

NJ Auto Industry Alert: COVID-19 Update

By Anthony Bush

GOVERNOR MURPHY ANNOUNCES UPDATES TO LIST OF ESSENTIAL RETAIL BUSINESS ALLOWED TO BE OPEN DURING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY

On March 30, 2020, New Jersey amended its list of essential retail businesses allowed to be open during the State of Emergency to include retail vehicle sales on a limited basis. ([click to view the administrative order](#)) Specifically, dealerships are now permitted to be open for sales but only to (1) deliver online purchases directly to customers, or (2) arrange for curbside pickup or in the dealership service lane. <https://faq.business.nj.gov/en/articles/3820777-does-my-business-need-to-close>. Showrooms are not permitted to be open.

Previously, on March 21, 2020, Governor Murphy issued Executive Orders No.107 and No.108 mandating the closure of all non-essential businesses throughout the State in an effort to curtail the spread of COVID-19. Under the Executive Orders, initially retail automotive sales were not considered essential business and not permitted. The Executive Orders initially allowed dealerships and others to open for automotive repairs, service, and vehicle rentals. Used dealers that are also buy here pay here locations were also allowed to continue to operate their lending business.

Under the Executive Orders, if selling vehicles retail during State of Emergency, dealers must:

- let their workers work from home whenever possible;
- limit on site staffing to the minimal number needed for essential operations;
- and follow [social distancing guidelines](#).

Dealers must also follow the [New Jersey Department of Health guidance regarding the workplace](#).