Bicycles	2015 Fairmount Ave.	267-507-9370
Philadelphia Bikesmith	1822 Spring Garden St.	267-324-5910

Pharmacies

Fairmount Pharmacy	1900 Green St.	215-567-0364
Parkway Pharmacy	2401 Pennsylvania Ave.	215-642-2422
Rite Aid	1924 Fairmount Ave.	215-765-5078
CVS	2320 Fairmount Ave.	215-232-5262
CVS	490 N. Broad St.	215-430-5757

Pet Stores / Veterinary Care:

Art Museum Veterinary Center	1710 Fairmount Ave.	215-982-1490
Fairmount Animal Hospital	2315 Fairmount Ave.	215-684-1439
Fairmount Pet Shoppe	2024 Fairmount Ave.	215-236-6080