

INSIDE

Next Week's Calendar

Session scheduled for Tuesday-Wednesday next week.

Legislative News

No Senate or Assembly Committee Meetings Announced Yet.

April public hearings calendar.

Updates from the Governor

Revised Nursing Home Guidance

50-year-olds Eligible for Vaccine

1st NY Case of Brazilian Variant

Agency News

AG: Closing Ghost Gun Loophole

AG acts on 1-4 Dioxane

Education Dept. Revises Tech Curriculum

Building Codes Act Proposed

Insurance Guidance on Climate Risk

Counting Down to FY2022 (April 1)

Spring made its annual appearance over the weekend and the final full week of March was busy as three-way budget negotiations crept forward toward next week's deadline.

Highlights include a reported agreement regarding the legalization of adult use marijuana, the opening of nursing homes across the state to visitors, and an Assembly Judiciary Committee impeachment investigation update that the process would [likely take months instead of weeks](#) to complete. In addition, after an allegation of sexual misconduct Congressman Tom Reed (23rd Congressional District) [announced](#) he would not be running for Governor or re-election in 2022.

FY 2022 Budget - On Monday, [state Budget Director Robert Mujica announced](#) that \$5 billion in resources (state and federal) had been identified, which could obviate the need for the budget cuts that had been proposed in the Executive Budget. Three-way budget negotiations continued against this backdrop, and the revelation that Assembly Speaker Heastie is working through a positive COVID diagnosis. There have been no recent updates regarding a three-way consensus on additional available funds (avails) for priorities, which is typically a critical step in negotiations.

Adult Use Marijuana - While an agreed to bill has not been introduced in either house of the legislature, numerous reports indicate that the legislature and the Governor have reached an agreement on legalized adult-use marijuana. Some reports indicate a likelihood that a final bill will be passed next week. Media reports are [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

Nursing Homes Open for Visitors - In yet another step toward reopening the state, nursing homes are now allowed to accept visitors. The Governor made that announcement yesterday (Thursday) after an announcement earlier in the week lowering the age for COVID vaccine eligibility to 50 and over - see our "[From the Governor](#)" section for details.

~ In non-state specific COVID pandemic news, more concerns are being raised related [to long term effects of a COVID-19 infection](#), even in less severe cases. The plight of COVID "long haulers" has been well [documented](#) since late last year as individuals recovered from the disease but continued to experience symptoms that often seem unrelated. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has said they are "[working to learn more.](#)"



From the Governor

Revised Nursing Home Guidance

The [guidance](#), which takes effect immediately, permits visitation at all times and for all residents with limited exceptions for unvaccinated residents in areas of high community spread and lower resident vaccination rates, residents with confirmed COVID-19 infection or those in isolation or quarantine. Facilities must still continue to adhere to strong infection control practices.

Lower Vaccination Eligibility Age

On March 22, Governor Cuomo [lowered the age](#) of eligibility for the COVID-19 vaccination to 50 years old.

First of Brazilian Variant Discovered in NYS

The COVID-19 Brazilian variant [was identified](#) by scientists at Mount Sinai hospital in New York City and verified by the Department of Health's Wadsworth Center Laboratories. The patient is a Brooklyn resident in their 90's with no travel history. DOH is working with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to learn more information about the patient and potential contacts.

Executive Orders

Governor Cuomo issued [Executive Order 202.98](#) which permitted indoor fitness classes to resume, expanded outdoor gathering capacity as well as the capacity for events, arts and entertainment indoors and outdoors.

Legislative news

2021 Legislative Session Days

Next week's scheduled session days are Tuesday the 30th- Wednesday the 31st. You can find the full 2021 Legislative Session calendar [here](#).

Legislative Committees

No announced Committee Meetings for the Senate or Assembly. If they are announced the meetings can be found here: [live stream available on the Senate website](#), with the Assembly [found here once announced](#).

Legislative Activity

The legislature passed 58 bills this week including [A.2580 \(Thiele\)](#) - Relates to granting localities greater contract flexibility to authorize shared purchasing; [S.1780B \(Skoufis\)](#) - Relates to providing for electronic notarization; [S.2998A \(Harkcham\)](#) - Authorizes peer recovery advocate telehealth services and credentialed family peer advocates for reimbursement.

Public Hearings

- ~ April 7 - [Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture and Labor](#). Subject: Diversifying Agriculture and Addressing Food Justice Alongside Continuing Inequalities in our Food Systems.
- ~ April 7 - [Senate Standing Committees on Transportation and Corporations, Authorities, and Commissions](#). Subject: East Side Access/East Side Tunnel Project Oversight (MTA/Amtrak).
- ~ April 13 - [Senate Standing Committees on Environmental Conservation and Energy](#). Subject: Climate and Community Investment Act (CCIA).
- ~ April 22 - [Senate Standing Committee on Investigations and Government Operations and Senate Standing Committee on Commerce, Economic Development, and Small Businesses](#). Subject: Primary and Secondary Ticket Marketplaces.

The full legislative public hearing calendar can be accessed [here](#).

State Agencies

From the NYS Attorney General

AG James Calls on U.S. Attorney General Garland to Close Ghost Gun Loophole

New York Attorney General Letitia James [took action](#) to prevent criminals from further accessing ghost guns. As part of a coalition of 18 attorneys general from around the nation, the Attorney General sent a [letter to U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland](#), calling on him to close the loophole in the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' (ATF) interpretation of the federal Gun Control Act, which allows purchasers of firearms to purchase receivers that are 80 percent complete.

AG James Takes Action to Correct "Fatally-Flawed" Toxic Chemical Risk Evaluation

New York Attorney General Letitia James, [leading](#) a coalition of 15 attorneys general and the City of New York, [took legal action to support the Biden Administration's remedy of numerous deficiencies in the risk evaluation for the widely-prevalent, highly-toxic chemical 1,4-dioxane.](#)

From the NYS Education Department

The New York State Education Department [proposed revisions](#) to the State's Perkins V Plan to address circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Commissioner Betty A. Rosa announced.

NYS Energy Research & Development Authority (NYSERDA)

Advanced Building Codes, Appliances and Equipment Efficiency Standards Act of 2021 to Reduce Carbon Emissions and Combat Climate Change

This [report](#) along with legislation has been submitted to the New York State Legislature from NYSERDA and the New York State Department of State, highlighting increased appliance energy efficiency standards projected to save New Yorkers \$15 billion by 2035, with 40 percent of savings delivered to low-to-moderate income residents.

NYS Department of Financial Services (DFS)

Proposed Guidance to NY Insurers on Managing the Financial Risks from Climate Change

The [proposed guidance](#) builds on the circular letter issued by DFS on September 22, 2020, which outlined its expectations that all New York insurers start integrating the consideration of the financial risks from climate change into their governance frameworks, risk management processes, and business strategies, and developing their approach to climate-related financial disclosure. DFS is seeking the interested parties' input on the guidance, which will be finalized following a 90-day public comment period.