

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY
COUNTY OF HUNTERDON**

**RESOLUTION
#2020 – 213**

COVID-19 Public Health Action Plan

WHEREAS, protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the residents and the County government employees of Hunterdon County is a paramount concern for the Board of Chosen Freeholders, particularly during the COVID-19 public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders Director Shaun C. Van Doren signed a declaration of a State of Emergency in the County on March 16, 2020; and

WHEREAS, President Donald J. Trump, on March 13, 2020, declared a nationwide emergency pursuant to the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary, on January 30, 2020, declared a public health emergency for the entire United States to aid the nation's healthcare community in responding to COVID-19 virus; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's Governor followed that action by declaring, on March 9, 2020, both a State of Emergency and a Public Health Emergency, invoking the authority provided by N.J.S.A. 26:13-3, the Emergency Health Powers Act; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared, on March 11, 2020, the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the spread of COVID-19 in New Jersey is greatly straining the resources and capabilities of the County government's essential services; and

WHEREAS, the County is engaging with federal, state and local officials, the Hunterdon Medical Center, and local health care providers on a daily basis to ensure a coordinated public health and emergency management response; and

WHEREAS, the County is providing critical information to the public about COVID-19, disseminating facts to encourage awareness and avoid unnecessary fear, preparing emergency responders and health professionals to respond appropriately to the public health emergency, and following up on health provider referrals.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders that the following action plan is authorized in response to the Covid-19 public health emergency, in order to protect the health, welfare and safety of the residents of Hunterdon County and the employees of Hunterdon County government:

The County Health Officer and all County Departments and Divisions shall continue to engage in collaborative efforts to determine and execute effective strategies, initiatives, protocols and procedures to prevent, mitigate and combat the spread of COVID-19, and provide critical information to the public about the virus based on facts and avoid unnecessary fear.

County Departments are directed to comply with the CDC's guidance to cancel all public gatherings of more than 50 individuals, to use telecommunications where possible and appropriate for any public meetings, and to seek advice from the County Health Department and County Counsel in determining other public event cancellations.

Prior to finalizing its recommendations to the Board for the 2020 County Budget, the County's Budget Committee is directed to consider redeploying existing financial resources and providing for additional resources for the Departments of Health and Public Safety, the Office of Emergency Management, the

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Division of Buildings and Maintenance, and other Department budget accounts as needed, for Covid-19 response activities.

County employees' travel for official business and attendance at conferences, functions, and meetings is temporarily suspended through April 22, 2020, unless such travel or attendance is essential to the operation of county government, as determined by the County Administrator. Any previously approved travel or attendance at conferences or large-scale meetings during that time period is hereby rescinded, except for those determined to be essential to the operation of the county government.

The temporary suspension will be revisited prior to the April 21, 2020 Board of Chosen Freeholders meeting to determine if it should be continued, based on the advice of the County Department of Health and County Counsel.

The County Administrator or his designee, in consultation with the Director of the Board, is hereby authorized to implement a telecommute program for eligible and/or essential County employees as part of his ongoing public health emergency which may prevent employees for accessing their assigned workspaces. The Administrator is also authorized to assign different locations and workspaces, temporarily, during the advent of a public health emergency.

The County Administrator or his designee, in consultation with the Director of the Board, is authorized to modify flextime or alternative workweek programs and may adjust established hours of daily or shift operations. These flextime arrangements may include modifications regarding hours of work and break times. When implementing a new program or a modification of an existing program, the Administrator shall advise affected union representatives of the modifications as necessary.

Any decision authorized in the above to remain in force must be made in writing, copies to be provided to the members of the Board of Chosen Freeholders and approved by the Board at the Freeholder meeting next occurring.

Pursuant to the New Jersey Civil Service Commission directive of March 12, 2020, should an employee be (i) diagnosed with COVID-19, (ii) directed by a medical professional or government agency to self-isolate or quarantine due to suspicion of exposure to or diagnosis with COVID-19, and/or (iii) undergoing a period of self-quarantine or isolation pursuant to public health assessment recommendations, the employee must provide documentation verifying the same within three work days of the initial absence to the Hunterdon County Department of Human Resources in order to receive a waiver of the use of accumulated leave time. If an employee does not provide such documentation, the employee will be required to utilize their own accumulated leave time.

If the absence is caused by the employee's need to care for an immediate family member who (i) has been diagnosed with COVID-19, (ii) was directed by a medical professional or government agency to self-isolate or quarantine due to suspicion of exposure to or diagnosis with COVID-19, and/or (iii) is undergoing a period of self-quarantine or isolation pursuant to public health assessment recommendations, the employee shall submit documentation verifying the family member's COVID-19-related illness, exposure, and/or quarantine period to the Hunterdon County Department of Human Resources within three days of the employee's initial absence. If no such documentation is received, the employee will be required to use their own accumulated leave time.

Employees who have been exposed to or diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus will not be permitted to enter the workplace until they are eligible to return per guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

The County Administrator in conjunction with the Human Services Administrator, and Director of the Board are granted the ability to waive fees associated with use of the LINK System during this ongoing public health emergency.

