Governor, Health Director Announce COVID-19 Testing Protocol

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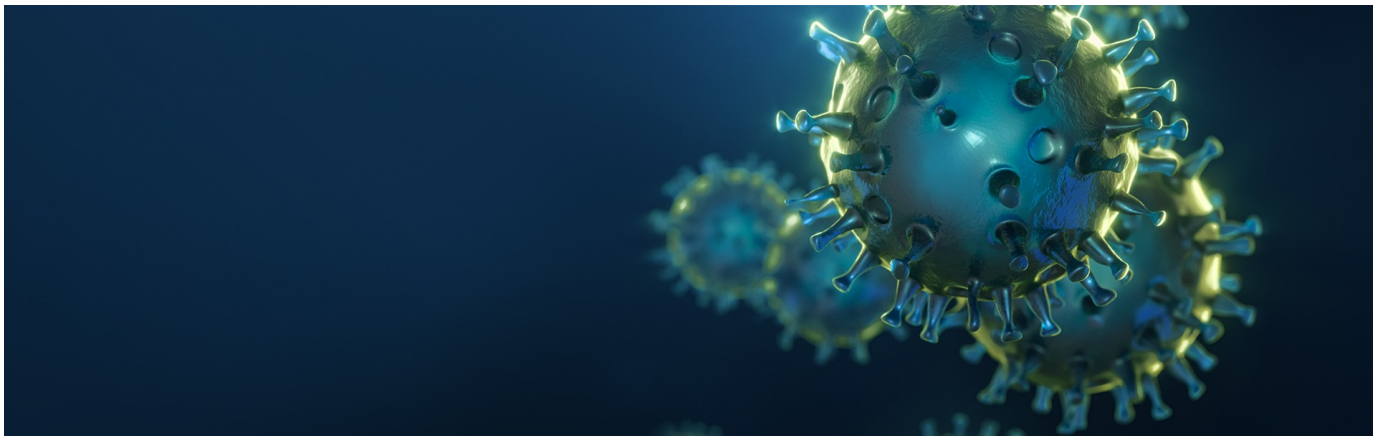

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH today announced the state's protocol for maximizing coronavirus (COVID-19) testing resources now that in-state testing is available.

"As the COVID-19 situation evolves, the Ohio Department of Health, working in conjunction with hospitals, primary care providers, and other health care experts, has a plan to maximize our testing resources. We are prioritizing the patients who are the most vulnerable to be tested in the Department of Health's State Laboratory, while ensuring those that need COVID-19 testing will be able to be tested," said Governor DeWine.

"We want to reassure Ohioans so there is no confusion. Information is critical to managing an outbreak of any infectious disease, and testing at our state lab offers the greatest ability for all of us to make the best decisions to protect the health of the greatest number of people. We will now be able to turn around results in an estimated 24-48 hours," said Dr. Acton.

For those who are hospitalized and meet the following criteria, samples will be sent to the ODH state lab:

- Have a fever or signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness, (e.g., cough or shortness of breath) and have had close contact with a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient within 14 days of symptom onset.
- Have a fever and signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness, and a history of travel from affected geographic areas with widespread or sustained community transmission within 14 days of symptom onset.
- Have a fever with severe acute lower respiratory illness and lack of alternative diagnosis (e.g., negative respiratory viral panel, negative rapid flu).

For individuals who are not hospitalized but meet the above criteria, calling a physician or other healthcare provider is appropriate. If that healthcare provider determines a COVID-19 test is necessary, those samples are sent to private labs who now have the capability to test.

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