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Below please find the Murphy office update on COVID-19.

As always, if you need assistance, please don't hesitate to contact our Hartford or Washington, D.C. offices.

Here's what you need to know today, July 10<sup>th</sup>:

- As cases continue to spike in other parts of the country, Governor Ned Lamont announced that Connecticut will pause its reopening plan and remain in the current phase. *The Hartford Courant* [provided a rundown](#) of what is open and what remains closed.
- Governor Lamont [announced](#) that he is reinstating the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) – a state initiative that funds infrastructure improvement projects for towns that are otherwise ineligible to receive urban action bonds. To accomplish this, the governor is opening a new round of grants totaling \$15 million. Restoring this program, which has been inactive since 2016, will provide much needed support to towns during a period of fiscal insecurity caused by the pandemic.
- Residents of long term care facilities and their families can access information about their rights through the State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program [here](#). Each Wednesday at 5:30pm, CT's Ombudsman Mairead Painter hosts a Facebook Live for residents and family members to ask questions and hear the latest guidance for those living and working at these facilities. You can learn more by [clicking here](#).
- Today, the CT Congressional delegation [called on](#) the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to reverse its decision to prohibit shellfish aquaculture from being eligible for direct payments through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) at USDA. In a [letter](#) to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, the lawmakers noted the CARES Act allows shellfish agriculture to receive funding through USDA, and allowing additional resources to shellfish farmers will help weather the storm due to COVID-19.
- The National Institutes of Health launched a website for those interested in volunteering for Phase 3 efficacy trials for the prevention of COVID-19. Registration and participation are strictly voluntary. Learn more by [clicking here](#).
- As of this week, all campgrounds at Connecticut State Parks have opened for the 2020 season. Due to the pandemic and to help maintain social distancing, all campers are required to make reservations in advance of their stay. Walk-in campers will not be permitted this season. Campers are also reminded to wear a face covering when coming into their office to check in for their reserved campsite. For more information about the operations of state campgrounds and to

make a reservation, [visit the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection website](#).

- Governor Lamont today announced that the Connecticut Department of Public Health has selected [Mathematica Policy Research](#) to conduct an independent, third-party review of the response to COVID-19 within the state's nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Last month, the governor [announced](#) that he was ordering the review to be conducted and soon thereafter proposals were solicited from third-party experts. Mathematica is expected to provide the state with a final report of its findings by the end of September. The analysis will be made available to the public.
- ICYMI: As coronavirus cases nationwide surge to record levels, Senator Murphy and Senator Blumenthal joined their Democratic colleagues [in a letter](#) demanding Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell bring the House-passed *Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act*, or the *HEROES Act*, to the Senate floor before the chamber recessed last week.
- It is important to get tested for COVID-19. Check out [CT's 211 Testing Locator](#) and enter your town, zip code, street address, or county to find locations closest to you.

For information on federal coronavirus relief, including help for small businesses, direct cash payments and more, visit [murphy.senate.gov/coronavirus](http://murphy.senate.gov/coronavirus). This page provides answers to frequently asked questions and gives a summary of available programs and funding.

For the latest information about keeping you or your family safe go to [cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://cdc.gov/coronavirus). For resources and information about Connecticut's response visit [ct.gov/coronavirus](http://ct.gov/coronavirus).

I hope you found this letter helpful. You can get the latest updates on Senator Murphy's work in the Senate by following him on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). If you have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to our offices in Hartford or in Washington, DC.



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[If you would like to opt-out of future coronavirus updates, please click here.](#)