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News Release
November 12, 2020

Eleven new COVID-19 testing sites to open across Minnesota; mail order program now available statewide

New testing sites to remain open 3-5 days a week through at least end of year

In order to expand access to free, “no barrier” COVID-19 testing, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) today announced 11 new longer-term COVID-19 testing sites will open across Minnesota in the coming weeks. Ten of the testing sites will be at National Guard Armories in Albert Lea, Anoka, Crookston, Fairmont, Hibbing, Hutchinson, Inver Grove Heights, Morris, Stillwater, and Wadena (see full list below). The 11th will be in the west metro.

In addition to the 11 new testing sites, the COVID-19 Test at Home (/diseases/coronavirus/testsites/athome.html) program is now available to all Minnesotans across the state. This is an expansion from the pilot, which was previously made available in 23 counties and the Red Lake Nation.

“Minnesota is entering the most difficult phase of the pandemic yet,” said Minnesota Commissioner of Health Jan Malcolm. “We have record levels of new cases, high hospitalization numbers, and increased community spread. At the same time, we know promising vaccines are entering new stages of development.”

“Right now, our job is to build a bridge to that day when safe and effective vaccines are widely available. We do that by working together to limit the impacts of COVID-19 on our families and communities through the simple steps we know make a difference. That includes social distancing, masking, avoiding crowds, staying home when sick, and getting tested when appropriate. This latest expansion of testing makes that last part easier by providing Minnesotans with an unprecedented level of access to COVID-19 tests, putting nearly every Minnesotan just three days from a test result,” continued Malcolm.

All of the new testing sites, as well as the mail order program, offer COVID-19 testing to any Minnesotan who wants to be tested, whether they have symptoms or not, and does not require insurance. Some sites will offer nasal swab testing, others will offer saliva testing. They will stay in operation until at least the end of the year to provide sustained testing capacity across the state.

The sites at National Guard armories will be staffed by a combination of local public health staff and members of the Minnesota National Guard. Nearly 100 members of the National Guard are being deployed to provide support with logistics, registration, check in and check out, supply management and transportation. These sites will replace the “pop-up” style of community testing events, which for the past several months would arrive in a community for 2-3 days of testing.

“Our mobile community testing events allowed us to test thousands of Minnesotans, in all corners of the state,” said Dan Huff, assistant commissioner for health protection. “We came to communities experiencing spikes in cases or hotspots. But now, every community is seeing spikes in cases. By placing these testing sites in armories for the time being, we’re able to spend more time providing tests, instead of setting up new testing sites every week. This expansion allows us to be more efficient and provide more access to more people.”

The state will also open a new saliva testing site in Burnsville, at the former Pier 1 store, on Monday, Nov 16. It is the 10th saliva site operated by Vault Medical Services, which has also partnered with the state to offer the COVID-19 Test at Home program statewide.

“Our mail order at-home test program is another way we are helping Minnesotans stay safe, which also includes the 10 on-site testing facilities across the state, and the Oakdale COVID-19 lab,” said Vault Health Founder and CEO Jason Feldman. "Now, residents can access our tests from the safety of their own home under the digital supervision of a practitioner with results in the same amount of time."

Through the COVID-19 Test at Home (/diseases/coronavirus/testsites/athome.html) program, any person in Minnesota can order a saliva test to be delivered at their home with expedited shipping. The test is then sent to the new lab in Oakdale, Minnesota, for processing.

“The pilot program provided valuable insight and important information about how the program works in practice, not just in our more populated areas of the state, but in our smaller communities as well. Using what we’ve learned, we’ve made the Test at Home program easier to use, more accessible, and more user-friendly,” continued Huff.

Find more information about the COVID-19 Test at Home program and find the link to order a test at COVID-19 Test at Home (/diseases/coronavirus/testsites/athome.html).

New MDH Testing Sites

Albert Lea
National Guard Armory
410 Prospect Ave.

Opens Nov. 18

Anoka
National Guard Armory
408 Main Street E
Opens Nov. 17

Crookston
National Guard Armory
1801 University Ave.
Opens Nov. 16

Fairmont
National Guard Armory
700 N Fairlakes Ave.
Opens Nov. 17

Hibbing
National Guard Armory
2310 Brooklyn Dr.
Opens Nov. 18

Hutchinson
National Guard Armory
1200 Adams St. SE
Opens Nov. 30

Inver Grove Heights
National Guard Armory
8076 Babcock Trail
Opens Nov. 17

Morris
National Guard Armory
722 Iowa Ave.
Opens Nov. 18

Stillwater
National Guard Armory
350 Maryknoll Dr. N.
Opens Nov. 16

Wadena
National Guard Armory
517 Jefferson St. N.
Opens Nov. 18

-MDH-

Minnesota Helpline:

For questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, call 651-297-1304 or 1-800-657-3504.

Mental Health Crisis Line - Call: **CRISIS (**274747)

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