



State of New Jersey  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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*Governor*

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*Lt. Governor*

JUDITH M. PERSICILLI, RN, BSN, MA  
*Commissioner*

July 7, 2021

Dear Chief School Administrators,

The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is making available a grant program for states to assist local educational agencies (LEAs) and nonpublic schools with implementing COVID-19 screening testing as schools reopen for in-person instruction. As Governor Murphy has indicated an intention to safely return to full time in person instruction this fall, these resources should help schools achieve that goal.

This program will allow LEAs and nonpublic schools access to testing resources such as test kits, diagnostic lab services, PPE, and full turnkey testing services through vendors. These resources will assist schools in implementing testing plans that are developed by each participating LEA and nonpublic schools.

The program is voluntary for LEAs and nonpublic schools. In order to participate in the program, an LEA or nonpublic school must develop a testing plan in collaboration with their local health department, based on [screening testing guidance](#) from the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH). LEAs and nonpublic schools must also:

- Define a testing protocol and select a vendor,
- Identify a testing team,
- Develop a communication plan,
- Set up software and regulatory requirements, and
- Determine testing logistics and supply needs.

More complete information about this program from the CDC can be found in the [ELC Reopening Schools](#) document. Additional resources are available, such as the [Rockefeller Foundation's COVID-19 Testing in K-12 Settings Playbook](#) and at [openandsafeschools.org](http://openandsafeschools.org). LEAs and nonpublic schools that demonstrate interest in this program will receive additional detailed guidance on program participation.

In addition, in order to assist LEAs and nonpublic schools with health-related questions regarding reopening and testing, the NJDOH will fund and designate three regional health advisors (in each of the northern, central, and southern regions of the state) to provide guidance regarding school-based testing, as well as health and safety questions. These regional advisors will supplement the role of Local Health Departments.

LEAs should utilize the screening testing guidance from the NJDOH to develop their testing plans for the 2021-2022 school year. Additionally, the NJDOH and the New Jersey Department of Education have issued [health and safety guidance](#) for schools as they return to fulltime, pre-pandemic instruction and operations in the fall 2021.

We are asking districts to complete the survey, through the link below, to express interest in the testing program. Please complete the survey via the following link no later than Wednesday, July 14, 2021.

[K-12 Testing Screening Program Survey: http://healthsurveys.nj.gov/NoviSurvey/n/zz2pi.aspx](http://healthsurveys.nj.gov/NoviSurvey/n/zz2pi.aspx)

Thank you,



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



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