July 29, 2021 | 12:45 pm

COVID-19 Updates

Unvaccinated individuals are at greater risk of serious illness from COVID-19. Learn more about the COVID-19 vaccines.

GET THE FACTS >

FEBRUARY 19, 2021 | Albany, NY

Governor Cuomo Announces Launch of New York Forward Rapid Test Program to Help Businesses and Catered Events Reopen Safely

CORONAVIRUS (/KI HEALTH)RC(NK PUBLIC SAFETY (/KEYWORDS/PUBLIC-SAFETY)

Public-Private Partnership First Announced in Governor's 2021 State of the State to Make Low-Cost Rapid Testing Available for Enhanced Economic Activity Eleven Initial Sites Are Open Today in New York City Capable of Conducting More Than 5,000 Tests Per Day

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced the launch of the New York Forward Rapid Test Program to help businesses safely reopen. This unique public-private partnership - first announced in the Governor's 2021 State of the State - will make low-cost rapid testing available to the public to support enhanced economic activity as the State continues to reopen sectors of the economy. Eleven initial sites will open today in New York City with the capacity to conduct more than 5,000 tests per day, while additional sites are scheduled to open in New York City and other parts of the state in the coming weeks.

"Throughout the COVID pandemic, we have relied on science over emotion and political rhetoric to guide our decisions, using all the tools available to navigate New York's public health and economic challenges," **Governor Cuomo said.** "I have said from the beginning that testing will be a key part of our post-pandemic recovery because it will help us accelerate the reopening of our economy - without undoing the extraordinary progress we made in beating back the virus. With testing sites located throughout the City, the New York Forward Rapid Test Program will help us ensure that we are encouraging economic activity while minimizing the risks to people's health."

Empire State Development Acting Commissioner and President & CEO-designate Eric Gertler said, "COVID-19 has not only been enormously disruptive to people's daily lives, but also to the state's economy and New Yorkers'

livelihoods. The New York Forward Rapid Test Program, announced by Governor Cuomo as part of his 2021 State of the State agenda, is just one of many innovative public private partnerships ESD is utilizing to help the reopenthe economy following the global pandemic and move New York forward."

REBNY President James Whelan said, "Governor Cuomo's leadership on statewide vaccination and rapid testing efforts has put New York on the path to a strong recovery. This is in part because the Governor understands how critical public private partnerships will be in successfully reopening businesses and rebuilding our statewide economy. REBNY and its members are proud to play a collaborative role in the New York Forward Rapid Test Program and we are working with the Cuomo Administration to expand the program and further increase access to rapid testing over the weeks to come."

The New York Forward Rapid Test Program aims to dramatically expand access to rapid testing to allow business and entertainment centers to more safely re-open. The network provides an additional layer of protection and confidence as New Yorkers resume economic activity, and it anticipates future State guidance that will increase capacity limits contingent upon testing. The Governor previously announced that catered events above the social gathering limit will be able to resume in accordance with state guidance on March 15, and all patrons must be tested prior to the event. Local health departments must be notified of events in advance. There will be a 50 percent capacity limit and no more than 150 people can attend the event.

Testing providers participating in the network must make rapid testing available for no more than $30, provide participants with their results within 30 minutes, offer a mechanism for people to schedule in advance and report the results to the State. To reduce the cost of testing for New Yorkers and expand the number of sites, the State is providing access to Abbott BinaxNow tests at cost to some providers and working with the Real Estate Board of New York, Business Improvement Districts and other partners across the state to identify vacant spaces in commercial centers that can be donated for the testing network. Donated sites must be in a commercially-zoned corridor, contain at least 750 square feet of open space and be available immediately for a minimum of six months. Sites must have street-level access, a restroom and be Americans With Disabilities Act-compliant. Entities that meet the above criteria and are interested in participating should email rapidtestingrealestate@esd.ny.gov (mailto:rapidtestingrealestate@esd.ny.gov) for consideration.

Individuals that are not experiencing COVID symptoms and that have not had a recent known exposure to COVID-19 may participate in this initiative by visiting participating locations and completing a questionnaire. Individuals must continue to comply with all New York Forward guidelines on reopening, including but not limited to the use of face coverings, social distancing, and other protocols.

Testing at the initial sites will be operated by:

- BioReference Laboratories at select CVS Pharmacy locations and other locations
- Clarity MedHealth, which operates mobile testing sites. Additional mobile testing sites are being added in the coming weeks that can be relocated around the State as needed to support economic activity.
- Quest Diagnostics will open additional sites in New York City and other regions across the State in the coming weeks, along with options for confirmatory COVID-19 molecular diagnostic testing

To find partners participating in this initiative and to make an appointment, visit the program website (http://ny.gov/rapidtestprogram).

The following testing locations will be open on Friday:

- Clarity MedHealth mobile lab at New York City Police Memorial, Liberty Street and South End Ave, New York, NY 10282
- Clarity MedHealth mobile lab at Irish Hunger Memorial, Vesey Street and North End Avenue, New York NY 10280
- Clarity MedHealth mobile lab at Pier A, 22 Battery Place, 10004
- Bioreference, 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019
- Bioreference, 6 West 52nd Street, New York, NY 10019
- Bioreference, 599 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10022
- Bioreference at CVS Pharmacy, 27 N 6th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11249
- Bioreference at CVS Pharmacy, 30-97 Steinway Street, Astoria, NY 11103
- Bioreference at CVS Pharmacy, 1916 Williamsbridge Road, Bronx, NY 10461

- Bioreference at CVS Pharmacy, 2182 Broadway, New York, NY 10024
- Bioreference at CVS Pharmacy, 475 6th Avenue, New York, NY 10011

A negative test result does not rule out the possibility of infection or mean that an individual is not at risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19. However, the initiative's screening and testing is another tool - in addition to the use of face coverings, social distancing, and other protocols - that can put New York State businesses on track to reopen more safely at higher capacities. To learn more about the New York Forward Rapid Test Program and view the Department of Health guidance, visit the program's website. (http://ny.gov/rapidtestprogram)

New York has been at the forefront of developing testing capacity throughout the COVID-19 crisis, conducting more than 200,000 tests per day on average. Visit the Health Department's website (https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you) to find a testing site near you.

Contact the Governor's Press Office

Contact us by phone:

Albany: (518) 474 - 8418
New York City: (212) 681 - 4640

Contact us by email:

Press.Office@exec.ny.gov

Translations

Bengali Translation
বাংলা অনুবাদ (https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/02.19.21.rel_.RAPID_I

Chinese Translation
中文翻譯 (https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/02.19.21.rel_.RAPID_C

Haitian-Creole Translation
Tradiksyon kreyòl ayisyen (https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/02.19.21.rel_.RAPID_Hai

Korean Translation
한국어 번역 (https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/02.19.21.rel_.RAPID_

Russian Translation Перевод на русский язык	(https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/02.19.21.rel_.RAPID_R
Spanish Translation Traducción al español	(https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/02.19.21.rel_.RAPID_S