

Governor Phil Murphy

Murphy Administration Sends Letter Directing Commercial Laboratories to Report All COVID-19 Test Results to the Department of Health

03/23/2020

TRENTON – In a letter to commercial laboratory operators, Jared M. Maples, Director of the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness and Chair of the New Jersey Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force today directed the reporting of all COVID-19 test results to the Department of Health (DOH). As testing expands throughout the State of New Jersey, it is vital that the State has access to the most accurate and up-to-date COVID-19 test results.

“New Jerseyans deserve to have critical public health information and a high level of transparency as we fight the COVID-19 pandemic together,” **said Governor Phil Murphy**. “We are committed to working with our private sector partners to save lives and to prevent the spread of coronavirus, but in order to do so, we must have access to all test results, including negative results. I am confident that our in-state commercial labs will do the right thing and help us keep the public informed.”

“Obtaining this information from New Jersey’s commercial labs will sharpen our risk mitigation efforts and strengthen our resilience as a state. As we continue to address the challenge of COVID-19, we will utilize every tool in our power to flatten the curve and ultimately beat this virus,” **said Director Maples**.

“This data will provide valuable insight on how many New Jerseyans are being tested overall and the percentage of negative test results in our state,” **said New Jersey Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli**. “Commercial laboratories operate on much larger scale than the State lab and we are grateful for their partnership as we respond to COVID-19.”

The Domestic Security Preparedness Act, signed into law on October 4, 2001 by Governor Donald DiFrancesco, authorizes the New Jersey Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force to compel the production of information necessary to perform its duties, including the assessment of risks to the delivery and availability of essential health care services.

Under the New Jersey Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force’s directive, commercial laboratories operating in New Jersey must report all COVID-19 test results to the New Jersey Department of Health, effective on Monday, March 23rd, 2020, including retroactive results of all tests performed prior to this date. Results must be reported daily no later than 8:00 p.m. daily.

Information that is confidential in nature, including proprietary information but excluding the total number of tests and associated results, will not be publicly disclosed by the State unless directly relating to the security, public safety, or well-being of the people of New Jersey.

A copy of the letter can be viewed here (http://d31hzlkhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20200323/4c/17/28/0a/1d51a4bd8114feb9a9af02cd/NJ_Memo_to_Labs_Final.pdf).

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