

Governor Phil Murphy

AG Grewal Announces Expansion of Pharmacists' Role in COVID-19 Testing Across New Jersey

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NEWARK –Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal today announced that the Division of Consumer Affairs has authorized licensed New Jersey pharmacists to widely administer COVID-19 tests to customers, paving the way for thousands of pharmacies statewide to serve as testing sites.

Expanding testing authority to the more than 18,000 pharmacists licensed in the state advances Governor Phil Murphy's goal of doubling statewide testing by the end of the month as part of his "Road Back" recovery plan to reopen the state.

"Widespread testing is a vital component of Governor Murphy's strategy for reopening New Jersey and we are doing everything we can to facilitate expanded testing," **said Attorney General Grewal**. "With thousands of pharmacists now authorized to administer COVID-19 tests, finding a testing site in New Jersey will be as easy as walking to the corner drug store."

There are 2,239 pharmacies in New Jersey, including retail chains and independent businesses. The Acting Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs last week signed an Administrative Order that permits licensed pharmacists to perform the tests at, or immediately outside of, a registered pharmacy. Under the Director's order, pharmacists may administer tests for COVID-19 or its antibodies without a prescription.

"Neighborhood pharmacists are trusted members of their communities and are often a primary source of healthcare services and information for their customers," **said Paul R. Rodriguez, Acting Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs**. "This order provides New Jersey residents with easy access to safe, accurate testing administered by someone they know and trust,"

The Administrative Order (https://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/COVID19/Documents/DCA-AO-2020-06_DCA-W-2020-10.pdf) specifically allows pharmacists to order and perform tests, and waives legal requirements that otherwise would preclude pharmacists from administering tests without entering into a collaborative practice agreement or protocol with a physician.

Under the Director's order, pharmacists may only perform tests that have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration ("FDA") or that have received an emergency use authorization issued by the FDA. Consumers are encouraged to ask about FDA approvals before submitting to a test.

Including pharmacists in COVID-19 testing remains important, as the FDA has so far authorized only one at-home sample collection kit that can then be sent only to specified laboratories for COVID-19 diagnostic testing. That testing kit is authorized to be used by individuals at home only if they have been screened using an online questionnaire that is reviewed by a health care provider.


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