State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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MIKIE SHERRILL
Governor

DR. RAYNARD E. WASHINGTON
Commissioner

October 16, 2026

VIA U.S. FIRST CLASS & ELECTRONIC MAIL

Mark Nessel
President, Virtua Voorhees & Marlton Hospital
West Jersey Hospital
100 Bowman Drive
Voorhees, NJ 08043

Re: West Jersey Hospital
License # 10405
CN # ER 2025-09393-04;01
Addition of Six (6) Neonatal Intensive Care Bassinets
Total Project Cost: $696,815.18
Expiration Date: October 16, 2031

Dear Mr. Nessel:

Please be advised that the Department of Health (Department) is hereby approving the Expedited Review Certificate of Need (ERCN) application CN # ER 2025-09393-04;01, received on September 2, 2025. This application was submitted by Virtua West Jersey Health System for West Jersey Hospital (hereafter referred to individually as "Virtua" and "WJH" and collectively as "the Applicant"). WJH is a general acute care hospital located in Camden County at 100 Bowman Drive, Voorhees, New Jersey 08043. WJH is currently licensed for sixteen (16) neonatal intensive care unit (NICU or intensive) bassinets and has requested authorization for the addition of six (6) intensive bassinets. This application is being approved at the total project cost as noted above.

Although the addition or reclassification of NICU bassinets is ordinarily subject to full review under the Certificate of Need rules, N.J.A.C. 8:33-5.1(b)(2) expressly authorizes the Department to use the expedited review process in lieu of full review when a proposed project has minimal impact on the health care system as a whole. Accordingly,

the Department may review an application for the addition or reclassification of NICU bassinets through the expedited review process when the Department determines, based on the facts and circumstances of the proposed project, that the project meets this regulatory standard.

In addressing this standard, the Applicant asserts that the majority of transfers from its intensive bassinet unit due to capacity limitations were directed to Children's Hospital in Philadelphia (CHOP), a partner for neonatal care with Virtua. The addition of these six intensive bassinets is expected to enhance access to neonatal care by increasing capacity for high-risk mothers and neonates and reducing the need for transfers to other facilities, including transfers to Pennsylvania Hospital, Cooper University Hospital, Jefferson Hospital, and internal transfers within Virtua's own system, including Virtua Mt. Holly Hospital and Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. The additional bassinets will support the provision of specialized neonatal care, improve access to appropriate levels of care, and strengthen the healthcare system's capacity to meet the needs of this population. Based on the foregoing, the Department has determined that the addition of these six intensive bassinets will support the delivery of neonatal care and will only have a minimal impact on the healthcare system as a whole, thereby meeting the requirements of N.J.A.C. 8:33-5.1(b)(2).

The Department has considered the applicable regulatory requirements for expedited review, including those set forth in N.J.A.C. 8:33-5.3. As it pertains to the provisions of N.J.A.C. 8:33-5.3(a)(1), the Applicant has provided an appropriate project description, including information about the total project cost of $696,815.18. The Applicant provided projected operating costs and revenues for the first year of operation, with total projected revenues of $6,092,464 and total projected expenses of $3,347,876. The source of funds has been identified as self-funded.

In compliance with the additional requirements outlined in N.J.A.C. 8:33-5.3(a)(1), the rationale for the proposed project is predicated on the hospital's articulated objective to enhance access to neonatal care for residents within its service area, with particular emphasis on the medically underserved population. According to the Applicant, this proposal is driven by a continuous increase in patient volume within the community over the past two years, with a marked increase observed during the 2023-2024 period.

In support of its contention, the Applicant reports that the rising incidence of comorbidities, including advanced maternal age, hypertension, diabetes, and obesity, is contributing to increased rates of preterm deliveries and complications among newborns. Without an increase in the number of licensed intensive neonatal bassinets, the hospital

notes that it is faced with transferring antepartum mothers and neonates, frequently to hospitals outside the community, thereby imposing an undue hardship on patients. Between January 2024 and September 2025, the Hospital reports transferring 123 newborns who required intensive neonatal care to other hospitals. The Hospital asserts that this proposed expansion is essential to meet the community's rising demand for neonatal care and to prevent vulnerable patients from traveling long distances for critical treatment.

N.J.A.C. 8:33-5.3(a)(2) requires assurance that all residents in the area, particularly those who are medically underserved, will have access to necessary services. The applicant affirms that this project will enhance access to essential neonatal care for residents of the service area, with special focus on the underserved population. Because patient volumes at times exceed capacity, many obstetric and neonatal patients have had to be transferred to outside facilities, which often requires patients to travel outside their community to receive care. This situation disproportionately affects the underserved population, who frequently face limited resources and transportation challenges. Approval of the request to expand the hospital's neonatal capacity will significantly reduce the need for these transfers, thereby improving access to care for all patients, particularly those in vulnerable communities.

Lastly, WJH has demonstrated a track record of substantial compliance with the Department's licensing standards as set forth in N.J.A.C. 8:33-5.3(a)(3)(ii) because there were no significant regulatory compliance events reported at the New Jersey facilities owned, operated, or managed by the Applicant.

This approval is limited to the proposal as presented and reviewed. The application, related correspondence, and any completeness questions and responses are incorporated into and made part of this approval. An additional review by the Department may be necessary if there is any change in scope, as defined at N.J.A.C. 8:33-3.9. However, a change in cost of an approved certificate of need is exempt from certificate of need review subject to the following:

1. The applicant shall file a signed certification as to the final total project cost expended for the project at the time of the application for licensure for the beds/services with the Certificate of Need and Healthcare Facility Licensure Program.

2. Where the actual total project cost exceeds the Certificate of Need approved total project cost and is greater than $1,000,000, the applicant shall remit the additional Certificate of Need application fee due to the Certificate of Need and Healthcare Facility Licensure Program. The

required additional fee shall be 0.25 percent of the total project cost in excess of the Certificate of Need approved total project cost.

3. The Department will not issue a license for beds/services until the additional fee is remitted in full.

Licensure approval to add these six neonatal intensive care bassinets to West Jersey Hospital's license is contingent upon the following conditions:

1. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:33-5.3(a)(3) (i), West Jersey Hospital must have the necessary physical space to accommodate the additional intensive bassinets and shall comply with all applicable physical plant requirements set forth in N.J.A.C. 8:43G and the 2022 Facility Guidelines Institute (FGI) Guidelines for Design and Construction of Hospitals.

2. West Jersey Hospital shall submit a licensing amendment application (CN-7 form) and fee to obtain licensure approval from the Certificate of Need and Healthcare Facility Licensure Program before the expiration of this ERCN approval.

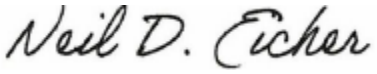
The Department, in approving this application, has relied solely on the facts and information presented by the Applicant. The Department has not independently verified such information. If material facts have not been disclosed or have been misrepresented, the Department may take administrative regulatory action to rescind the approval or refer the matter to the Office of the Attorney General.

Any approval granted by this Department relates to certificate of need and/or licensing requirements only and does not imply acceptance by a reimbursing entity. This document is not intended as an approval of any arrangement affecting reimbursement or any remuneration involving claims for health care services.

This approval is not intended to preempt in any way the authority to regulate land use within its borders and shall not be used by the applicant to represent that the Department has made any findings or determination relative to the use of any specific property. Please be advised that changes in beds or services may not commence until a license application and amended license have been approved by the Certificate of Need and Healthcare Facility Licensure Program. A survey by Department staff may also be required prior to approving the changes and commencing services.

The Department looks forward to working with Virtua and WJH to provide high-quality care to its patients. If you have any questions concerning this Certificate of Need approval, please do not hesitate to contact Rebecca Nazario-Straffi, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Certificate of Need and Licensing at rebecca.nazario-straffi@doh.nj.gov

Sincerely,



Neil Eicher
Deputy Commissioner
Health Systems
New Jersey Department of Health

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