

**Cape May County
New Jersey
Board of Chosen Freeholders
Public Information**

4 Moore Road
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210-1601
Telephone: (609) 463-4331 ▪ Fax: (609) 465-4639
Website: www.capemaycountynj.gov
Denis Brown, Administrative Aide



NEWS
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GRANT FUNDING EXPANDS COVID-19 TESTING IN CAPE MAY COUNTY

New grant funding coming to Cape May County will expand testing capabilities for COVID-19 over six months. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC)-Enhancing Detection Grant comes through the New Jersey Department of Health for \$552,513.

The Cape May County Department of Health, in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Health, Cape May County Office of Emergency Management, local OEM and Cape Regional Medical Center will use the ELC grant funding to increase access to COVID-19 testing for state recommended at-risk priority individuals, first responders and vulnerable populations within Cape May County.

"I can't say enough about the work of our Cape May County Health Department and the continued partnership with our community partners including Cape Regional Medical Center," said Freeholder Jeff Pierson, liaison to the Health Department. "The Health Department has engaged in bringing additional testing to the County, public awareness campaigns, and has led our County's Coronavirus Task Force. This expanded testing will allow us to isolate cases and get people quarantined quicker so we can reduce the spread of COVID-19."

The increased testing will be initiated in multiple ways. One of the priorities is to establish an additional COVID-19 testing center at Cape May County Department of Health. This will focus on expanding testing for first responders, symptomatic individuals, close contacts of positive cases, health care workers, and asymptomatic referrals. The County will also conduct testing by operating mobile and walk-up testing options for vulnerable populations that have trouble accessing the stationary County testing sites. The focus of these mobile testing sites will be in geographic areas currently underserved, seniors living in high-rises and dense apartment buildings, and at-risk symptomatic individuals of the general population. Testing will be conducted four days a week for 26-weeks. Mobile testing will be conducted two days a week in all 16 municipalities on a rotating basis and another two days per week at the Cape May County Department of Health.

“We have seen recently how important it is to remain diligent with rising cases nationally and here in New Jersey,” said Freeholder Director Gerald M. Thornton. “This additional capacity will allow our residents, many of whom are vulnerable, to access testing more quickly and within their own communities. It is an essential step in mitigating the spread of COVID-19.”

The County Health Department will be releasing a schedule for testing closer to the start of the program. Public awareness will also be another key element of this campaign. Both traditional and social media will be used to advertise the importance of COVID-19 and promote testing options to target populations within Cape May County.

“We thank the State Health Department and our partners including the Cape May County Office of Emergency Management, local OEM offices, and Cape Regional Medical Center in working with us on implementing a long-range testing plan in Cape May County,” said Cape May County Health Officer Kevin Thomas. “This additional testing will provide the County with the necessary testing for our residents.”