



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

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JUDITH M. PERSICILLI, RN, BSN, MA
Commissioner

September 1, 2021

Dear Chief School Administrators,

On July 14, 2021, the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), announced via broadcast that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) awarded \$267 million to NJDOH to assist provide COVID-19 screening testing resources and support to local educational agencies (LEAs) and nonpublic schools. These resources will be provided through the NJDOH K12 Screening Testing Program and will assist each participating LEA and nonpublic school in implementing testing plans that will be developed in collaboration with their local health departments and based on guidance from the NJDOH. The program can assist LEAs and nonpublic schools with meeting the requirements set forth in Executive Order 253 regarding COVID-19 testing for unvaccinated PreK-12 school personnel.

LEAs and nonpublic schools interested in participating in the program must select one of two options for doing so. The first option will provide access to testing resources through full turnkey testing services provided on-site at schools by state-contracted vendors in the North, Central, and Southern regions of the state. The second option will provide LEAs and nonpublic schools with funding to support testing programs that are already in place and align with the NJDOH screening testing guidelines.

Participation in this program is voluntary for LEAs and nonpublic schools. LEAs and nonpublic schools shall complete the enclosed survey by September 13, 2021 to indicate interest in, or opt-out of participation. Through the survey, the LEA or nonpublic school will select one of the two options outlined above. LEAs that do not respond by September 13, 2021 will be considered not interested and will not be eligible to participate in this program. In order to prevent individual schools within a district from selecting alternate options, please make all requests based on total enrollment and not individual school facility unless your school type operates in only one facility. Additional information regarding the K-12 School COVID-19 Screening Testing Program is on the NJDOH's COVID-19: Information for Schools webpage.

The HHS has also dedicated \$50 million to provide free COVID-19 testing to K-12 schools throughout the country. This program is run by Affinity Empowering on behalf of Clinical Enterprise, a Eurofins Scientific company. LEAs that are interested should enroll via their website at www.operationet.com/. This program is an additional resource and is separate and apart from the DOH K12 Screening Testing Program.

Governor Murphy is committed to safely reopening schools for full time in-person instruction this fall and these resources will help LEAs and nonpublic schools achieve this goal. If you have any questions regarding the statewide school testing program, please contact COVID.SchoolTesting@doh.nj.gov. Thank you.

Judith M. Persichilli, RN, BSN, MA
Commissioner
NJ Department of Health

Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D.
Acting Commissioner
NJ Department of Education

COVID-19 Screening Testing Program: Intake Process for K-12 Education Agencies and Non-Public Schools

The latest CDC guidance highlights that students benefit from in-person learning and recommends layered COVID-19 prevention strategies to lower the risk of COVID-19 transmission in schools and to reduce disruptions to students' in-person learning. COVID-19 screening testing in K-12 schools remains a primary CDC-recommended prevention strategy to promptly identify cases, clusters, and outbreaks[1]. New Jersey has received federal funding (referred to as "federal funds" hereafter) to support K-12 school COVID-19 screening testing.

To support safe return to full in-person learning, the NJ Department of Health (NJDOH) will offer COVID-19 testing support to K-12 local education agencies (LEAs) and non-public schools (e.g., private, independent, or parochial) for students and school staff[2] throughout New Jersey. These testing resources will also support covered entities in complying with Executive Order No. 253.

Testing resources will be provided through one of the following two options:

- **Option 1: End-to-end screening testing will be provided on-site at schools by state-contracted vendor at no cost to LEAs and non-public schools until federal funds are expended.** This comprehensive service solution will include, at a minimum, the implementation, management, staffing, equipment, and daily operations needed to operate school testing clinics, including all required reporting.
- **Option 2: For LEAs or non-public schools that have a testing program or plan in place, NJDOH will offer funding to support screening testing efforts.** To receive funds to support contracts with independent vendors, LEAs or non-public schools must submit their COVID-19 screening testing and reporting plan, and it must meet minimum requirements outlined by NJDOH Communicable Disease Service (CDS) Screening Testing Guidance. If this option is selected, LEAs and non-public schools are expected to organize and implement their testing programs and the State will not provide end-to-end testing vendor services. Any entity that opts-in to funding support must continue to follow reporting requirements per the latest CDS guidance.

All LEAs and non-public schools must complete the survey below to opt in or out of receiving State COVID-19 screening testing support. Any non-response will be considered an opt-out of participating in this program to receive state-supported

resources for COVID-19 screening testing (i.e. will receive neither vendor COVID-19 testing support nor direct funding support). All LEAs and non-public schools should complete the survey as soon as possible, and no later than September 13, 2021.

Please complete the survey below no later than September 13, 2021.