

### RMS End of Week Update 12/20/2024



*Happy Holidays from all of us at Reid, McNally & Savage!*

#### Governor Hochul Presides Over Proceedings of the Electoral College

Earlier this week, Governor Hochul presided over the 60th general proceedings of the New York State Electoral College in Albany. As part of the proceedings, Governor Hochul announced her support for a Constitutional Amendment for a national popular vote for President and putting an end to the Electoral College.

To view the full press release, please click [here](#).

#### Minimum Wage Increase On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025

This week Governor Hochul reminded New Yorkers that New Yorkers earning minimum wage will earn an additional \$0.50 per hour starting on January 1, 2025. New York's minimum wage will increase to \$16.50-per-hour in New York City, Westchester, and Long Island, and \$15.50-per-hour for the rest of the state. This adjustment is part of New York's multi-year agreement between Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature to index the minimum wage to inflation.

"Putting money back in your pockets has been the focus of my first three Budgets, and that includes increasing minimum wage for the lowest earners across the state," Governor Hochul said. "With rising costs of living, this increase will help to lighten the burdens of inflation for New Yorkers while providing businesses with the time needed to adjust."

New York State Department of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon said, "In this current era of inflation and rising costs, every cent counts for all New Yorkers, especially workers who earn minimum wage. By gradually increasing wages for the lowest earners, we are ensuring businesses can adjust to the change while also helping more families make ends meet. I want to thank Governor Hochul and the Legislature for working together to strengthen the paychecks of New Yorkers statewide."

Assemblymember Harry Bronson said, "Our families and workers deserve a minimum wage that keeps pace with costs so they can afford life's necessities. As Chair of Labor, I am proud to have stood with my colleagues in the Legislature in the fight to raise the minimum wage, and, critically, index it to inflation, so working people will no longer continue to be priced out of the economy if costs rise. This was about doing right for New Yorkers and creating an economy that supports our businesses and our families."

The minimum wage is scheduled to increase by another \$0.50 in 2026 and then increase annually starting in 2027 at a rate determined by the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for the Northeast Region. An "off-ramp" is available in the event of certain economic or budget conditions.

Employers can find additional information, including an interactive [Minimum Wage Lookup Tool](#), by visiting the Minimum Wage [website](#).

Minimum wage earners who do not see the increase reflected in their paychecks can file a wage complaint on the New York State Department of Labor's [website](#) or by calling 833-910-4378. For more information about NYSDDL's efforts to combat wage theft, visit the Department's [landing page](#).

To view the full press release, please click [here](#).

#### Bills Left for Governor Hochul to Act on By the End of 2024

After signing 44 bills and vetoing 40 last Friday, Governor Hochul still has 107 bills on her desk as well as two that have not yet been sent to her. Please see below summaries of some of the many bills left for her to take action on with less than two weeks left until 2025.

- The [Grieving Families Act](#) would allow families who file wrongful death lawsuits to seek damages based on the grief or anguish they experience after losing a loved one. Several groups spanning areas including health care, business, local governments, and more are opposed to the bill while the Trial Lawyers Association is in support.
- The [Climate Change Property Tax Assessment Relief Act](#) would provide a local option for municipalities and other taxing entities to grant real property tax abatements to homeowners whose properties sustain damage as a result of natural disasters.
- [S885-C, Hinchey/ A4130-C](#) would create a statewide registry for short-term rental properties and require owners, as well as services that host the properties like Airbnb, to regularly share data on the rental's use and apply the same sales and occupancy taxes as hotels to the rentals.
- The legislative oversight of automated decision-making in government act ([LOADinG Act](#)) would prevent state agencies from using artificial intelligence without first doing an impact assessment on any biases that may emerge from its use.
- [S8537, Webb/ A8866, Kelles](#) would ban drilling and fracking for natural gas and oil using carbon dioxide. While fracking has been banned for several years in NYS, this is a similar method that uses pressurized carbon instead of water and chemicals to break shale underground and extract natural gas. Supporters of the bill argue this method is also unsafe while opponents say that is unknown and that this would boost the economy as companies would lease land from owners.
- [S1752, Hinchey/ A1234, Lupardo](#) would define cannabis as an agricultural product to make clear that it is eligible to receive an agricultural assessment and allow for lower assessments to support NYS farmers.

The two remaining bills left to be sent to Hochul include:

1. [S2129-B, Krueger/ A3351-B, Dinowitz](#), named the [Climate Change Superfund Act](#), would require large companies responsible for carbon emissions in New York to pay into a fund used to mitigate and respond to the effects of climate change.
2. [S9349, Salazar/ A10274, Eichenstein](#) would raise the rate, and tie it to the personal income growth index, at which schools are reimbursed for a program that provides transportation to students whose school hours end after 4PM.

For more information on these bills and others, please see the Capitol Confidential article linked [here](#) as well as another [story](#) detailing several bills Hochul vetoed recently.

#### New Laws In New York State Beginning January 1, 2025

There are a few new laws that will take effect January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025 in New York. They include:

##### Minimum Wage Increases

Starting January 1, 2025, hourly employees making minimum wage in New York State will see an increase of \$.50. This brings New York's minimum wage to \$15.50 per hour. Except in New York City, where the minimum wage increases to \$16.50 per hour. Minimum wage will increase another \$.50 on January 1, 2026.

##### Pre-Natal Leave

Governor Hochul announced in May, that the state has enacted a stand-alone prenatal leave policy as part of the fiscal year 2025 budget. She also announced the doulas will be covered under Medicaid and the state will create the first doula director. As part of the paid leave program, which takes effect January 1<sup>st</sup>, employees are now able to receive an additional 20 hours of paid sick leave for prenatal care, in addition to the existing sick leave.

##### Contractor/Sub-Contractor Registry

Another new law that goes into effect just before January 1<sup>st</sup>, on December 30, 2024 will affect contractors and sub-contractors who do construction work on public and some private projects.

The new law will have contractors [have to register](#) before submitting any new bids or begin work on a covered project on or after December 30, 2024. Sub-contractors will need to register before starting any new work on a covered project as well.

To register, contractors and subcontractors must apply through the NYDOL's Contractor Registry Portal via NYSDDL's Management System for Protecting Worker Rights (MPWR).

For more information on these laws, please click [here](#).

#### OMIG Fall 2024 Health Care Provider Engagement Forum Presentation Slides

The New York State Office of the Medicaid Inspector General (OMIG) published on its website yesterday the presentation slides from the Fall 2024 Health Care Provider Engagement Forum sessions held Nov. 18 in Albany and Dec. 18 in New York City.

To view the presentation slides, please click [here](#).

#### OHIP Release of the November 2024 Medicaid Update

The Office of Health Insurance Programs of the New York State Department of Health has approved the release of the November 2024 [Medicaid Update](#). Please find the improved, interactive issue as a PDF (Portable Document Format) file available to be downloaded [here](#). A print-ready version is also available on the Medicaid Update web page.

You may also go straight to an article or topic that pertains to you by selecting from the current issue's table of contents below.

##### Policy and Billing

- [Dental Benefit Expansion of Criteria for Silver Diamine Fluoride \(Cover\)](#)
- [Reminder: Vaccines for New York State Medicaid Members Residing in a Long-Term Care Facility or an Assisted Living Program](#)
- [Coverage of Hypoglossal Nerve Stimulators, Effective January 2025](#)
- [Reminder: Coordination of Benefits Billing Protocols for Providers: New York State Medicaid is the Payer of Last Resort](#)

##### All Providers

- [NY State of Health Offers Affordable Health Insurance Options During 2024 Open Enrollment](#)

##### Pharmacy

- [NYS Rx Reimbursement](#)

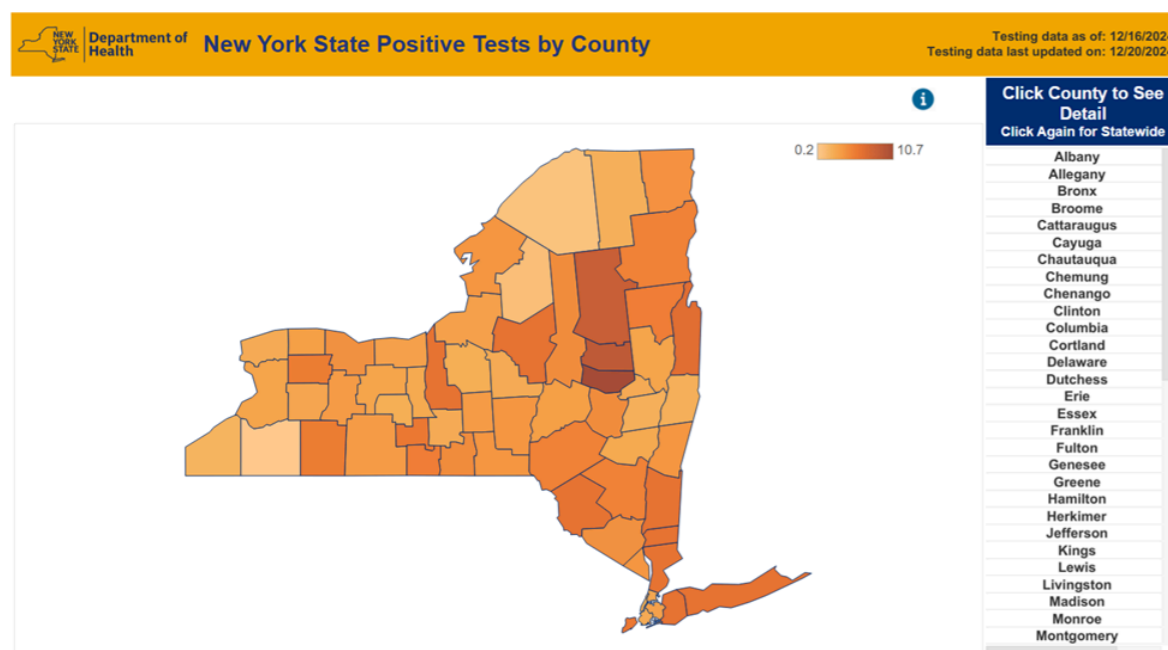
#### 2025 Legislative Calendar Released

The NYS legislative session calendar was released last week with the legislative session set to begin on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and scheduled to wrap up June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

To view the calendar, please click [here](#).

#### NYS COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard

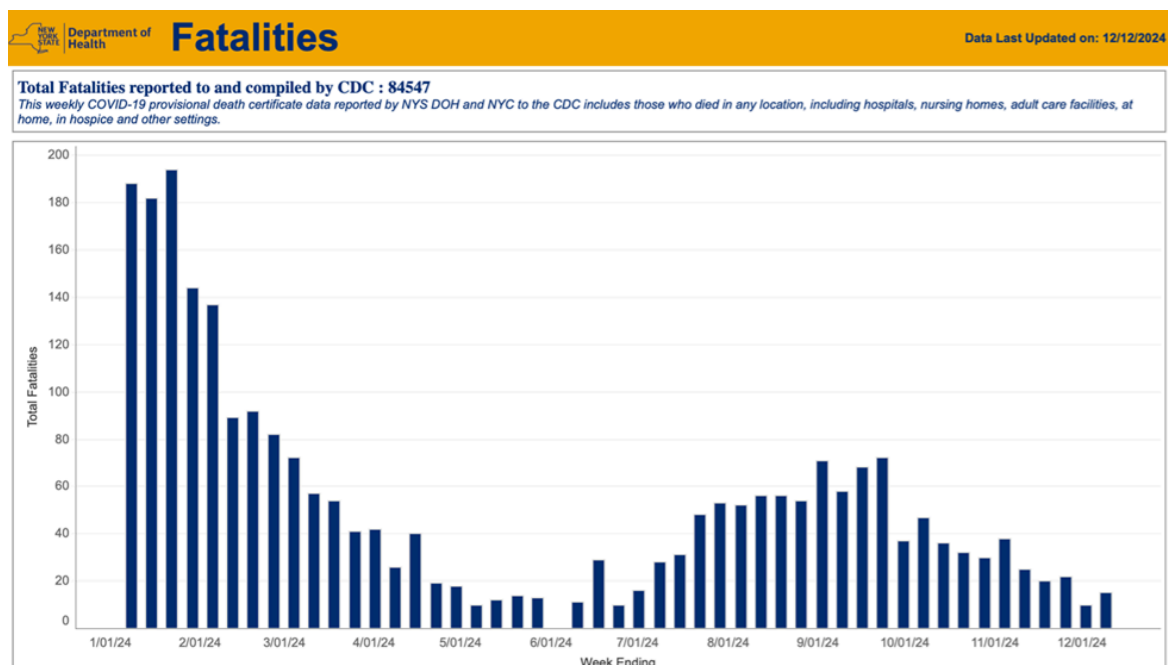
Below we have included the link to the State's Testing Tracker which includes the State's overall testing status--by clicking on the link above you can view the testing results by county. This data is current through December 20, 2024.



Use this link to view the State's updated [COVID-19 Hub](#).

#### NYS COVID-19 Fatalities Tracker

Below we have included the Fatalities Tracker with the webpage where updated numbers can be found throughout the week linked [here](#).



#### Helpful Links and Resources

- [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [Department of Financial Services information and resources](#)
- [New York COVID-19 Vaccine Information Page](#)
- [Department of Health](#)
- <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>
- [COVID-19 Guidance for Medicaid Providers](#)
- [Office of Mental Health](#)
- <https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/covid-19-resources.html>
- [OPWDD](#)
- <https://opwdd.ny.gov/coronavirus-guidance>
- [State Education Department](#)
- <http://www.op.nysed.gov/COVID-19.html>
- [NYS Department of Labor](#)
- <https://dol.ny.gov/>