

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

Public Information Department

County of Warren

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## **Warren County to Suspend Drive-Thru COVID-19 Testing Center**

Warren County will suspend operations of its drive-thru COVID-19 Testing Center at the end of the month, as the State of New Jersey moves to make testing more readily available at other locations.

The testing site, opened April 8 in partnership with St. Luke's University Hospital Network (SLUHN) on the grounds of Warren County Technical School in Franklin Township, has tested 538 residents to date. Warren County funded the entire project with no state or federal assistance.

Information about testing, including eligibility, procedures, and a link to the online scheduler, can be found at [www.co.warren.nj.us/Healthdept/wccovidtesting.html](http://www.co.warren.nj.us/Healthdept/wccovidtesting.html). Testing is available on May 22 and May 29.

"Warren County opened our testing site to reduce the impact on our local health care system. As the burden on our hospital capacity has decreased, the county's role is no longer necessary," said Freeholder James R. Kern III, freeholder liaison for health and public safety.

Referring to news that Gov. Phil Murphy will expand testing availability statewide, Kern noted, "The Governor's announcement also outlines that the State will begin to partner with private businesses and pharmacies to assist with widespread testing. For the past month and half, County staff and our partners at St. Luke's have stepped up to help flatten the curve with our testing site. As the administration outlines their plan for testing moving forward, we will look to partner in any way we can as long as funding is provided."

"While we recognize the importance of COVID-19 testing to the Governor's plan to reopen the state, without federal funding Warren County can no longer afford to operate our testing site," Warren County Health Officer Pete Summers said. "Instead, we will be focusing our limited resources on maintaining our case investigation and contact tracing program and hope that the State's plan to increase private testing will meet the needs of our community. Should state or federal funding become available, we would certainly look to improve the county's testing capacity," Summers added.

Warren County has developed a robust contact tracing program, using staff from the county Health Department and Prosecutor's Office, as well as county library staff, school nurses, and other public employees who have been unable to report to their usual jobs due to pandemic-related shutdowns.

Once test site operations are suspended, the County would be able to quickly ramp up testing again if the need arises.

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