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ERIE COUNTY COMPTROLLER

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COMPTROLLER REPORTS UPDATE ON COVID OVERTIME AND HOLIDAY PAY

Health Commissioner's COVID-19 overtime and holiday pay climbs to a combined \$147,249

(ERIE COUNTY, NY) – Erie County Comptroller Stefan I. Mychajliw, Jr. released the most recent data on escalating COVID-19 related overtime and holiday pay costs for Erie County government political employees and those represented by a bargaining unit. All monies are being deducted from the \$160 million CARES Act fund. Federal funds were distributed to local governments to fight the virus, protect taxpayers and support struggling schools, businesses and families.

The highest COVID-19 overtime and holiday pay recipient is the Erie County Health Commissioner. Most recent payroll records show Dr. Gale Burstein received \$147,249 in overtime and holiday pay, which began in March of this year. The \$147,249 in COVID related overtime and holiday pay is higher than what all but eleven Erie County employees receive in base salary for an entire year.

“Taxpayers can judge for themselves if they think \$147,249 in overtime and holiday pay for a salaried, political appointee is exorbitant. People are angry. They are fed up. Look no further than business owners telling Dr. Burstein’s inspectors to ‘get lost’ when they tried to shut down an Orchard Park gym. Families suffer. Schools are closed. Businesses are being destroyed by lockdowns. Lives are ruined by politicians fearful of a disease with a survival rate of 99.92%. Enough is enough. Adding insult to injury, while struggling taxpayers are barely getting by because of lockdowns, political appointees are personally profiting from COVID-19,” said Erie County Comptroller Stefan I. Mychajliw Jr.

To date county employees earned \$4,582,748 in COVID-19 related overtime and holiday pay. Of that, \$1,018,618 was paid to Managerial Confidential(MC), political appointees. A final report will be calculated at the end of the fiscal year to determine the total amount of COVID-19 related holiday pay and overtime for all county employees. This report will be provided to the Erie County Legislature.

Erie County government employees started receiving COVID-19 related overtime in March of this year. More is being earned between now and December 31st, 2020, when Erie County can no longer use federal CARES Act funds for COVID-19 expenses. A Comptroller’s Office analysis in September of other New York State counties found that [Erie County paid nearly three times the amount in overtime to its Health Commissioner as 52 other counties paid combined to all MC employees for COVID related expenses.](#)

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