

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy, Acting Governor Oliver, and Commissioner Persichilli Announce First Presumptive Positive Case of Novel Coronavirus in New Jersey

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WEST TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy, Acting Governor Sheila Oliver, and New Jersey Department of Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli tonight announced the first presumptive positive case of novel coronavirus, or COVID-19, in New Jersey. The individual, a male in his 30s, is hospitalized in Bergen County and has been hospitalized since March 3.

“My Administration is working aggressively to keep residents safe and contain the spread of COVID-19 in New Jersey,” **said Governor Murphy**. “We take this situation very seriously and have been preparing for this for weeks. I urge residents to remain calm and use resources from the New Jersey Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control to prepare and prevent the spread of infection. Safeguarding the public’s health is one of my highest priorities and my Administration is prepared to respond swiftly to any additional positive cases of COVID-19 here in New Jersey.”

“Our Administration has been coordinating across all levels of government, and with our federal partners, to ensure that we are active and engaged with preparedness and response plan,” **said Acting Governor Oliver**. “We urge all New Jersey residents to follow guidance from the New Jersey Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control to help contain the spread of COVID-19.”

The presumptive positive result came from a sample tested by the New Jersey Department of Health at the New Jersey Public Health Environmental Laboratories (PHEL) and is now being submitted to the CDC for confirmatory testing. State and local public health authorities are proceeding with the public health investigation and response activities as if this was a confirmed case. The hospital is working closely with the Department of Health and continues to follow all infectious disease protocols. Working with the local health department, the New Jersey Department of Health is tracing close contacts of this individual and is taking appropriate public health actions. The investigation is underway and more information will be released when it becomes available.

“Any case of novel coronavirus in our state is concerning, however most New Jersey residents are at very low risk of contracting COVID-19,” **said New Jersey Department of Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli**. “The Department is working closely with the CDC and local health officials to respond to this case and is monitoring the evolving situation across the nation.”

The New Jersey Department of Health has been working to prepare for and respond to the evolving novel

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coronavirus since early January. The Department shared state and CDC guidance with hospitals, local health officials, K-12 schools, universities and businesses; established a novel coronavirus webpage (<https://nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>); partnered with the New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES) to open a call center (1-800-222-1222) for the public; hosted stakeholder teleconferences; and continues coordinating state efforts weekly with the New Jersey Coronavirus Task Force chaired by Commissioner Persichilli.

To date, the 24/7 NJPIES hotline (1-800-222-1222) has received more than 1,195 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.

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Office of Governor PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-6000

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