

Governor Phil Murphy

# Governor Murphy Updates the Public on the Status of Coronavirus in the State and Highlights New Jersey's Preparedness Measures Amid Global Outbreak

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**EWING** – Governor Phil Murphy, joined by State health and emergency management officials at the Regional Operations Intelligence Center, highlighted New Jersey's preparedness measures amid the global novel coronavirus outbreak. New Jersey has no confirmed cases of COVID-19.

"As Governor, I am charged with safeguarding the health and safety of our residents," **said Governor Murphy**. "My Administration is actively engaged in a multi-level, whole-of-government approach – from our hospitals, to our schools, to our ports – to implement a preparedness and response plan for the potential spread of the coronavirus in New Jersey. Together, we are prepared to respond properly and swiftly to any future individuals who meet the Centers for Disease Control guidelines for coronavirus testing."

"Although this novel virus is understandably a cause for concern, it is important for New Jersey residents to know that the risk to the general public still remains low," **said New Jersey Department of Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli**. "We are working closely with the CDC and our public health and healthcare partners to ensure our preparedness levels for this novel virus remain high."

The Murphy Administration continues to work closely with the CDC and local health partners to monitor the situation and will provide updates accordingly. On February 3, Governor Murphy signed Executive Order No. 102 creating the Coronavirus Task Force to coordinate all State efforts to appropriately prepare for and respond to the public health hazard of COVID-19. The Coronavirus Task Force includes key agencies including the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, Office of Emergency Management, Department of Education, Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Port Authority, and NJ TRANSIT. These agencies are critical in preparations for transporting and housing quarantined individuals, preparing schools and employees, and mass transit. The Task Force meets weekly to coordinate the State's partnership with the Federal government and Newark Liberty International Airport to ensure effective communications. Governor Murphy also spoke with Vice President Pence regarding the state's proactive preparedness efforts.

"Preparing for the threat from the COVID-19 coronavirus will take heightened vigilance and the coordination of all people, ranging from health and education officials to students and their parents," **said New Jersey Department of Education Commissioner Lamont O. Repollet**. "We can't emphasize enough how the safety of the nearly 1.4 million children in our schools depends on all stakeholders proactively engaging in effective communication, collaboration and preparation."

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"Residents and visitors to New Jersey can rest assured that we are instituting a comprehensive, all hands on deck approach to the monitoring and response of the COVID-19," **said Colonel Patrick Callahan of the New Jersey State Police.** "While we urge residents to be prepared by taking advantage of the information and resources being made available, please know that the New Jersey State Police and the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management stand ready to respond immediately."

"The Port Authority will continue to provide all necessary support for the screening being carried out by the CDC and CBP of passengers at our airports who may have been exposed to coronavirus and ensuing referrals for quarantine in conjunction with state and city health authorities," **said Port Authority Chief Security Officer John Bilich.** "We encourage all travelers -not just at the region's airports but those utilizing all Port Authority facilities- to make themselves aware of the health and safety protocols established by CDC."

As part of the preparedness activities, the Murphy Administration has prioritized communication with the public and launched a webpage (<https://nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>) with resources regarding COVID-19, including travel updates and advisories and guidance sent to health care providers, local health departments, infection preventionists, and other health partners. The Administration also opened a hotline (1-800-222-1222 (tel:18002221222)) for the public to ask questions about COVID-19. The 24-hour hotline is operated by the New Jersey Poison Information and Education System, also known as the New Jersey Poison Center. The free hotline is staffed with trained health care professionals and can accommodate callers in multiple languages. To date, the hotline has received more than 800 calls from the public and can accommodate callers in multiple languages.

Click here (<https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>) for more information on novel coronavirus.

## Governor Phil Murphy

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