



SUSSEX COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS
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PRESS RELEASE

County of Sussex

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County of Sussex Seeking Recovery Data from COVID-19 Positive Residents

(Newton, NJ) Officials with Sussex County's Division of Health and Office of Public Health Nursing are in the process of seeking recovery data from residents who had tested positive for COVID-19 during the pandemic.

According to Carol Novrit, the Administrator of the County's Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health will be coming to the homes of Sussex County residents to check on the recovery status of those who tested COVID-19 positive, but have not yet responded to phone calls and letters mailed to their residences.

The Centers for Disease Control classifies case investigations as public health/infectious disease investigations, which allows public health professionals to identify those with confirmed and probable COVID-19 diagnoses. Contact tracing is the identification, monitoring and support of the contacts of the individual identified with the virus, who have been exposed and possibly infected with it.

The county's initial investigation phase begins with phone calls from Public Health Nursing to check on residents who have tested positive with COVID-19, asking them for a

return call. If there is no response to the phone calls, a letter will be sent asking the resident to call Public Health Nursing. If there is no response to the letter, the resident will be moved to the “recovery phase,” with another letter sent to them indicating a Public Health representative will personally follow up with them at their residence. Once they have made contact with the resident, that representative will present their identification, maintaining six feet from the resident at their front door, per social distancing guidelines, to ask the resident how they are feeling, as well as what race they consider themselves.

Residents who responded to the initial investigation and contact tracing, but not to the follow up phone calls, will also receive the letter asking them to contact Public Health Nursing; and if the resident does not contact Public Health Nursing, Public Health will visit their residence to determine if they have recovered from COVID-19.

In both cases, the representative will finalize their visit by leaving a postage-paid questionnaire in the resident’s mailbox, to be mailed back to Public Health Nursing. All responses will remain confidential per the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act or “HIPAA.”

Sussex County residents with questions about the recovery data process may call the COVID hotline between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday; and leave messages after hours at: 973-579-9488. Calls outside of regular business hours will be returned the next business day.

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