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COVID-19 Updates

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OCTOBER 1, 2020 | Albany, NY

Governor Cuomo and Governor Murphy Launch Exposure Notification Apps to Help Stop the Spread of COVID-19

CORONAVIRUS (/KI HEALTH)RCNKI TECHNOLOGY | (/KI PUBLIC SAFETY)GY)/KEYWORDS/PUBLIC-SAFETY)

COVID Alert NY and COVID Alert NJ Notify Users of Potential COVID-19 Exposure While Maintaining Individual Privacy and Security

Apps Use Google and Apple Bluetooth Technology to Add a Tool to New York and New Jersey Contact Tracing Programs

New York and New Jersey Join Pennsylvania and Delaware to Create Regional COVID Alert App Network to Stop the Spread of COVID-19

Download the App Here

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy today announced the launch of COVID-19 exposure notification mobile apps in their respective states that will serve as crucial tools to supplement the effort to trace and contact individuals subject to a COVID exposure. The apps, COVID Alert NY and COVID Alert NJ, notify users of potential COVID-19 exposure while maintaining user privacy and security. With today's launch, New York and New Jersey join Pennsylvania and Delaware in creating a regional COVID Alert app network that operates across

state lines to stop the spread of COVID-19. Connecticut has also announced it will launch the Exposure Notification System in the coming weeks. The app can be downloaded here (https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-alert-ny).

The free mobile apps-available to anyone 18 or older who lives, works, or attends college in New York or New Jersey-are available for download from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store. COVID Alert NY is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Bengali, Korean, Russian and Haitian Creole.

"We have a very exciting announcement that has taken a lot of work and it's really creative and smart and I think it can make a big difference. This is a technology-based contact tracing app. Testing is only as good as your contact tracing," **Governor Cuomo said.** "Testing is to identify a person, so you can isolate and quarantine that person and then find the connections from that person, and that's contact tracing. We have about 15,000 people statewide who do contact tracing, they call them disease detectives. But we've been looking for a technology-based solution. And today, we are announcing an app that you can download for free from the app store called COVID Alert NY."

"Over the course of our public health emergency, we've called for a shared sense of personal responsibility to support our contact tracing efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19," **said Governor Murphy.** "With the launch of COVID Alert NJ and our regional app network, New Jerseyans and residents in our neighboring states can support our fight against COVID-19 simply by downloading an application on their phone. The app is free and secure, and your identity, personally identifying information, and location will never be collected. The more phones that have the app, the better we can fight this pandemic."

Governor Lamont said, "This is another critical tool in our toolbox to help our state keep the spread of COVID-19 at bay. With our states using similar technology it recognizes, yet again, that the virus does not recognize boundaries, and that we must continue to work together to take all of the steps necessary to keep our residents safe. Our efforts on contact tracing have been successful, and this will supplement those efforts."

The apps use Exposure Notification System (https://protect2.fireeye.com/v1/url?k=2af28bc9-7673b9aa-2af072fc-000babd9069e-7258e3c0df2d345b&q=1&e=84e3c589-f29f-4bdc-a2bd-9a74a96515f7&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2Fcovid19%2Fexposurenotifications%2F) technology developed by Google and Apple to strengthen New York and New Jersey's contact tracing programs statewide. The COVID Alert apps will notify users if they have been in close contact - within six feet for at least 10 minutes - with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Knowing about a potential exposure can help individuals quickly make a plan to stay safe, including contacting their physician or the State Health Department hotlines to get more information about quarantining and testing to prevent community spread.

COVID Alert NY and COVID Alert NJ are completely anonymous and do not track or collect any location data or personal data from your phone. The COVID Alert apps do not use GPS location data. The Exposure Notification System uses Bluetooth Low Energy technology to detect when another phone with the same app is within six feet. Proximity is measured, but not geographic location. COVID Alert app users must explicitly choose to turn on exposure notifications - and can turn it off at any time.

COVID Alert apps serve to strengthen New York and New Jersey's contact tracing programs. After downloading the app, users must opt-in to receive "Exposure Notifications." As individuals go about their day, the app will use Bluetooth to sense any "close contact" - other app users who are within six feet of you for more than 10 minutes. When the app senses a close contact, your phone will exchange a secure random code with the close contact's phone. Of note, your location, name or personally identifiable data are never disclosed. If you test positive for COVID-19, a public health representative from the local health department will call as part of the states' contact tracing programs and ask if you are willing to anonymously notify your "close contacts" by uploading your app's anonymous close contact codes. Each day, the app will compare your list of close contact codes to the list of codes associated with positive COVID-19 app users. If there's a match, you will get an Exposure Alert, along with appropriate next steps to stay safe and prevent community spread like self-quarantining and getting tested. COVID Alert apps never reveal the identity of the COVID-19 positive individual.

The COVID Alert NY app will work in conjunction with similar apps in Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, allowing New Yorkers to continue to receive exposure notifications when exposed to residents of those states. If a New York State resident travels to one of those states and is exposed to someone with COVID-19 who has an equivalent app, the resident will receive a notification.

COVID Alert NY and COVID Alert NJ provide users with the latest information about COVID-19 in their states, including publicly reported testing data. In addition, the app features a Health Log where users can anonymously record daily symptoms.

COVID Alert NY and COVID Alert NJ were created with software developer NearForm. COVID Alert NY is a partnership between Google, Apple and Tech:NYC.

"New York State has led the nation in our pandemic response, and we are thrilled to augment our already robust contact tracing program with this innovative technology to keep New Yorkers safe and their privacy maintained. The COVID Alert NY technology complements the work of our contact tracing teams and will speed up the process by

which New Yorkers are notified of potential exposure and provided with helpful resources on testing and social services from the State Department of Health. We urge all New Yorkers to take the simple steps to download the app today," **said New York Department of Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker.**

"The launch of COVID Alert NY is a win for New Yorkers. It will equip people with one more tool to protect themselves from the pandemic, and help us all keep the curve flat. This app took a lot of time and effort, and I applaud the Governor and our tech partners for their innovative and collaborative work. This is proof that New York can accomplish anything when its political, business, and community leaders come together," **said Julie Samuels, Executive Director, Tech:NYC.** "COVID Alert NY will not alone stop the spread of COVID, but I am hopeful it will play a constructive role as one of several components to our pandemic response strategy. Privacy and transparency are ingrained in the app, and I strongly urge everyone to download it."

"Built with privacy at its core, the COVID Alert app puts power in people's hands to fight against COVID-19. In using open source peer-reviewed technology, interoperable with Pennsylvania and Delaware, the States of New York and New Jersey will allow citizens to engage, protect each other and break transmission chains. This privacy preserving approach has already been successfully rolled out across borders in Ireland and parts of the UK," **said Cian O Maidin, CEO, NearForm.**

Visit ny.gov/covidalerts (https://www.ny.gov/covidalerts) for more information about COVID Alert NY. The app is available on the Apple Store and Google Play.

Visit covid19.nj.gov/app (https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/app) for more information about COVID Alert NJ.

Contact the Governor's Press Office

Contact us by phone:

Albany: (518) 474 - 8418
New York City: (212) 681 - 4640

Contact us by email:

Press.Office@exec.ny.gov

Translations

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