MARCH 31, 2020   ELIZABETHTOWN, NY

ENFORCEMENT OF GOVERNOR CUOMO'S EXECUTIVE ORDERS

Essex County continues to tirelessly work to provide information to its residents regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure that its residents are protected against the virus.

The County is pleased with the public's response to the Governor's Executive Orders with respect to the reduction in the workforce relative to non-essential employees and prohibition of non-essential gatherings of individuals of any size for any reason as set forth in Executive Order 202.10.

However, the County has received reports of non-essential businesses continuing to open in violation of the Executive Order and of non-essential gatherings of individuals. These violations fly in the face of mainstay of the Governor's response; stay at home and do not congregate.

The public should know that Essex County will take a zero tolerance approach to these violations. The County has the authority to enforce these Executive Orders principally through New York State Public Health Law Section 12-b which makes violations a misdemeanor punishable by jail time and a fine of up to $2,000. Additionally, there are other avenues of enforcement available such as fines of up to $10,000 for bars or others who sell alcohol who continue to do so in violation of the Order and the possible loss or suspension of their license to sell alcohol. Other enforcement will also occur in other businesses that are regulated by the State or are licensed by the State.

Essex County Chairman Shaun Gilliland has stated that it is unfortunate that there are a few who are disregarding these restrictions, but the public's safety and well-being demands enforcement.

Finally, the New York State Attorney General has enforcement capabilities and may issue injunctions. Should anyone believe that there is a violation of the Executive Orders, they can call the Attorney General's Office at (212) 416-8700 or email labor.bureau@ag.ny.gov.