

Suburban rabbi among New York's confirmed cases of COVID-19

March 6 2020



Pedestrians pass the offices of Gap Inc., Thursday, March 5, 2020, in New York. Gap Inc. says that it has closed its New York office and is asking employees to work from home "until further notice" after learning that one of its employees was confirmed to have the new virus. (AP Photo/John Minchillo)

The rabbi of a suburban New York congregation that is grappling with

the coronavirus outbreak has tested positive for the illness.

Rabbi Reuven Fink of the Young Israel of New Rochelle temple was among the confirmed cases of COVID-19 previously announced by [state officials](#), according to a statement posted Friday on the website of Yeshiva University, where Fink teaches two courses.

Many members of Fink's congregation were asked to self-quarantine earlier in the week, when one person in the synagogue's community, a New York lawyer, was hospitalized. Since then, some people who were friends or relatives of the lawyer have tested positive.

The local outbreak has been responsible for all but a few of New York's 23 confirmed cases of the illness, including another positive test announced Friday by New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio.

Fink had isolated himself as a precaution earlier in the week, telling congregants in a Facebook posting that following the quarantine order is "a sacred obligation that we all must take very seriously."

"This is a very emotionally trying time for us all," he wrote then. "When we first heard of the Coronavirus it seemed so remote. It has now come not only to our doorstep, but has pierced our lives."

The upper Manhattan campus of Yeshiva University was already closed through Friday because the stricken lawyer's son is a student there and has also tested positive for COVID-19. The university said it was advising Fink's students to self-quarantine until further notice.

The synagogue's website says it is closed through Sunday.

Health officials had said earlier that people who attended services there on Feb. 22, and a funeral and a bat mitzvah on Feb. 23, must self-

quarantine until at least Sunday.

There were scattered school closings in the region amid fears of a wider spread of the virus. Two elite private schools in Manhattan, the all-girls Spence and the all-boys Collegiate, closed Friday because a family associated with the schools was being monitored for the [coronavirus](#).

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