



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

JUDITH M. PERSICILLI, RN, BSN, MA
Commissioner

April 6, 2020

Re: Establishment of Temporary Quarantine/Isolation Non-Congregate
Housing Program for Specific Populations

Dear Commissioners,

On March 9, 2020, Governor Philip D. Murphy issued Executive Order No. 103, declaring the existence of a Public Health Emergency posed by COVID-19. Through subsequent Executive Orders, the Governor also imposed significant mitigation measures to limit the spread of the virus by restricting all gatherings, closing certain businesses, directing individuals to stay home, and directing that all individuals maintain social distancing. To date, 41,090 New Jersey residents have tested positive for COVID-19 and least 1,000 deaths are attributable to the virus.

In light of the clear dangers posed by COVID-19, the Department of Health, in partnership and with your departments and local officials throughout the State, seeks to further minimize the risk of exposure to certain vulnerable populations, as well as health care workers and emergency responders and their families. Accordingly, I am establishing a temporary quarantine/isolation housing program that will assist in helping to minimize exposure for these specific populations. Action on temporary non-congregate housing to allow for quarantine and isolation of specific populations listed below are reasonable and necessary to address the public health needs of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am requesting that all New Jersey Departments responsible for certain vulnerable populations identified below or who employ first responders and/or health care workers who may become exposed to COVID-19 as a result of their duties work together with State, county, and local Offices of Emergency Management and local officials on strategies to implement non-congregate housing solutions, such as hotels and dormitories, for at least the following populations:

- 1) Homeless individuals and families who live in congregate shelters who are symptomatic or tested positive for COVID-19;
- 2) Homeless individuals who require quarantine or isolation due to being symptomatic or having a positive test for COVID-19;
- 3) Children and adults living in congregate living settings who have tested positive for COVID-19; and

- 4) First responders and healthcare workers who do not require hospitalization but nevertheless need to avoid direct contact with their families due to exposure to COVID-19.

All State departments must work together with State, county and local OEM and local officials to minimize the risk of exposure to the public by advancing appropriate non-congregate shelter options, as needed, to assist the groups of individuals identified above as well as other groups that may need assistance as the State continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Health will also work with healthcare systems to ensure that non-congregate sheltering options are available for those individuals requiring quarantine or isolation outside of a traditional hospital setting.

More details about the program will follow. In the meantime, if you have questions or need to immediately arrange for temporary housing for quarantine/isolation for a person in one of these populations, please reach out to Christopher Menschner, Assistant Commissioner of the Division of HIV, STD, and TB Services at christopher.menschner@doh.nj.gov.

We appreciate your cooperation with this non-congregate sheltering endeavor.

Sincerely,



Judith M. Persichilli, RN, BSN, MA
Commissioner