

County Makes Virtual Training Available For Hunterdon First Repsonders

County Continues to Work For The Public During Crisis

Through a virtual instruction program made available by Hunterdon County's Office of Emergency Management, the county's First Responders from the twenty-seven volunteer fire companies, fifteen Emergency Medical Service agencies, and county Police Departments are continuing to receive required training while adhering to social distancing rules.

Developed by the instructional staff of the Hunterdon County Emergency Services Training Center (HCESTC), virtual classes are available to all Hunterdon County First Responders. Coursework can be accessed using a computer, tablet or other device and can be accessed when it is convenient for the individual first responder.

Freeholder Board Director Shaun C. Van Doren said, "Up-to-date instruction and training are critical for emergency responders. Creating a virtual instruction model which can be accessed from remotely from home or elsewhere provides a way for training to continue in spite of the COVID-19 health crisis."

Brayden Fahey, Hunterdon County's Office of Emergency (OEM) division head said, "Last month the County made the difficult decision to suspend the in-person course deliveries at the HCESTC. However such action is critically important to ensure the continuity of the emergency response system that our residents and visitors rely on. By suspending training, we ensured that first responders would avoid close contacts at our facility.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we are working to balance social distancing with ensuring our responders remain proficient in their skills and are afforded opportunities to expand their knowledge. Those participating in our Firefighter 1 program have continued their coursework throughout the on-site training suspension, and we are pleased to now expand remote learning for all of our first responders."

Online learning and other virtual platforms have allowed the county to continue its operations throughout the COVID-19 health emergency. All county operations have been available since the Governor's stay at home order was executed, either through the rotation of staff in offices or working remotely.

Hunterdon County First Responders may register for online learning by visiting the Emergency Services Training Center website

<http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/911/HCESTC/CurrentCourses.html> or email Linda Rifino, lrifino@co.hunterdon.nj.us.