



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on May 20, 2020

De Blasio Says Those Who Swim at Beaches Will Be “Taken Right Out of the Water”

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, who has taken a heavy-handed approach to enforcing the coronavirus lockdowns at both the state and city levels, is continuing his quest to become the “Grinch who stole summer.”

De Blasio issued a firm warning during his COVID-19 press briefing on May 18, saying that the city is serious about keeping swimmers out of the water at its public beaches on Memorial Day weekend. State beaches in upstate New York, as well as in Connecticut and New Jersey, have begun to lift their coronavirus-related restrictions and are all set to be open for Memorial Day weekend.



“Anyone tries to get in the water, they’ll be taken right out of the water,” the mayor told reporters.

De Blasio said the “first half of June is the first opportunity to relax anything,” adding that if “we don’t see the right thing, we’ll have to be stricter.”

De Blasio said that city officials would not put up police barriers at beaches, giving New Yorkers the chance to comply “voluntarily.” Swimming, lifeguards, parties, barbecues, and sports would all be prohibited on the beaches, de Blasio added, and social-distancing rules will still apply. Anyone who has ever played a game of frisbee at the beach might consider the distance between the player to be sufficient to avoid spreading the virus, but that apparently is not good enough for de Blasio.

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“It’s a dangerous situation to ever go in the water if there are no lifeguards present,” de Blasio went on. He said that city officials are also concerned that large numbers of people would take the bus or subway to beaches, noting that only residents of the communities surrounding the beaches would be allowed to use the beach as “open space you can walk on.”

It is surprising that social liberals have not complained that the rules are elitist, because they allow residents fortunate enough to live near the beaches to walk on them, while barring the inner-city residents who must travel on public transportation to go there.

Back on Sunday, de Blasio had said that police will take action against people gathering together to drink on sidewalks in lieu of bars. This practice, he said, “violates what we’re saying about social distancing, and that puts lives in danger. We’re not going to tolerate people starting to congregate. It’s as simple as that.”

“So the police department will be out, the sheriff’s office will be out, watching very carefully.”

The Orwellian phrase “Big Brother is Watching You” comes to mind.



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Image: Gage Skidmore/Wikimedia Commons

Warren Mass has served The New American since its launch in 1985 in several capacities, including marketing, editing, and writing. Since retiring from the staff several years ago, he has been a regular contributor to the magazine. Warren writes from Texas and can be reached at wmass@thenewamerican.com.

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