Governor Phil Murphy

New Jersey, Delaware, and Rhode Island Announce Coordination on COVID-19 Testing Guidance

10/30/2020

TRENTON - Building on a previous announcement regarding COVID reopening, Delaware Governor John Carney, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, and Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo announce that their states will be working together on asymptomatic COVID-19 testing.

Joint statement from the Governors:

The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted our interconnectedness as states. It has also underscored the critical connection between the health of our people and the health of our economies. In order to support the health of both, our states have worked together to develop a common approach to testing among high-risk, high-priority populations even when they are asymptomatic.

As new cases increase in many of our states, and re-opening our economies is delayed or adjusted, the importance of early identification is especially clear, and the role of SARS-CoV-2 testing is central. While experts around the world recommend increased access to testing, there is not uniform federal guidance about funding or testing protocols, and the federal government identifies states as responsible for developing testing plans. While we will have individual state-driven approaches, we are announcing that our states are working together on asymptomatic COVID-19 testing guidance.

Together, we have identified priority populations for asymptomatic testing, outlined key strategies for testing in those populations and developed an approach to financing the benefits and necessity of testing. These populations include, but are not limited to, skilled nursing and assisted living populations, other congregate settings, immunocompromised individuals, workers with high exposure risk, people experiencing homelessness, and asymptomatic people with known exposure

Our approach is science-based, follows the lead of other countries that have used testing to control the virus, and is designed to mitigate the spread of SARS-CoV-2 and enable safe, sustainable re-opening of economies in the three states. *Our work will be guided by six overarching principles:*

- Prevent the transmission of SARS-CoV-
- Inform infection control measures in high-risk settings.
- Protect high-risk populations, especially those living and working in high-risk settings.
- Provide predictability for all residents.
- Allow flexibility to respond to urgent needs.
- Ensure wise use of limited resources.

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These three states share goals for keeping our residents safe. In the absence of clear national guidance, and with a rapidly changing environment we have been developing testing strategies for asymptomatic populations separately. By sharing and aligning our approaches we will increase our likelihood of success in this critical work.

“It is more important now than ever before for states to work together to stop the spread of this virus,” said **New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy**. “Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have worked with our regional partners to coordinate our responses to COVID-19. It is a pleasure to work with Governor Carney and Governor Raimondo, along with the experts on their teams on strategies for asymptomatic COVID-19 testing.”

“Since the first case of COVID-19 was announced in Delaware, we have been using science to guide our public health response,” said **Delaware Governor John Carney**. “In the absence of a uniform testing strategy from the federal government, I am pleased to work with Governor Murphy and Governor Raimondo and their staffs to assure that our three states have an aligned strategy in terms of whom we test, how and when we test, and how we pay for that testing. I am confident that a strong and unified approach to COVID-19 testing will help to keep more of our residents safe and healthy, and our economies moving forward.”

“We know that a strategic asymptomatic testing plan is one of our strongest lines of defense against the spread of COVID-19,” said **Rhode Island Governor Gina M. Raimondo**. “As case number spike across the country, it’s more important now than ever that we’re taking the most effective interventions possible. I’m grateful to my fellow governors for their collaboration as we follow this shared approach to keep our residents safe.”

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