



State of New Jersey  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PO BOX 358  
TRENTON, N.J. 08625-0358

[www.nj.gov/health](http://www.nj.gov/health)

PHILIP D. MURPHY  
Governor

TAHESHA L. WAY  
Lt. Governor

JEFFREY A. BROWN  
Acting Commissioner

September 26, 2025

**VIA ELECTRONIC & FIRST-CLASS MAIL**

Dr. Nizar Kifaieh  
Interim Chief Executive Officer  
Heights University Hospital  
176 Palisade Avenue  
Jersey City, New Jersey 07306

Re: Heights University Hospital  
License #10902

Dear Dr. Kifaieh:

At the meeting held on Thursday, September 25, 2025, between Department of Health (Department) staff and Hudson Regional Health (HRH) representatives, HRH raised the potential closure of Heights University Hospital (Heights or the Hospital). The HRH representatives also solicited additional financial contributions from the State in addition to the previous financial assistance provided through charity care advancements in FY23, FY24, and FY25, and a \$10,625,000 loan consummated in 2024. The purpose of this correspondence is to remind HRH of the statutory and regulatory requirements that control the orderly closure of a licensed general hospital in New Jersey. Be advised that HRH cannot simply close a hospital overnight. Doing so would be a blatant abandonment of its responsibility to the community and would constitute a serious licensure violation, exposing HRH to substantial fines and regulatory action.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:33-3.2(b), the closure of a general hospital is subject to the full-review certificate of need (CN) process. Applications for the closure of a general hospital are accepted on the first business day of any month. Once the application is received, it will be reviewed for completeness as provided by N.J.A.C. 8:33-4.5 (a). This regulation further stipulates that only complete applications will be processed. An application will be deemed complete or incomplete after the applicant has been allowed to supplement the submission, within a specified timeframe, in response to questions posed by the Department. Id. Following its review, the Department shall notify the applicant in writing of its determination. If the application is deemed complete, the Department will refer copies of the application to the State Health Planning Board (SHPB)

for review. Id. If the application is deemed incomplete, the Department will notify the applicant in writing and identify the specific deficiencies.

In the case of a potential closure of a general hospital, N.J.S.A. 26:2H-5.8(c) requires the SHPB to hold at least one public hearing in the service area of the hospital. This hearing must be held within 30 days of the CN application being deemed complete. Id. Within 90 days of the application being deemed complete, the SHPB will provide its recommendations on the application to the Commissioner. N.J.A.C. 8:33-4.13(c). Upon receipt of the recommendations, the Commissioner will render a final agency decision on the application. N.J.A.C. 8:33-4.14(a).

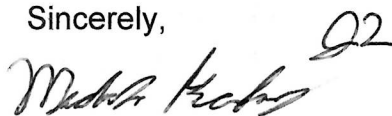
Following certificate of need approval for the requested closure of the Hospital, N.J.A.C. 8:43G-2.7 requires that "[a]t least 30 days prior to voluntary surrender of its license where approved by Certificate of Need, or as directed under an order of revocation, refusal to renew, or suspension of license, a facility must directly notify each patient and the patient's physician concerned of the intended closure. The license shall be returned to the Licensing Office within seven calendar days from voluntary surrender, order of revocation, expiration, or suspension of license, whichever is applicable."

Additionally, when terminating the operations of a facility, the Millville Dallas Airmotive Plant Job Loss Notification Act, N.J.S.A. 34:21-1 et seq., (the Act) requires employers with 100 or more employees to provide 90 days' advance notice for mass layoffs or closings. For any closures triggering the Act, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) must also be notified. Any questions or concerns regarding the Act should be referred to NJDOL.

Please keep the Department abreast of any decisions involving the operational status of the Hospital.

If there are any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at [Michael.Kennedy@doh.nj.gov](mailto:Michael.Kennedy@doh.nj.gov).

Sincerely,



Michael J. Kennedy, J.D.  
Executive Director  
Division of Certificate of Need and Licensing  
New Jersey Department of Health

C: J. Brown, DOH  
J. Rodriguez, DOH  
N. Glyn, DOH  
K. Jenkins, DOH  
A. Ventura, DOH  
B. Iannacone, DOH