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NEWS RELEASE

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Expanded Testing For COVID-19 In Georgia

Revised Testing Criteria and Increased Number of Test Sites

Atlanta – The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) is increasing the number of specimen collection sites statewide for COVID-19 testing, and is revising the current testing criteria to accommodate more testing of Georgia residents.

Effective immediately, **all symptomatic individuals** will be eligible for COVID-19 testing. Health care workers, first responders, law enforcement and long-term care facility residents and staff will still be prioritized for testing regardless of whether they are or are not symptomatic.

Referrals are still required, however, there are now **two ways** to be referred to a DPH specimen collection site:

Local Health Department

Individuals who meet COVID-19 testing criteria may now be referred to DPH specimen collection sites by contacting their local health department. They will be screened by appropriate health department staff and referred to the closest, most convenient specimen collection site.

Contact information for local health departments can be found on the DPH homepage at <https://dph.georgia.gov/>, under COVID-19 in Georgia.

Health Care Provider Referral

Health care providers and/or physicians can and should continue to refer patients for COVID-19 testing.

People **should not arrive unannounced or without a scheduled appointment** at a specimen collection site, hospital, emergency room or other health care facility. **Only individuals who have been evaluated by public health or a health care provider and assigned a PUI # number will be referred to these drive-thru sites.**

Together we can stop further spread of COVID-19 in our state and save lives.

Stay home – the Governor has issued a [shelter-in-place Executive Order](#) that should be observed by all residents and visitors.

Practice social distancing – keep at least 6 feet between yourself and other people.

Wash your hands – use soap and water and scrub for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60% alcohol) if soap and water aren't readily available.

Wear a mask – the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend [the use of face masks](#) to help slow the spread of COVID-19, especially where social distancing is difficult to maintain (grocery stores, pharmacies, etc.), and **especially** in areas of significant community-based transmission.

For more information about COVID-19 <https://dph.georgia.gov/novelcoronavirus> or <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

For updates on the COVID-19 situation as it develops, follow @GaDPH, @GeorgiaEMA, and @GovKemp on Twitter and @GaDPH, @GEMA.OHS, and @GovKemp on Facebook.