

News from the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Somerset County Coronavirus Update

March 31

As of March 31, a total of 405 cases of COVID-19 and 11 deaths have been reported in Somerset County. The New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) is reporting a total of 18,696 cases and 267 deaths in the state.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) expects that widespread transmission of COVID-19 will continue and that, in the coming months, most of the United States' population will be exposed to the virus. COVID-19 can cause mild to more severe respiratory illness. Symptoms appear within two to 14 days after exposure and include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

While individuals may know to stay away from people who are coughing or sneezing, there is evidence that the virus may be spread by people without symptoms. Residents should assume that undiagnosed cases of COVID-19 exist throughout the community.

Social distancing – staying at least at least two arm's length (about six feet) away from other people - is the most effective tool public health has in trying to delay the spread of the virus and reduce the impact of the disease. This is especially important to protect older people and those with underlying health conditions like diabetes, heart disease, cancer and other ailments.

Additional daily health precautions that can prevent the spread of the coronavirus and other diseases:

- **Stay home.**
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water, and for at least 20 seconds each time
- Resist the urge to touch your eyes, nose and mouth
- Avoid close contact with people who are ill
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze
- Do not reuse tissue after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched
- Stay home when you are sick

To avoid spreading respiratory illnesses, please do not show up at a clinic, hospital, or testing site without calling in advance for instructions.

If you are NOT sick, you do not need to wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a facemask). Facemasks are in short supply and they should be saved for healthcare workers and caregivers.

Not everyone needs to be tested for COVID-19. There is specific criteria set by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the New Jersey Department of Health to determine who should be tested for COVID-19. Somerset County is following guidance from these agencies and distributing what limited supplies are available to the most vulnerable populations, hospitals and first responders. For information about current New Jersey testing site locations and self-assessments, visit: <https://covid19.nj.gov/search.html?query=Testing+Centers+in+NJ>.

Residents with questions or concerns about COVID-19 can call 2-1-1, text NJCOVID to 898-211, or email coronavirus@co.somerset.nj.us.

Since the situation is evolving, it is important to stay up to date by following trusted sources of information such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov, the World Health Organization at www.who.int, the New Jersey Department of Health at www.nj.gov/health and the Somerset County Department of Health at www.co.somerset.nj.us/health.

For helpful resources including posters and flyers available in English and Spanish, visit: <https://www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/public-health-safety/health-department/services/disease-prevention/covid-19-health-education>.

To stay up to date with Somerset County events and information, sign up for [free email alerts](#) at www.co.somerset.nj.us/subscribe or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).