

Governor Phil Murphy

Press Pool Coverage: Governor Murphy Tours Field Medical Station at New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center

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The 500-bed field hospital at the New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center in Edison is largely set up already, with cubicle-like hospital rooms closed off with cloth doors.

Joining Gov. Phil Murphy on the tour was U.S. Sen. Cory Booker, state Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli, State Police Superintendent Patrick Callahan, and numerous officials from the State Police and National Guard.

Marc Pellegrino, a commander with the State Police, said the hospital is likely to begin taking patients Saturday “if all goes well.”

Workers began building the third hospital in the state, at the Atlantic City Convention Center, yesterday, Pellegrino said. The hope is that will take seven days and it will open sometime next week, he said.

Pellegrino said U.S. Department of Defense personnel who will staff the facility are on ground in New Jersey today. They hope to be here tomorrow for orientation and training.

The Edison facility will be for low-acuity patients. It is double the size of the ones in Secaucus and Atlantic City, which have 250 beds each.

Murphy, wearing a black State Police pullover, walked with Booker, in a dark suit, on the tour. Both wore masks.

“We’ve got to stop meeting like this,” Murphy told Booker.

There are 15 nurse stations at the hospital, as well as a pharmacy, and portable showers and bathrooms.

Murphy thanked everyone who helped build the facility – including FEMA, the National Guard, labor unions.

The governor said the field hospitals are critical as the state battles two lines: trying to “break the back” of the virus’ spread and “build up” hospital capacity.

“These are huge, quantum steps for us in terms of capacity,” Murphy said. “So I thank everybody associated with this. It means more than you know.”

Back
to top

Booker said “this is the best of local, state, and federal officials working together seamlessly.”

“This is the way our federal dollars should be working,” the senator added.

Added Murphy: “We’ve got a really tough two or three weeks ahead of us, at a minimum. And this is gonna make a huge difference.”

Brent Johnson | Statehouse Bureau

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VIDEO (NJTV):

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[Environment \(/governor/initiatives/#Environment\)](/governor/initiatives/#Environment)

[Health \(/governor/initiatives/#Health\)](/governor/initiatives/#Health)

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[Transportation \(/governor/initiatives/#Transportation\)](/governor/initiatives/#Transportation)

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