



**ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE  
ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

**NOTICE OF ONLINE VIDEO PUBLIC HEARING**

**SUBJECT:** The impacts of COVID-19 on individuals struggling with a substance use disorder and the availability of supportive services.

**PURPOSE:** Examining the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals with a substance use disorder, with a focus on the impacts that COVID-19 had on service delivery and potential guidance on how to mitigate the effects.

**Tuesday,  
September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
11:00 A.M (EST)**

Web Link:

<https://www.nyasembly.gov/av/live/>

**ORAL TESTIMONY BY INVITATION ONLY**

Experts, treatment providers, individuals, and advocacy communities have indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic has had an outsized adverse impact on individuals struggling with a substance use disorder. Researchers and health experts have cited many unique challenges that individuals struggling with a substance use disorder face during this pandemic, including the threat of relapse due to increased stress and difficulty accessing services to help them maintain their recovery. Additionally, health experts including the Director of the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA), have indicated that there will likely be an increase in the number of individuals struggling with a substance use disorder as a result of the compounding effects of isolation, stress and unemployment.

According to NIDA, some individuals struggling with a substance use disorder may also be at a greater risk of experiencing health complications from COVID-19 due to the effects various substances have on the immune system, as well as one's respiratory and pulmonary health.

The Committee seeks to obtain input from various stakeholders to ascertain the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on current and emerging cases of individuals struggling with a substance use disorder, with a focus on their ability to access effective services and the compounding effects of isolation on the disorder. Additionally, the Committee seeks input on whether steps need to be taken to help mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on these populations, in addition to the guidance and easing of regulatory requirements provided by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Office of Addictions Services and Supports (OASAS) and the Department of Health (DOH).

Persons invited to present testimony to the Committees at the above hearing should complete and return the enclosed reply form no later than September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020. It is important that the reply form be fully completed and returned so that persons may be notified of means by which to testify and/or in the event of emergency postponement or cancellation.

Oral testimony will be limited to 5 minutes' duration. In preparing the order of witnesses, the Committees will attempt to accommodate individual requests to speak at particular times in view of special circumstances. These requests should be made on the attached reply form or communicated to Committee staff as early as possible.

Attendees and participants at any legislative public hearing should be aware that these proceedings are video recorded. Their likenesses may be included in any video coverage shown on television or the internet.

In order to further publicize these hearings, please inform interested parties and organizations of the Committees' interest in hearing testimony from all sources.

In order to meet the needs of those who may have a disability, the Assembly, in accordance with its policy of non-discrimination on the basis of disability, as well as the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), has made its facilities and services available to all individuals with disabilities. For individuals with disabilities, accommodations will be provided, upon reasonable request, to afford such individuals access and admission to Assembly facilities and activities.

**Linda B. Rosenthal**  
**Chair**  
**Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse**

**Richard N. Gottfried**  
**Chair**  
**Committee on Health**

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PUBLIC HEARING REPLY FORM

Testimony will only be taken upon approval by the Committee Chairs. Individuals who have been invited to present testimony are requested to complete this reply form no later than September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and email a copy of planned testimony. Individuals invited to participate will be notified within 48 hours of the hearing. All replies and testimony submissions must be emailed to:

Jennifer Sacco  
Assistant Secretary for Program and Policy  
Email: saccoj@nyassembly.gov  
Phone: (518) 455-4371

- I have been invited to make a public statement at the hearing. My statement will be limited to 5 of minutes, and I will answer any questions which may arise.
- I will address my remarks to the following subjects:

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- I do not plan to attend the above hearing.
- I would like to be added to the Committee mailing list for notices and reports.
- I would like to be removed from the Committee mailing list.
- I will require assistance and/or handicapped accessibility information. **Please specify the type of assistance required:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**ALL INFORMATION BELOW MUST BE COMPLETED:**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_