

**Atlantic County**  
**Office of Emergency Management**  
**and**  
**Department of Health.**

**SARS-COV-2 Specimen Collection Site**  
**Guidance**

**Version 1.2**

**April 01, 2020**

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# **1 Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to provide county staff with technical guidance for the operation of drive-thru SARS-COV-2 specimen collection clinics. This document will be updated as new information becomes available and as feedback is received from our staff.

## **2. Scope**

The scope of this document is limited to drive-thru SARS-COV-2 specimen collection clinics operated by The Atlantic County government. Nothing in this document is meant as guidance for drive-thru clinics for other purposes other than SARS-COV-2 specimen collection.

## **3 Planning Assumptions**

The following planning assumptions were considered in the development of this guidance. Recognizing that this is a fast-moving, dynamic situation, not all planning assumptions may be listed below.

- The New Jersey Department of Health will provide written technical guidance to Atlantic County to aid in the planning of drive-thru SARS-COV-2 specimen collection clinics;
- Direct involvement of federal agencies (i.e. FEMA) may limit the applicability of this guidance;
- Atlantic County government will designate a lead county agency to serve as the single point-of-contact for the New Jersey Department of Health and/or New Jersey State Police;
- Atlantic County government will use the provided guidance for consideration in the development of our drive-thru SARS-COV-2 specimen collection clinics;
- Adequate staffing will be identified and trained for the desired level of service;
- The individuals submitting specimens will follow directions and adhere to eligibility criteria;
- The reporting of results will be in a secure and timely manner;

## **4 New Jersey State Responsibilities**

- The state will continue to provide written technical guidance and verbal consultation throughout the duration of planning for and operationalizing drive-thru SARS-COV-2 specimen collection clinic;
- The New Jersey Department of Health may provide personal protective equipment from what it has received from the Strategic National Stockpile, including:
  - o Surgical facemask respirators;
  - o Nitrile gloves;
  - o Face shields.
- The New Jersey Department of Health will facilitate the procurement of specimen swabs and containers and may directly provide these supplies if they become available.
- The state may provide limited support from the New Jersey State Police, National Guard, Department of Transportation, or other state agencies if needed and with prior approval of the Commissioner of Health and associated head of each entity.

## **5 Atlantic County Responsibilities**

- Atlantic County Government is responsible for Personal Protective Equipment, Testing Kits and testing where required and feasible and for the planning, advertising, operations, security, and demobilization of drive-thru SARS-COV-2 specimen collection clinic;
- Atlantic County government is responsible for designating a lead county agency to coordinate all activities and, ideally, should be either the Office of Emergency Management and the County Health Department;
- Atlantic County is responsible for maintaining the safety and security of each clinic;
- Atlantic County will identify, designate, and assign at least one EMS (BLS) unit for every two lanes of specimen collection;
- Atlantic County governments shall maintain the privacy and dignity of every individual who requests, schedules, arrives for, and/or completes a specimen collection and submission.

## **6 Participating Agencies**

### **State Agencies**

The New Jersey Department of Health is the lead state agency for the response to COVID-19. Under the leadership and direction from the Commissioner of Health, any state agency may be made available to assist county governments in this mission.

Requests for additional assistance of state government shall be submitted through E-TEAM by the County Office of Emergency Management, with simultaneous direct notification to Chris Neuwirth or his assigned designee for each county.

### **County Agencies**

Atlantic County is expected to mobilize all relevant emergency support functions for this mission, including the following:

- Office of Emergency Management
- Health Department
- Law Enforcement
- Emergency Medical Services
- Social Services
- Public Works

### **Participants:**

**Local Agencies/Non-Governmental Organizations: AtlantiCare, Shore Hospital and Cape Regional**

Recognizing that the site may be a large public-facing venue, involvement of local agencies in and around the site is recommended. Whenever possible, close coordination between Atlantic County and local governments will ensure success of the overall operation.

## **7 Concept of Operations**

### **Site Selection**

Site selection is a critical step that will determine how many staff and resources we will need to effectively operate this clinic. Preference has been made to locations that have been previously selected as a point-of-distribution site.

We considered the following physical characteristics when selecting the clinic site:

- Does the site have roadways/driveways that naturally lend to flowing traffic?
- Is there a large parking lot where cars can stop, and drivers speak with a screener?
- Is there enough space for a tent to be placed where specimen collectors can work?
- Is there access to electric and internet (via wifi or cellular)?
- Can the site be easily accessed from major roadways?

### Staffing Requirements

Position	Quantity	Comments
Screeners	1 person per lane	A person to speak with individuals when they arrive and confirm eligibility.
Specimen Collectors	2 people per lane	One collector for each side of the vehicle to physically obtain the specimen from each person.
Traffic Controllers	6 people total	Four people to direct traffic in and into lanes; two people to control exiting.
Data Entry	1 person per lane	Data entry tracks and logs every specimen into a database
Specimen Handling	1 person per lane	Person to take each specimen and place/secure them into the storage container after its been logged.
Supply Management	4-10 people total	People to ensure every lane and all operational staff have the supplies they need to fulfill their duties.
Security	4-10 people total	Varies by location; security should be present at the entrance to every lane and one person assigned to the specimen collection area.
EMS	1 BLS unit per two lanes	EMS should be present in the event someone needs immediate transport to a hospital.
Safety Officer	1 person total	The Safety Officer ensures that the entire operation is running safely and without any hazardous conditions

**TOTAL      21 – 33 people per operation, not including shift changes.**

## Personnel Protective Equipment

The level of personal protective equipment required for each person depends on their assigned tasks. Generally, staff not in direct contact with anyone submitting specimens does not need to wear any respiratory protection. The table below outlines recommended levels of personal protective equipment for each position; however, the safety officer can advise staff members to don higher levels of personal protective equipment to maintain safety.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Recommended PPE</b>
Screeners	Gloves Only
Specimen Collectors	Surgical Facemask, Face Shields, Gloves, Gown
Traffic Controllers	Personal Clothing or Department issued and ANSI Compliant safety vest.
Data Entry	Personal or Department Issued Clothing
Specimen handling	Gloves only
Supply Management	Personal or Department Issued clothing
Security	Personal or Department Issued clothing
EMS	Squad or Department Issued clothing
Safety Officer	Personal or Department Issued clothing with a bright identifiable vest.

## Eligibility

As of March 15, 2020, symptomatic individuals experiencing fever, cough, shortness of breath, and other associated symptoms of respiratory illness, especially with direct contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case, should be prioritized for specimen collection and testing. Drive-thru SARS-COV-2 specimen collection clinics are generally designed to collect nasopharyngeal specimens from symptomatic individuals. Individuals not experiencing any signs or symptoms of a respiratory illness are discouraged from being tested, as it diverts resources away from those who need it most, floods the laboratory with specimens unlikely to test positive, and provides individuals with a false sense of security when the results come back negative. Accordingly, eligibility criteria will be established, adhered to, and always promoted during this or any Atlantic County drive-thru clinic operation.



The New Jersey Department of Health strongly recommends that only symptomatic individuals receive testing.

## **Scheduling**

The New Jersey Department of Health recommends that each county establish a system for individuals to schedule their specimen collection in advance. This process will limit the number of individuals submitting specimens at any one time and will greatly enhance the overall experience of everyone involved. Without prior scheduling, drive-thru clinics can expect longer wait times, disruptive traffic lines, and an upset/angry public. More so, a lack of scheduling promotes heavy crowds, operational disorganization, stress on all staff, and greatly increases the chances of exposure to specimen collectors as they rush and become distracted.

The New Jersey Department of Health has established an online appointment scheduling System (<https://covid19.community>) that is free and available to all 21 counties. Atlantic County will be using the New Jersey Department of Health's appointment scheduling system. We will contact Chris Neuwirth and provide the following information:

- The days and hours of operation for your clinic (i.e. March 15th from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM);
- The number of lanes you will have open during that timeframe;
- How long you anticipate each appointment lasting (i.e. 10 minutes);
- The total number of appointments you want for that day.

## **Physicians Order**

Every individual submitting a specimen **MUST** have a physician's order.

The person may obtain an order from their primary care provider.

## Reporting Requirements

Upon submission of a specimen, every person shall be advised, in writing, of how they will be notified of their test results.

**NEGATIVE:** No notifications; people are advised that if they receive no communications from the local health department and/or their healthcare provider within five (5) business days that they are negative for SARS-COV-2.

Asymptomatic Individuals must be advised, at the time of specimen collection, that a negative result does NOT mean they are negative from SARS-COV-2. A negative result simply means that there was no detectable SARS-COV-2 virus in their specimen at the time it was collected.

**POSITIVE:** Immediate notification; people are advised that if they test positive for SARSCOV- 2, they will receive an immediate telephone notification by their local health department.

Every drive-thru clinic should be prepared to report the following data to the New Jersey Department of Health, via email within 24-hours from when the clinic closed:

- Total number of appointments completed (every person is one appointment);
- Total number of specimens being sent to the commercial laboratory;
- Total number of staff who participated in that day's clinic;
- Any EMS transports with brief description of reason for transport;
- Any unusual occurrences or incidents.

## Follow Up

Atlantic County Department of Health will establish a process to ensure that people with positive results are informed in a timely manner and provided with guidance, consultation, and next steps. Recognizing that the individuals were able to arrive at the clinic, follow-up activities should include directions to remain at home, under self-quarantine, and to relieve symptoms with over-the-counter medications, as needed. If their clinical condition has worsened since their specimen collection, they should be instructed to seek treatment in the emergency department of the closest hospital – with someone calling ahead to advise the emergency department.

## 8. **Specimen Collection, Packaging and Transportation**

### **Supplies**

Synthetic fiber swabs with plastic shafts and viral transport medium are the preferred, ideal supplies to use for specimen collection.

### **Collection**

Per the CDC recommendations:

Use only synthetic fiber swabs with plastic shafts. Do not use calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts, as they may contain substances that inactivate some viruses and inhibit PCR testing. Place swabs immediately into sterile tubes containing 2-3 ml of viral transport media.

*Nasopharyngeal swab:* Insert a swab into the nostril parallel to the palate. Leave the swab in place for a few seconds to absorb secretions.

Label each specimen container with the patient's ID number (e.g., medical record number), unique specimen ID (e.g., laboratory requisition number), specimen type (e.g., serum) and the date the sample was collected.

### **Packaging and Storage**

The CDC recommends storing the specimens at 35-46°F for up to 72 hours after collection. If a delay in testing or shipping is expected, store specimens at -70°C or below.

The New Jersey Department of Health recommends placing collected specimens into an insulated storage container or bag with ice packs, using a digital thermometer to ensure the temperature remains in range throughout the operation.

The Atlantic County Clinic will adhere to these recommendations.

### **Transportation**

The New Jersey Department of Health requires that ALL collected specimens be transported directly to the noted commercial laboratory within six (6) hours from when the clinic closed.

## 9. **Volunteers**

### **Selection**

- Medical Reserve Corps
- American Red Cross
- Community Emergency Response Team
- County Law Enforcement
- Local Public Safety Agencies (law Enforcement, Fire and EMS)
- Atlantic County staff volunteers
- Atlantic Cape Community College
- Stockton University
- Atlantic County Executive of Education

<b>Position</b>	<b>Volunteer Source</b>
Screeners	CERT, MRC
Specimen Collectors	EMT, Paramedics, Nurses
Traffic Controllers	Fire Police, DPW, Police
Data Entry	Any
Specimen Handling	EMT, Paramedic, Nurse, Public Health Vol.
Supply Management	Any
Security	Law Enforcement
EMS	EMT
Safety Officer	EMT, Firefighter, Public Health Officer

## Appendix “A”

### Map of Hamilton Mall – Hamilton Mall Associates



Appendix – “B”  
Diagram of Final Set up – Clinic



## Appendix “C”

### Resources

#### Hamilton Mall Collection Site

#### COVID-19

Item	Quantity	Location
Jersey Barriers	42	Sears Building to Olive garden
	3	Leipzig Ave at North Entry
	3	North Entry and mall Road
	4	Mall Road at Collection Exit
	6	Mall Road at South Exit
<b>58</b>		<b>Total Barricades</b>

Cones	530	If we keep the cones 5 feet apart
	350	If we keep the cones 8 feet apart
	300	If we keep the cones 10 feet apart
Variable message Boards	1	Black Horse Pike - E/B near Wal Mart
	1	Black Horse Pike - W/B near Wrangleboro Rd
	1	Leipzig Ave Near North Entrance
	1	Leipzig Ave Near South Entrance
	<b>4</b>	

<b>Tents</b>	1	<b>Military Style - Drive thru</b>
		LME 24'x32' lightweight maintenance shelter - 17' height
	2	15'x15' - to be used for briefings and staff preparation
<b>E-Z Up</b>	1	To stay out of sun / weather
<b>Fan</b>	1	Positive Pressure - vehicle tent
<b>Wash up location</b>	1	Placed in the collection area
<b>Port-A-Potty's</b>	2	1 male and 1 female or 1 Combo
		We do have use of Mall
<b>Water</b>	4 cases	Enough for 30 persons for 8 hour Operation per day
		<b>Salvation Army may Assist</b>
<b>Food??</b>		<b>Salvation Army may Assist</b>



Item	Quantity	Location
<b>Personnel - Per day</b>		
<b>Law Enforcement ACSO</b>	1	Leipzig Ave at North Entry
	1	Leipzig Ave at South Entry
	1	Mall Road Near Olive Garden
	1	Mall Road Near Sears
NOTE - Could be security	2	1 Per Lane
NOTE - Could be security	2	Specimen Collection Area
	<b>8</b>	<b>Total Minimum LEO</b>
Screeners	2	1 per lane
Specimen Collectors	4	2 Per Lane
Data Entry	2	1 per lane
Specimen handling	2	1 per lane
Supply Management	4	2 per lane - Minimum
EMS	1	1 Unit with 2 persons minimum. 1 Must be an EMT
Safety Officer	1	Overall
	<b>16</b>	<b>Volunteers and Staff from County Health</b>
OEM Representative	1	Functioning of the site
County Health Representative	2	Overall Management of Site

**Extra - Items that may help**

ACSO	Staffing
ACPO	Staffing
	Command Post
	Lic Plate Reader
AtlantlCare	Nurses
	Staffing