



News from the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Shanel Y. Robinson, Freeholder Director • Sara Sooy, Freeholder Deputy Director
Brian D. Levine, Freeholder • Brian G. Gallagher, Freeholder • Melonie Marano, Freeholder

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Somerset County and SCBP Economic Recovery Task Force Launch "Open for Business" Map

Stores, Restaurants, and Other Businesses Can Promote Services, Hours, Location, Contact Info and How They Conduct Services

Somerville, NJ – In response to requests from local businesses, Somerset County and the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Task Force have developed an online map that will help connect businesses to consumers regarding everything they need to know to find open stores, restaurants, medical providers, contractors, and any other company navigating the "new normal" of pandemic economics.

"As we work to open our economy safely during this global pandemic, we need to be sure that customers can find businesses as they open up," said Freeholder Director Shanel Robinson, who is also a member of the Task Force. "The 'Open for Business' map allows Somerset County businesses to enter where, when, and how they are open, and to update their information as things change."

Any Somerset County business that is open at any level can enter their information on the "Open for Business" map by visiting <https://bit.ly/2ZMbFri> and filling out the simple form. The form includes location, contact information, social media, logos and images, services provided, menus and delivery services, and more as applicable. As the state regulations about business operations change, or as a business adopts new services and opportunities, they can update their entry at any time.

"In these unprecedented times, most businesses face a legal and health environment that requires them to regularly change how and when they provide services and products to their customers," said Freeholder Deputy Director Sara Sooy, a founding member of the Task Force. "The 'Open for Business' map is intentionally flexible to allow our great economic leaders the opportunity to communicate any changes with customers as they happen."

The "Open for Business" map was the brainchild of Somerset County GIS coordinator Michael Stepowyj, who noticed that some of his favorite retail stores and restaurants were having a difficult time communicating with their customers about operational changes required by the COVID-19 crisis. Stepowyj, along with his other Division of Finance teammates, used their business and technology acumen to quickly pull together the map. They then worked with the Somerset County Business Partnership (SCBP) to add options to the survey, and over the past week have seen dozens of SCBP members sign up during the initial beta test.

The "Open for Business" map and form are now available for any business operating in Somerset County, and can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/2ZMbFri>.

“The ‘Open for Business’ Map is now launching for businesses throughout Somerset to enter their information, helping them to grow their customer bases and sales with this innovative tool,” said Chris Edwards, President & CEO of the Somerset County Business Partnership. “We are glad to partner with the Task Force and the County to offer this for the benefit of not only our member businesses, but of the economic recovery of the entire Somerset County region.”

The ‘Open for Business’ project fits in perfectly with two of the six Priority Focus Areas identified by the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Task Force: *Help businesses transform*; and *Capitalize on “next normal” opportunities*.

“Open for Business” will be featured prominently on the websites of Somerset County, the Somerset County, NJ COVID-19 Economic Recovery Task Force, and the Somerset County Business Partnership. It will also be promoted aggressively on social media.

To stay up to date with Somerset County events and information, sign up for [free email alerts](#) at www.co.somerset.nj.us/subscribe or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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