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### **Governor Urges Residents, Business Owners and Politicians to “Stay the Course”**

During a May 11 press conference, Governor Wolf urged Pennsylvania residents to continue to follow the extended stay-at-home order to help continue to combat the deadly COVID-19 virus. The press conference included a specific message to politicians and business owners who have, or who are planning to, reopen before the order is lifted.

The Governor stated that there will be consequences to opening early and illegally, including the loss of CARES Act and other relief funding through the state, revocation of business licenses, and the loss of insurance coverage for businesses failing to operate in accordance with the law.

The press conference can be found here:

[www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom/gov-wolf-may-11-remarks-on-staying-the-course-following-the-law/](http://www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom/gov-wolf-may-11-remarks-on-staying-the-course-following-the-law/)

Delaware County Council has been and will continue to do everything within its power to bring Delaware County to a “yellow phase” and begin to ease restrictions in both a safe and timely manner that does not jeopardize the lives of our residents.

Measures taken by Delaware County Council include:

- Along with our neighboring four counties in Southeastern PA, advocating strongly for more diagnostic testing, which will enable us to help contain future spread of the virus once restrictions are lifted. Currently, Delaware County and its partners in the Chester County Health Department (“CCHD”) do not have access to the level of testing needed to accomplish this vital aspect of containing the spread of the virus.
- Coordinating food and supply donations to residents in need and offering other support for those who are struggling.
- Supporting our small businesses with the investment of \$1.75 million in the Delco Strong Small Business Support Program. We are currently working to initiate a second round of business support in an effort to help our businesses get through this crisis.
- Providing public health guidance, through the CCHD, to all essential businesses and industries currently open on how to contain the spread and avoid infection of their employees and customers. The CCHD COVID-19 hotline and online resources are available to all Delaware County residents and businesses.

- Providing case investigation and contact tracing of COVID-19 positive cases, through its partnership with CCHD, which is also advising and assisting Long Term Care Facilities, Hospitals and Congregate Care Facilities with COVID-19 cases. CCHD is communicating with the PA Department of Health, the agency responsible for licensing and regulating long-term care facilities in Delaware County.
- Advocating for metrics that separately measure progress in long-term care facilities and progress in the broader community in the assessment of whether Delaware County can begin to lift restrictions safely.
- Working with the Governor and his public health team to re-examine the metrics previously set to gauge reopening and adjust them with a focus on the unique demographics and the resulting statistics in Southeastern Pennsylvania, as well as any opportunities to reopen certain types of businesses using sensible safety measures.

We understand this pandemic has been devastating to our entire community. As we have previously said, Delaware County Council does not have the authority to lift or amend the Governor's order and decide independently when and which restrictions should be lifted. Doing so would threaten the vital support and funding we receive for businesses and the community through the state and federal government, would put our businesses at risk of losing their state licenses and insurance coverage, and would force employees to make the difficult decision of whether to put themselves in harm's way by going back to work prematurely.

Please know we are doing everything within our power to safely reopen as quickly as possible. We will continue to develop resources to support our residents and business during this difficult time and prepare for a safe lifting of the Governor's stay at home order. While we will continue to advocate for sensible changes to the Governor's Reopening plan that allow for an easing of the restrictions where it is safe to do so, the best thing we can do as a community is to fight the spread of COVID-19 in our community so that we can make the case for further reopening.