



ERIE COUNTY COMPTROLLER  
HON. STEFAN I. MYCHAJLIW

November 23, 2020

Mr. Troy P. Schinzel  
Commissioner  
Erie County Parks, Recreation and Forestry  
95 Franklin Street, Room 1260  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Commissioner Schinzel,

Our Whistleblower Hotline has once again been contacted concerning a COVID-19 case among parks employees. If confirmed, this information is extremely troubling considering it may put even more workers at risk of exposure. According to the complaint made on Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020, a county worker assigned to Wendt Beach tested positive for COVID-19 on Wednesday, November 18<sup>th</sup>. Reportedly, another worker related to the individual who tested positive was sent from Wendt Beach to Chestnut Ridge Park to work.

It has been reported by the concerned Whistleblower that workers were not directly informed about not only about another positive case of COVID-19, but that an infected parks worker was sent from one park to another: Wendt Beach to Chestnut Ridge. There is much concern surrounding this case due to remarks that were overheard. Reportedly, the transferred employee said that everyone should stay away from him, while continuing to work, potentially exposing other parks workers to COVID-19. In addition, the Whistleblower reported that employees, who weren't given any instructions concerning their health or a possible outbreak, were instructed to not say anything.

Considering these concerns, I wanted to inform you as to protect county workers if someone who has been exposed to COVID-19 was at work last week and continues to work this week. Many employees expressed concerns about a troubling lack of information concerning positive cases of COVID-19 amongst fellow employees. While recently realizing the effectiveness of promoting work from home opportunities to deter the spread of COVID-19, this does not provide information to employees who physically report to county facilities for work, which is a large portion of your staff.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stefan I. Mychajliw, Jr.", is written over a blue ink stamp of the same name and title.

Stefan I. Mychajliw, Jr.  
Erie County Comptroller

CC: Dr. Gale Burstein, Commissioner of ECHD  
Honorable Members, Erie County Legislature  
Mr. Timothy Hogues, Commissioner of Personnel