State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

JUDITH M. PERSICHILLI, RN, BSN, MA
Commissioner

EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE NO: 20-009

Authorization for One Paramedic Pronouncements of Death

WHEREAS, Coronavirus disease 2019 ("COVID-19") is a contagious, and at times fatal, respiratory disease that is responsible for the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak; and

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declared the outbreak a "public health emergency of international concern," which means "an extraordinary event which is determined to constitute a public health risk to other States through the international spread of disease and to potentially require a coordinated international response," and thereafter raised its global risk assessment of COVID-19 from "high" to "very high"; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the Secretary of the United States' Department of Health and Human Services declared a public health emergency for the United States to aid the nation's healthcare community in responding to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the CDC expects that additional cases of COVID-19 will be identified in the coming days, including more cases in the United States, and that person-to-person spread is likely to continue to occur; and

WHEREAS, as of April 15, 2020, the State has approximately 71,030 documented cases of COVID-19 and 3,156 deaths related to COVID-19, and

WHEREAS, the current rate of spread of COVID-19 in New Jersey is greatly straining the resources, staff and capabilities of advanced life support hospitals; and

WHEREAS, projections indicate that the number of deaths related to COVID-19 cases may continue to increase to proportions that will strain the resources and medical professional staff, including certified mobile intensive care paramedics, who are needed to pronounce deaths that are occurring outside of an acute care hospital setting; and

WHEREAS, it is critical to prepare for an increasing number of deaths in the State related to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020 Governor Philip D. Murphy issued Executive Order 103, declaring the existence of a Public Health Emergency, pursuant to the Emergency Health Powers Act, N.J.S.A. 26: 13-1 et seq, and a State of Emergency, pursuant to the Disaster Control Act, in the State of New Jersey for COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on April 7, 2020, Governor Philip D. Murphy issued Executive Order 119 extending the Public Health Emergency declared on March 9, 2020; and

WHEREAS, under the declared public health emergency, the Commissioner of the Department of Health is empowered, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 26:13-18(a), to require and direct in-State health care providers to assist with the treatment, testing and examination of any individual; and

WHEREAS, the skill set of certified mobile intensive care paramedics under their scope of practice includes assisting physicians with the pronouncement of deaths for deaths that occur outside of an acute care hospital setting; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JUDITH PERSICHILLI, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Health, pursuant to the powers afforded to me under the Emergency Health Powers Act, hereby ORDER and DIRECT the following:

1. A licensed advanced life support hospital is authorized to direct one certified mobile intensive care paramedic who is not staffing a mobile intensive care unit to report to the scene of an apparent death to assist with the pronouncement of the death, consistent with the requirements of N.J.A.C. 13:35-6.2.

2. Advanced life support provider hospitals must continue to maintain advanced life support coverage in their designated certificate of need areas and may not take mobile intensive care units offline in order to use paramedics solely for pronouncements of death, unless otherwise directed or authorized by the Department of Health.

This Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until such time as it is determined by me that an emergency no longer exists.

Judith Persichilli, R.N., B.S.N., M.A.
Commissioner

4/16/2020
Date