OVERVIEW

On March 9, 2020, through Executive Order No. 103, the Governor of the State of New Jersey declared both a public health emergency and a state of emergency in response to the 2019 novel coronavirus disease outbreak (COVID-19). COVID-19 is a contagious infectious, respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The State of New Jersey has implemented rapid, systematic measures to mitigate the spread of the disease and expand emergency response capacity.

Pursuant to the Temporary Rule Waiver of N.J.A.C. 8:7-1.11 through 1.13 and N.J.A.C. 8:7-1.17 – Licensure of Persons for Public Health Positions, adopted by the Commissioner, Department of Health, individuals whose health officer and/or registered environmental health specialist (REHS) license was placed into inactive status within the past five years (July 13, 2015 to July 13, 2020) are eligible for “COVID-19 Public Health Professional Licensure Reactivation” so long as the applicant is not disqualified. The frequently asked questions (FAQs) delineated herein provide comprehensive guidance to ensure public health professionals are equipped with clear and timely information to best navigate them through the licensure reactivation process. To access the Temporary Rule Waiver, visit: https://www.state.nj.us/health/legal/covid19/

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: I already have an active license to practice as a public health professional in the State of New Jersey. Does the COVID-19 Public Health Professional Licensure Reactivation Waiver Program apply to me?

Although the COVID-19 Public Health Professional Licensure Reactivation Waiver Program only applies to inactive health officers or registered environmental health specialists (REHS), an existing rule set forth at N.J.A.C. 8:7-1.14 allows for the waiver of all or part of the fifteen (15) continuing education contact hours (CEs) required annually
to maintain an active license status, if needed. Please note that the course catalog found on
the New Jersey Learning Management Network’s (NJLMN) website at
https://njlmn.njlincs.net/ comprises many online courses for which active licensees can participate to obtain the required number of CEs.

Q: My license has been inactive for the past six years. Can I apply for reactivation under the COVID-19 Public Health Professional Licensure Reactivation Waiver Program?

Persons whose health officer or registered environmental health specialist license was placed into inactive status, including, expired or lapsed, within the past five years (July 13, 2015 to July 13, 2020) are eligible.

Q: Which professions are included in the COVID-19 Public Health Professional Licensure Reactivation Waiver Program?

Inactive health officers and registered environmental health specialists (REHS) licensed in the State of New Jersey within the past five years (July 13, 2015 to July 13, 2020) who satisfy the requirements are eligible to apply.

Q: I received my license from another state. Can I still apply?

The COVID-19 Public Health Professional Licensure Reactivation process only applies to persons whose health officer or registered environmental health specialist (REHS) license was issued in the State of New Jersey.

Q: What key requirements are temporarily waived for the COVID-19 Public Health Professional Licensure Reactivation process?

The Temporary Rule Waiver of N.J.A.C. 8:7-1.11 through 1.13 and N.J.A.C. 8:7-1.17 waives the following requirements:

- Annual license renewal fee of $50.00 in addition to the $25.00 late fee.
- Fulfillment of 15 approved continuing education contact hours (CEs).
- Submission of verified documentation of accumulated CEs.

The aforementioned requirements are temporarily waived, and the application process is free of charge.
Q: What are the conditions that would deem an applicant ineligible?

Applicants are not eligible for licensure reactivation if any of these conditions apply:

- Applicant is currently under investigation by any State public health licensing authority;
- Applicant has a proposed or final enforcement action pending or entered against him or her by any State public health licensing authority;
- Applicant is excluded from acting as an actively licensed health officer or registered environmental health specialist pursuant to a settlement reached with any State public health licensing authority;
- Applicant has been cited for impersonating an actively licensed health officer or registered environmental health specialist; or,
- Applicant has a criminal history as referenced in N.J.S.A. 26:1A-43.

Q: Can I participate in the COVID-19 Public Health Professional Licensure Reactivation Waiver Program if I was convicted of a crime?

You are not eligible for this program if you are currently under investigation by any state or public health licensing authority; if you were subject to disciplinary restrictions; or if you have been convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude as referenced in N.J.S.A. 26:1A-43.

Q: What information will I need to apply for the COVID-19 Public Health Professional Licensure Reactivation Waiver Program?

To apply, you will need to submit a completed COVID-19 Public Health Professional Licensure Reactivation Application via the link that follows:

http://healthsurveys.nj.gov/NoviSurvey/n/zz2cr.aspx

The online application would include submission and verification of the following but not limited to information:

- Contact Information
- Professional History
- Legal History
- Acceptance of Affirmation Statement
Q: Are there any applicable monetary fees associated with the application?
The COVID-19 Public Health Professional Licensure Reactivation Application process is free of charge.

Q: Is there an application deadline?
Application submissions are accepted on a rolling basis during the current public health emergency in the State of New Jersey and processed in the order received.

Q: How long will it take to process my public health licensure reactivation request?
If your application is complete and satisfies the requirements, the Office of Local Public Health (OLPH) anticipates issuing you an active license on a temporary, emergent basis within 3-5 business days of receiving your application.

Q: Will I receive a copy of my active license in the mail?
No, a paper license will not be mailed to you. You will receive a confirmation email with an electronic license indicating your active status. Please note, however, that your license will not be displayed as “active” in your New Jersey Learning Management Network (NJLMN) account.

Q: How long will my active license be valid?
This temporary rule waiver/modification, as well as any provisional licenses issued thereunder, will expire forty-five (45) days after the end of the Public Health Emergency declared by Governor Philip D. Murphy in EO 103. To maintain an active license at the end of the public health emergency, the applicant must successfully complete all the requirements set forth in N.J.A.C. 8:7-1.11 through 1.13 and N.J.A.C. 8:7-1.17. If the applicant fails to satisfy all the requirements for licensure by the expiration date of this rule waiver/modification, then the applicant’s provisional licensure will become invalid, prohibiting the individual from practicing as a health officer or REHS in the State of New Jersey.
Q: Will the New Jersey Department of Health, Office of Local Public Health, or the New Jersey Public Health Licensing and Examination Board arrange for employment or volunteer opportunities?

The New Jersey Department of Health, Office of Local Public Health, or the New Jersey Public Health Licensing and Examination Board are not responsible for employment or volunteer opportunity placement. Applicants are recommended to independently search for opportunities to support the State’s response to COVID-19. The websites below may offer helpful information.

- New Jersey Medical Reserve Corps https://www.nj.gov/health/lh/njmrc/
- New Jersey Contact Tracer Interest Registration https://covid19.nj.gov/search.html?query=contact+tracing