

Governor Phil Murphy


# Governor Murphy Outlines New Jersey Preparedness Activities Related to Novel Coronavirus

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**NEWARK** – Governor Phil Murphy today announced New Jersey’s preparedness activities related to the outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Wuhan, China and its recent spread to the United States. The Murphy Administration is taking a comprehensive approach to respond to 2019-nCoV by ensuring public health and health care system preparedness. At this time, New Jersey has no reported cases of 2019-nCoV or reports under investigation.

“As Governor, I am above all charged with protecting the health and safety of our residents,” **said Governor Murphy.** “New Jersey is an international crossroads, home to global businesses and research and educational institutions, and with proximity to numerous international airports and other points of entry. Together, we are collaborating with our federal partners, state authorities, and local health officials to ensure that we have strong preparedness protocols in place to protect all New Jerseyans.”

As part of the preparedness activities, the Administration has launched a webpage (<https://nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>) with resources regarding 2019-nCov, including travel updates and advisories and guidance sent to health care providers, local health departments, infection preventionists, and other health partners. The Administration has also opened a hotline (1-800-222-1222 (tel:1-800-222-1222)) for the public to ask questions about 2019-nCoV. 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.

The New Jersey Department of Health has shared with hospitals across the state specific guidance for evaluating reports of patients exhibiting coronavirus symptoms, including the taking of a full travel and potential-exposure history, which is a critical metric when determining whether a patient meets specific criteria for Center for Disease Control (CDC) testing.

New Jersey continues to work closely with the CDC and local health partners to monitor the situation and will provide updates accordingly.

“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 remains low,” **said New Jersey Health Commissioner Judith M. Persichilli.** “If you haven’t traveled and are feeling ill, your symptoms may be related to flu or other respiratory viruses. We are in the height of respiratory virus season, so individuals should practice good health habits such as washing hands often and staying home when you are sick. The Department is closely monitoring this rapidly evolving situation and working with healthcare and public health partners to prepare

[Back to top](#)

for potential novel coronavirus cases.”

“The safety and security of our passengers is the Port Authority’s highest priority,” **said Port Authority Chairman Kevin O’Toole.** “We are in close contact with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding its protocols and procedures for Newark Liberty, as we have been for screening processes already in place at JFK Airport, and are fully committed to working with the CDC, U.S. Customs and Border Protection and other federal and state agencies to assist in whatever capacity we can.”

“We continue to monitor the situation with our public and private sector partners through the Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force,” **said Jared M. Maples, Director, New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness.** “My office remains committed to ensuring the safety and security of all residents and visitors.”

“We are working closely both with state agencies and postsecondary institutions to monitor the coronavirus and its potential impact on campuses, including students and employees who are studying and working abroad,” **said Secretary of Higher Education Zakiya Smith Ellis.** “We urge all students, staff, and faculty to stay up-to-date on the resources provided by the Department of Health, including the most recent guidance issued to universities. The health and safety of our students and residents is of utmost importance.”

“Schools play a vital role in this effort by providing crucial guidance to students and families,” **said Education Commissioner Lamont O. Repollet.** “New Jersey schools have faced many outbreaks and viruses over the years, and each time we work with experts throughout the state to arm our school leaders with the information they need to keep our children safe.”

## Governor Phil Murphy

[Home \(/governor/\)](/governor/)

### Administration

[Governor Phil Murphy \(/governor/admin/about/\)](/governor/admin/about/)

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[Cabinet \(/governor/admin/cabinet/\)](/governor/admin/cabinet/)

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[Economy & Jobs \(/governor/initiatives/#Economy\)](/governor/initiatives/#Economy)

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

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

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

[Law & Justice \(/governor/initiatives/#Justice\)](/governor/initiatives/#Justice)

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

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[Transition Reports \(/governor/news/reports/approved/reports\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/reports/approved/reports_archive.shtml)

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