



Board of Chosen Freeholders

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Freeholders: Opening Up Businesses The Right Call Now State Needs To Provide COVID-19 Test Kits

Hunterdon County's Freeholders have called the Governor's decision to permit non-essential retail stores to re-open with curbside pickup and for non-essential construction projects to resume, effective on Monday, May 18th, good first steps for local businesses, but said the state needs to provide more resources for COVID-19 testing to give the economy the boost it needs.

Hunterdon County Freeholder Board Director Shaun C. Van Doren and Deputy Director Susan J. Soloway, in a letter to the Governor on the behalf of the Freeholder Board last week, called on Governor Murphy to allow small businesses to be able to offer curbside pickup effective immediately.

Under Executive Order # 142, the Governor announced yesterday that retail curbside pickup would be allowed and construction projects for homeowners would now be permitted.

Van Doren said, "The Governor made the right call in heeding our advice, along with that of other counties and business groups, to allow small businesses the option to offer curbside pickup for customers. We also welcome the decision to allow construction companies, many of which are also small businesses, to begin work again. All of these businesses need the chance to get back on their feet and workers need their jobs."

Soloway, a Board liaison for Economic Development, stated, "In our letter to the Governor, we pointed out that numerous restaurants in Hunterdon County and across the State of New Jersey have been offering curbside food pickup successfully by adapting their operations to protect public health. Now our small local shops can do the same."

Soloway, who also is liaison for the Health Department, said, "To further help the economy, we need the state to provide resources to Hunterdon County for increased COVID-19 testing and contact tracing. The joint Hunterdon Somerset test site at RVCC has tested nearly 700 individuals and the County's Health Department has conducted over 4000 individuals through the contact tracing program. The State needs to step up to help us do more."

Van Doren noted, "The County's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) recently submitted a request to the State OEM for 5000 more COVID-19 test kits, in addition to the 5000 requested in mid-March. The federal government has said New Jersey is in line to receive hundreds of thousands of test kits, but Hunterdon County has yet to see one from the state."