



## VILLAGE OF SCARSDALE

### **Open Letter to Scarsdale Community**

*COVID-19 and Other Updates: November 13, 2020*

Dear Scarsdale community,

COVID-19 not only remains a public health threat, but has also been on the increase in recent weeks as we get deeper into fall and people begin to retreat to indoor environments. In response to observed concentrations in testing positivity rates, a [NYS "Micro-Cluster" Strategy](#) was developed to identify disease concentrations meriting special controls to minimize further spread.

Scarsdale is not included in any of the current [Micro-Cluster Focus Areas](#), though could be listed without advance notice if the NYS metrics are exceeded. Helping to reduce the likelihood of any such future designation of our community rests squarely on our collective shoulders.

Apart from what have now become [well-known CDC strategies](#) for illness prevention and helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the following NYS mandates are particularly relevant to the holiday season and periods when college students are returning from out-of-state college for holidays and breaks:

#### [New Gathering Limit for Private Residences](#)

Effective today, Friday, November 13, at 10:00 PM, the State of New York restricts indoor and outdoor gatherings at private residences to *no more* than 10 people.

Governor Cuomo reported that this mandate is being implemented due to the recent prevalence of COVID spread resulting from small indoor gatherings, including Halloween parties. As noted in the announcement, small gatherings at private residences have become a major cause of cluster activity across the state.

#### [New Restrictions on Bars, Restaurants and Gyms or Fitness Centers](#)

Effective today, Friday, November 13, at 10:00 PM, the State of New York mandates that all bars, restaurants, and gyms or fitness centers, as well as any State Liquor Authority-licensed establishment, close from 10 PM to 5 AM daily. Restaurants will still be allowed to provide curbside, food-only pick-up or delivery after 10:00 PM, but will not be permitted to serve alcohol to go.

## [NYS Travel Advisory and Mandates](#)

Travelers from a [contiguous state](#) must only complete a [NYS Traveler Health Form](#). All other travelers, including college students, who were out-of-state for **more than 24 hours** must:

- Obtain, *prior to arrival in NY*, a COVID-19 test within three days of departure from the state they had been in for more than 24 hours.
- Quarantine for three days upon arrival in New York.
- On day four of their quarantine, the traveler must obtain another COVID test.
- Traveler must complete a [NYS Traveler Health Form](#).

If both tests referenced above come back negative, the traveler may exit quarantine early upon receipt of the second negative diagnostic test. A 14-day quarantine and [NYS Traveler Health Form](#) are required if the traveler does not complete *all* mandatory actions.

For travelers who were out-of-state for **less than 24 hours**, excluding contiguous states:

- The traveler does not need a test prior to their departure from the other state, and does not need to quarantine upon arrival in New York State.
- The traveler must fill out the [NYS Traveler Health Form](#) upon entry into New York State, as well as take a COVID diagnostic test four days after their arrival in New York.

Persons failing to comply with the above-referenced mandates are subject to significant penalty. [Detailed Travel Guidance](#) is also available online.



Again, our safety is in our hands. To help slow the spread of COVID-19, adhere to the NYS mandates and continue to follow these CDC and the NYS Department of Health guidelines:

- Wear a mask.
- Wash or sanitize your hands frequently.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Practice social distancing (6 feet).
- Stay at home if you are not feeling well.

Undertaking these efforts, including encouraging children, teens, and young adults, will reduce the likelihood that more rigorous restrictions on businesses and our daily activities may need to be reinstated.

We've done a great job locally, so let's keep it up!

Next, I believe it is important to touch on the topic of mental health amidst the continuing pandemic.

## Pandemic Mental Health

There is abundant research and practical medical experience highlighting the serious mental health implications of disasters. This is not surprising, as individuals, families, and communities are exposed to extreme stress and experience profound loss during such periods of upheaval.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an extended disaster of historic proportions.

Metrics including positivity rates, active case counts, the number of hospital beds available – and fatality rates – provide us with a quantitative window into how widespread the disease is and its overall public health impact. Each of these metrics is trending back up at this time, returning in some cases to levels that we haven't seen for months. At the same time, financial health metrics illuminate harsh realities in connection with disparate impacts on individuals and families, with many still out of work and not knowing how to make ends meet, while others, including small businesses, struggle to regain their financial footing while perched on the precipice of financial collapse – please continue to support our local businesses.

The pandemic's public health and economic consequences have been severe and we are not out from under its dark shadow, though the prospect of highly effective vaccines is promising.

The stress individuals are facing is enormous. As a community, we must help lift some of the burden from the shoulders of those most directly impacted. Adhering to NYS mandates intended to help slow the spread of COVID-19 is the minimum level of effort we can each make in that regard; but, we must do more, both individually and collectively.

We need to recognize the [mental health implications of COVID-19](#) and take them seriously. This begins with taking care of your own mental and emotional health. The CDC suggests these healthy ways to cope with stress:

- Know [what to do if you are sick](#) and are concerned about COVID-19. Contact a health professional before you start any self-treatment for COVID-19.
- Know where and how to get treatment and other support services and resources, including counseling or therapy (in person or through telehealth services).
- [Take care of your emotional health](#). Taking care of your emotional health will help you think clearly and react to the need to protect yourself and your family. [Project Hope](#), a collaboration between the State of New York and FEMA, provides a COVID-19 Emotional Support Hotline (1-844-863-9314), educational materials, and trusted referrals, to help individuals manage and cope with changes brought on by COVID-19. Project Hope Crisis Counselors understand what you are going through. Talking to them is free, confidential, and anonymous. Talk to someone who is trained, knowledgeable and never judges. Sometimes it helps to talk with someone you don't know.

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including those on social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body.
  - Take deep breaths, stretch, or [meditate](#).
  - [Eat healthy, well-balanced meals](#).
  - [Exercise regularly](#).
  - [Get plenty of sleep](#).
  - Avoid excessive [alcohol and drug use](#).
- Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
- Connect with your community- or faith-based organizations. While social distancing measures are in place, consider connecting online, through social media, or by phone or mail. Note that the [Scarsdale-Edgemont Family Counseling Service](#) is there to help, too.

Finally, if you are in crisis, please call the toll-free [National Suicide Prevention](#) Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), which is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. The service is available to anyone and all calls are confidential.

### **Scarsdale Volunteer Ambulance Corps Fundraiser**

Throughout the pandemic, the Scarsdale Volunteer Ambulance Corps (SVAC) has been there for Scarsdale residents and others in need. Particularly early in the pandemic when Personal Protective Equipment was in short supply and the disease threat was not well understood, SVAC personnel sacrificed their own personnel safety in a valiant effort to charge toward the danger the ordinary people would run away from.

SVAC members are first responders of the first order, along with our police and fire personnel, there to help and serve the Scarsdale community 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

Now, SVAC needs your help.

Without your generous contributions, our village would have to rely on a commercial ambulance service, which would not only result in a reduced level of care for Scarsdale community members, but also increased cost funded through increased property taxes.

Although SVAC is primarily comprised of volunteers, their operating costs are significant. As we need their support, SVAC needs ours.

Please consider [donating](#) today.

## Concluding Comments

Wishing you and your families a healthy and happy Thanksgiving – even if it is a more subdued celebration than we are accustomed to. There remains much to be thankful for. I am thankful for this wonderful Village. Our friends and neighbors are constant sources of support and joy and we thank you for making Scarsdale such an amazing place to call home.

Stay safe and be well, friends.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MS', is positioned above the printed name.

Marc Samwick  
Mayor