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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Akron, Ohio – As the reopening of Ohio starts this week one important aspect of keeping Ohioans safe is increased testing capabilities in Ohio. The Ohio Department of Health has established testing priorities in the following priority areas:

**Priority 1: Ohioans with symptoms who are:**

- Hospitalized individuals
- Healthcare workers. This included behavioral health providers, home health workers, nursing facility and assisted living employees, emergency medical technicians (EMT), housekeepers and others who work in healthcare and congregate living settings.

**Priority 2: Ohioans with symptoms who are:**

- Residents of long-term care/congregate living settings.
- First responders/public health workers/critical infrastructure workers.
- 65 and older.
- Living with underlying conditions.
  - Consideration should be given for testing racial and ethnic minorities with underlying illness, as they are at increased risk for COVID-19 and more severe illness.

**Ohioans without symptoms who are:**

- Residents or staff directly exposed during an outbreak in long-term care/congregate living settings.

**Other Ohioans who are:**

- Designated by public health officials to evaluate/manage community outbreaks (such as in workplaces, other large gatherings).

**Priority 3: Ohioans with and without symptoms who are:**

- Receiving essential surgeries/procedures, including those that were reassessed after a delay.
- Receiving other medically necessary procedures not requiring an overnight stay/inpatient hospital admission, as defined by their providers' process for COVID-19 testing.

Local health departments are using these priority areas to test individuals utilizing the testing capabilities provided by the State.

There are two types of testing available for COVID-19: the viral and antibody testing. The viral testing tells you if you have a current COVID-19 infection. The viral test checks samples from your respiratory system (such as swabs of the inside of the nose) to tell you if you





currently have an infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Some tests are point-of-care tests, meaning results may be available at the testing site in less than an hour. Other tests must be sent to a laboratory to analyze, a process that takes 1-2 days once received by the lab. The antibody testing tells you if you had a previous COVID-19 infection. Antibody blood tests, also called antibody tests, check your blood by looking for antibodies, which show if you had a previous infection with the virus. Depending on when someone was infected and the timing of the test, the test may not find antibodies in someone with a current COVID-19 infection. Antibodies are proteins that help fight off infections. Antibody tests should not be used to diagnose someone as being currently sick with COVID-19. There are many types of antibody tests available and SCPH does not endorse one test over another. Some antibody tests are more reliable than others so make sure to research your options before you pay to have an antibody test.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) will be conducting random sample of residents that represents all of Ohio for antibody testing for COVID-19. The residents will first receive a postcard, followed by a letter regarding the test. Someone will come out to their home and test one individual 18 years or older in the household with a nasal swab and blood sample. Residents of households chosen have the right to refuse testing if they do not wish to be tested.

Currently COVID-19 testing for those outside the identified priority levels is available at:

Rite Aid Pharmacy

4053 South Main St. Akron, Ohio

At no cost

For those 18 years and older with COVID-19 symptoms

To register visit: [Riteaid.com/pharmacy/services/covid-19-testing](https://www.riteaid.com/pharmacy/services/covid-19-testing) to register.

Remember testing is just one strategy to control the spread of COVID-19. Other steps that Summit County residents should continue to do to slow the spread of the virus include:

- **Maintain a six-foot distance** from other individuals.
- **Wear a cloth face covering or mask when in public.**
- **Wash your cloth face cover routinely in the washing machine.**
- **Cover your coughs and sneezes** with your elbow or sleeve, or a tissue and then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands afterwards.
- **Washing your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds**, especially after going to the bathroom or before eating. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- **Avoid touching your face** – especially your eyes, nose and mouth – with unwashed hands.
- **Stay home if you have cold- or flu-like symptoms**, for seven days after your illness onset or three days after your fever resolves without fever reducing medicine, and avoid close contact with people who are sick.

For more information about the coronavirus situation in Summit County visit <https://www.scph.org/covid-19>. If you have questions, call the COVID-19 Call Line at (330) 926-5795. The call line is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. M-F.

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