

March 25, 2020

**ESSEX COUNTY EXECUTIVE DIVINCENZO, FREEHOLDER PRESIDENT GILL
AND VICE PRESIDENT RICHARDSON ANNOUNCE SCREENING SITE FOR NOVEL
CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) TO OPEN IN ESSEX COUNTY WEEQUAHIC PARK**
*Essex County Residents can Register for an Appointment
at www.EssexCOVID.org*

Essex County, NJ – Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr., Freeholder President Brendan Gill and Vice President Wayne Richardson announced that Essex County will be opening a drive-through testing site for Essex County residents who are symptomatic of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Essex County Weequahic Park in Newark. The site will open on Thursday, March 26th and Saturday, March 28th when 100 tests per day will be administered; it will then be open next week on Monday, Wednesday and Friday when 150 tests per day will be administered each day. **The testing site is for Essex County residents; appointments are mandatory.** Residents must arrive by car.

“The most effective way that elected officials and public health professionals can get a handle on how far reaching COVID-19 has become is to test residents for the virus,” DiVincenzo, Gill and Richardson said in a joint statement. “These screenings are in high demand and we ask for the public’s cooperation throughout this process. We encourage our residents to continue to take precautions to prevent the spread of the virus and not place themselves in situations where they may be exposed,” they said.

The screenings are being offered to Essex County residents only who are symptomatic of COVID-19. This means anyone wishing to be tested must meet specific testing criteria, which includes a fever of at least 99.6 degrees and respiratory symptoms of shortness of breath. Appointments will be scheduled from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Those who do not meet the criteria will not receive an appointment. If you are exhibiting severe symptoms, please contact your local health care provider or local health department for guidance.

Residents can visit www.EssexCOVID.org, where they will be required to complete a short online screening process before an appointment is scheduled. Residents will be asked several health-related questions and detail any symptoms they have related to the coronavirus. Upon completion of the survey, they will be informed if they are eligible for the screening. If they are eligible, a confirmation number will be provided; **residents must bring the confirmation number with them to their appointment.**

If someone does not have internet access, they can register by calling the Essex County Office of Emergency Management at 973-324-9950. The call-in center will be open from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. An operator will help them complete the initial survey and issue the confirmation number. **Residents must bring the confirmation number with them to their appointment.**

Tests are being offered free of charge to Essex County residents. Having health insurance is not a requirement. Follow up contact will be made to assess the continuing health of the person who completed the screening.

Medical personnel from RWJBarnabas Health System, Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, University Hospital, Hackensack Hospital, Essex County Hospital and nurses from public schools in Essex County are staffing the testing sites and call-in center. Security at the site is being provided by the Essex County Sheriff's Office and Newark Police Department.

Essex County will continue to administer the virus screening as long as supplies of test kits, gowns, facial masks and gloves last.

Residents can help stop the spread of Novel Coronavirus by washing their hands frequently, using hand sanitizer after touching hard surfaces, staying home if they feel sick, practicing social distancing and avoiding spending any time in crowds of people. Residents are also reminded to adhere to restrictions enacted by Governor Phil Murphy, which include a curfew between the hours of 8 p.m. and 5 a.m. and restrict their traveling unless it is absolutely necessary.