

BERGEN NEW JERSEY County



County of Bergen Executive Order No. 2020-01

Pursuant to the authority vested in me under the County Executive Form of Optional County Charter Law, N.J.S.A. 40:41A-36 and 37, *et. seq.*, and Article 3, Section 3.4 of the Administrative Code of the County of Bergen, I issue the following Executive Order:

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization designated the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the United States Health and Human Services Secretary declared a public health emergency for the entire United States to aid the nation's healthcare community in responding to the COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the spread of COVID-19 within New Jersey constitutes an imminent public health hazard that threatens and presently endangers the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of one or more municipalities or counties of the State; and

WHEREAS, as of this date, 15 presumptive positive cases both travel-related cases and community contact transmission of COVID-19 have been documented in New Jersey, with confirmed cases in Bergen County; and

WHEREAS, the spread of COVID-19 in New Jersey at a rate comparable to the rate of spread in other affected areas, would greatly strain the resources and capabilities of county and municipal governments, including public health agencies, which provide essential services for containing and mitigating the spread of contagious diseases, such as COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, the Governor of the State of New Jersey has declared the concurrent invocation of both a State of Emergency pursuant to N.J.S.A. App.A.:9-33 *et seq.* and a Public Health Emergency as contemplated by N.J.S.A. 26:13-1 *et seq.*, which action invoked the authority and powers contemplated by N.J.S.A. 26:13-3, the Emergency Health Powers Act; and

WHEREAS, on this date, March 10, 2020, the State of New Jersey recorded its first death attributed to COVID-19, and accordingly the County will implement more aggressive mitigation measures in conjunction with the current containment efforts to combat COVID-19;

WHEREAS, the County is working with federal, state and local officials and authorities on a daily basis on prevention and mitigation activities that include providing critical information to the public about COVID-19 to provide facts and avoid unnecessary fear, training emergency responders and health professionals about the disease and investigating suspected, presumptive and confirmed cases; and

WHEREAS, Bergen County provides the services of Health Officer to thirty-five (35) of seventy (70) municipalities that comprise the County; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has determined that COVID-19 generally presents a low risk to children but seniors, particularly those with underlying chronic medical conditions are at high risk of serious illness from the disease; and

WHEREAS, one of Bergen County's priorities as part of the County's preparedness and response planning is to get critical services to those areas where the most vulnerable populations are located and provide vital resources for the support and care of vulnerable populations prior to, during and following an emergency; and

WHEREAS, the County may be required to acquire goods and services that may not be currently available in the County's product inventory or from vendors with whom the County currently has a contractual relationship in order to protect and maintain the health, safety, and welfare of New Jersey residents and visitors, and successfully combat the impact of the virus.

NOW THEREFORE, I, James J. Tedesco, III, as County Executive, do hereby order and direct that:

- 1) The above recitals are incorporated herein as if more fully set forth at length.
- 2) A health emergency hereby exists within Bergen County regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- 3) All necessary County agencies are authorized to take appropriate action to assist municipal governments in containing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from this COVID-19 outbreak.
- 4) All County Departments and agencies immediately shall implement any and all infectious disease guidelines and protocols and use all personal protective equipment in connection therewith.
- 5) All County Departments and agencies shall provide all necessary assistance to federal, state and local authorities to protect the health, welfare, and safety of the citizens of Bergen County during this COVID-19 outbreak, and shall prioritize the most vulnerable county residents served and develop the appropriate contingency plans to avoid any disruption of services. With a special focus on senior centers and Meals-on-Wheels recipients.

- 6) All County employees shall follow all local, County, State and Federal health recommendations, in addition to Centers for Disease Control recommendations including but not limited to Handwashing, Sanitizing and Basic Infection Control Procedures.
- 7) There is an immediate ban on all County business related international travel or domestic travel to any states that have reported COVID-19 cases. Similar travel restrictions are strongly recommended to all county businesses.
- 8) In order to protect those who may be more susceptible to COVID-19, their families and loved ones, visitation at the Bergen County Health Care Center in Rockleigh, New Jersey, is hereby suspended until further notice. The facility is hereby directed to review alternative technological means to provide visitation to residents. Similar measures are strongly recommended at the many long term care and senior focused facilities throughout the County.
- 9) Bergen County residents who are seniors, particularly those with underlying health conditions, are strongly encouraged to avoid large crowds and large gatherings while COVID-19 remains a threat.
- 10) To combat COVID-19, the County shall be permitted whenever necessary to procure the necessary goods or services, which are not available under contracts currently in existence with the County, without complying with the New Jersey Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-6 *et. seq.*), including but not limited to the following:
 - to award emergency contracts, including but not limited to emergency contracts or leases for relocation and support of County operations for professional services for purchases of commodities, services, and technology;
 - to purchase food, supplies, services, and equipment;
 - to procure any supplies or equipment required to ensure adequate sanitization, cleaning or sterilization of any facility or location.
- 11) The County Health Officer shall implement any emergency regulations or amendments to any sanitary or health codes of the 35 municipalities in which services are provided by the Health Officer, and recommend same to the remaining 35 municipalities.
- 12) The County Health Officer shall engage in periodic and regular communication with all local health officers in order to coordinate activities, avoid any gaps in information sharing and collaborate on containment and mitigation measures in order to ensure accurate and comprehensive contact tracing to effectively combat the spread of COVID-19.
- 13) All County agencies shall take all reasonable measures to protect the health and safety of such vulnerable and at-risk populations, including safe treatment, transfer and discharge practices, and to comply with the Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (42 U.S.C. section 1395dd) and any associated regulations.

- 14) The County Health Officer and all County Departments and Divisions shall work collaboratively to determine and execute effective strategies, initiatives, protocols and procedures to prevent, mitigate and combat the spread of COVID-19, particularly among the most vulnerable and at-risk populations, including but not limited to senior centers and nursing homes; and take all action to the extent necessary to maintain the public health with respect to treatment or containment of persons with or possibly exposed to COVID-19.
- 15) I strongly encourage the cooperation of all local health officials with the County Health Officer to share information to the degree and extent possible and permitted in order to effectively combat the spread of COVID-19.
- 16) This Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until such time as it is determined by me that an emergency no longer exists.
- 17) A copy of this Executive Order shall be immediately transmitted to the Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "James J. Tedesco, III". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "J" and a prominent "T".

James J. Tedesco, III
County Executive

Dated: March 10, 2020