

## RISK ALERT

January 12, 2022

# Governor Murphy Reinstates a Public Health Emergency in Response to Omicron Variant of COVID-19

On January 11, 2022, through [Executive Order 280](#), Governor Phil Murphy has reinstated the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) and reinstates the existing State of Emergency across all of New Jersey, which had been previously terminated. This action works to ensure the State is able to respond to the continued threat of COVID-19 and the rapidly spreading Omicron variant. With the PHE reinstated, this allows state agencies and departments to utilize state resources to assist the State's healthcare system and affected communities responding to and recovering from the latest surge in COVID-19 cases.

For the first time since April 2020, the COVID-19 Activity Level has reached the "Very High" score throughout the state as of January 1, 2022. With increased prevalence of the Omicron variant, and increasing hospitalizations and confirmed deaths, the numbers demonstrate that the spread of the Omicron variant has led to the highest number of cases in NJ, as well as increased risk to health and safety of health care workers and staffing shortages.

Following the enactment of Executive Order 280, [Executive Order 281](#) reinstates Executive Orders 111, 112, and 207 back into full force. It also continues the effectiveness of Executive Orders 251, 252, 253, 264, and 271 to remain in effect, and extends various regulatory actions in response to COVID-19. **However, the state did not extend the immunity related to the COVID-19 response on Executive Order [112](#).**

### Executive Orders

- [111](#): *Directing Health Care Facilities to Report Data, Including Personal Protective Equipment Inventory and Bed Capacity, On a Daily Basis*
- [112](#): *Remove Barriers to Health Care Professionals Joining New Jersey's COVID-19 Response and Provide Protections for Front Line Health Care Responders*
- [207](#): *Enrolling Residents Who Choose to Receive a COVID-19 Vaccine in the New Jersey Immunization Information System*
- [251](#): *Indoor Mask Requirement for Beginning of 2021-2022 School Year*
- [252](#): *Directs Vaccination or Testing Requirement for Workers in Health Care Facilities and High-Risk Congregate Settings*
- [253](#): *Instituting Vaccination or Testing Requirement for All Preschool to Grade 12 Personnel and for All State Workers*
- [264](#): *Instituting Vaccination or Testing Requirement for All Child Care Center Personnel*
- [271](#): *Instituting Vaccination or Testing Requirement for State Contracted Employees*

Under the PHE, the state can continue vaccine distribution, administration and management, the collection of COVID-19 data, implementation of any applicable recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to prevent or limit the transmission of COVID-19, staffing and health resource and personnel allocation, and other critical components of the State's COVID-19 response. The PHE declaration also authorized all State agencies to take all appropriate steps to continue to address the public health hazard of COVID-19, including any and all new variants. In addition, the PHE continues the mandate requiring masks in schools (K-12) and daycares without exception.

Under the Emergency Health Powers Act, the PHE will expire after 30 days, unless extended by the Governor.

As always, Conventus members can call the Practice Resources Department at (877) 444-0484 ext. 7466 if there are any questions regarding the new PHE Executive Order.

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