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Cudahy Health Department



## **Health Departments in the South Shore Unite with Local Partners to Bridge COVID-19 Testing Access Gaps**

*Low barrier testing will be available four days a week, is free and open to all, with or without symptoms*

The Cudahy, Oak Creek, South Milwaukee/St Francis Health Departments in the south shore announced they will build on their strong partnership to establish the Zone E Community Coronavirus Specimen Collection Site. This testing site will be the first of its kind in the South Shore area, offering free, low barrier tests to any Wisconsinite who believes they need to be tested.

“As the cases of COVID-19 in our State climb, testing all individuals with high risk exposures to COVID-19 remains a key strategy for containing further spread of infection,” said Heather Puente, Cudahy Interim Health Officer. “All persons who were in close contact with a person infected with COVID-19 (defined as being within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) should be tested, regardless of symptoms.”

With the limited number of area medical clinics, local leaders in the south shore are dedicated to ensuring their communities have local, accessible testing options. “Having access to local testing is instrumental for our communities,” said Puente. “This testing site removes barriers to testing for many people, whether they are unable to get to a testing location, uncomfortable going to a medical clinic, are uninsured or under-insured, or are looking for more convenient access.”

“Our battle against COVID-19 is far from over,” said Jackie Ove, South Milwaukee/St. Francis Health Officer. “Uniting together through innovative partnerships in one of the ways we are able to maximize resources to combat COVID-19. The municipalities in Zone E have previously coordinated public health programming and emergency response efforts, so this was a natural collaboration. Zone E is defined by the Milwaukee County Office of Emergency Management as the communities of Cudahy, Oak Creek, South Milwaukee, and St. Francis.”

“The former Bucyrus Campus offers a prime drive through site location that allows for testing to all Wisconsinites. It allows for easy entry and exit, as well as contained space within the facility.”

“Access to local testing, combined with masking, social distancing, and staying home to isolate or quarantine when appropriate, is critical to combat COVID-19,” said Darcy DuBois, Oak Creek Health Officer. “No one wants to pass this illness to their friends or family. Getting tested provides vital information and peace of mind on an individual level and on a community level; it helps us protect those we care about and slows the spread of the disease.”

Official dates and times of the Zone E Community Coronavirus Specimen Collection Site will be released soon and will be available on the health department’s websites.