

PURPOSE:

A capacity building initiative to bolster New Jersey's local health department workforce for public health emergency response in mitigating the spread of COVID-19.

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🌐 <https://www.nj.gov/health/lh/>

RESPOND BY:

Respond to this
Call for Requests
by 3:00 PM EST on
3/23/2020.

Submit your request to
<http://healthsurveys.nj.gov/NoviSurvey/n/zz283.aspx>



OFFICE OF LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH (OLPH)

STRENGTHENING NEW JERSEY'S LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM

CALL FOR REQUESTS

The New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), Office of Local Public Health, in collaboration with Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, School of Public Health (SPH), seeks capacity building requests from local health departments (LHDs) in New Jersey for the rapid deployment of public health graduate students to support local response to COVID-19. Students will be deployed to work alongside public health professionals remotely or in local health department settings to carry out a variety of public health duties related to COVID-19. Local health departments interested in receiving capacity building support should **respond to this Call for Requests by no later than 3:00 PM EST on Monday, March 23, 2020. Submit your request [here](#).** OLPH will work closely with Rutgers SPH to match qualified graduate students with local health departments across the State of New Jersey.

GUIDANCE ON ACCEPTING STUDENTS

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS SHOULD OFFER GRADUATE STUDENTS VALUABLE LEARNING EXPERIENCES UNDER SAFE CONDITIONS:

- Provide equipment, training, information, educational materials, and resources for students to perform assigned COVID-19 tasks.
- Discourage workers and students from using phones, desks, offices, or other work equipment not assigned to them, when possible.
- Encourage sick workers and students to remain home.
- Be aware of workers and students' concerns about safety, health, and other issues that may arise during response to COVID-19.
- Do not allow direct patient care or exposure to confirmed COVID-19 cases.

- Encourage employees and workers to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 if they suspect possible exposure.
- Minimize close contact among workers and students with social distancing and other exposure-reducing strategies like flexible work hours.
- Replace face-to-face meetings with virtual communications and implement telework, if feasible.
- Provide a work environment that promotes personal hygiene by supplying tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfectants, and disposable towels for cleaning work surfaces.

IDEAS FOR GRADUATE STUDENT WORK ASSIGNMENTS

RUTGERS SPH GRADUATE STUDENTS CAN STRENGTHEN CAPACITY AND FILL GAPS FOR LOCAL RESPONSE TO COVID-19.

Suggested assignments for graduate students include:

- Receive calls from healthcare providers and use NJDOH guidelines to provide information on COVID-19 testing, isolation, and quarantine.
- Receive calls from healthcare providers seeking approval for COVID-19 testing at NJDOH Public Health and Environmental Laboratories (PHEL) and use NJDOH and LHD guidelines to deny/approve requests.
- Gather medical, demographic, and exposure information from patients and/or healthcare providers on persons approved for COVID-19 testing and/or received positive COVID-19 result.
- Data entry of medical, demographic, laboratory, and exposure information from patients and/or healthcare providers on persons approved for COVID-19 testing and/or received positive COVID-19 result.
- Conduct interviews with COVID-19 cases and contacts as part of contact tracing and, using NJDOH guidelines, assign and communicate risk categories and monitoring level to all exposed persons.
- Data entry of contact tracing and monitoring information for exposed persons.
- Assist in preparation of reports describing epidemiology of cases and contacts.
- Receive calls from residents and use NJDOH guidelines to provide information on COVID-19.
- Assist in planning, implementation, and evaluation of community testing sites for COVID-19.