



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4 2020

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Joint Information Center

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New East St. Louis Testing Site Opens Wednesday Offering Free COVID-19 Testing

Jackie Joyner Kersee Center to serve as the first Community Based Testing Site to offer Drive-Thru and Walk-Up testing services

SPRINGFIELD – Increasing COVID-19 testing capabilities in the State of Illinois continues to be an operational priority during the state’s response to this ongoing pandemic. Today, the State is announcing a new COVID-19 testing facility will open in East St. Louis on Wednesday, May 6 with drive-thru and walk-up services. Similar to the six additional Community Based Testing Sites (CBTS) throughout the state, this service at the Jackie Joyner Kersee Center will be open seven days a week to test individuals with COVID-19 symptoms and those who support critical services.

“By bringing COVID-19 testing into communities free of charge, we are to make testing more readily available and easier to access,” **said IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike.**

“Testing is essential to identify the prevalence of virus circulating in our communities. Through widespread testing, we can make science-based decisions that will help us end this pandemic.”

“Making sure the citizens in East St. Louis and the surrounding communities receive the necessary resources to access testing and treatment has remained a priority for me during this pandemic,” **said State Representative LaToya Greenwood.** “What we do today will absolutely impact our future, including how many people get sick, how many people are able to recover in the coming weeks, and how many people will lose their lives. We must continue to be diligent about adhering to the Governor’s stay-at-home order, social distancing, and washing our hands.”

“Testing and contact tracing has proven to be an effective way to slow the spread of this highly contagious virus. This additional site is a welcome addition to St. Clair County,” **said Mark Kern, St Clair County Board Chairman.**

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CBTS/2222

“We are doing everything we can to help the surrounding community during this hard time. We know that testing is a critically important part of the pandemic response and that’s why I am excited about the new testing center. St. Clair County and the City of East St. Louis will continue to partner together to provide testing in order to prevent further infection,” **said East St. Louis Mayor Robert Eastern III.**

The testing site at the Jackie Joyner Kersee Community Center provides a unique opportunity to expand testing availability in the Metro-East, thanks in large part to the accessibility of public transportation. Metro provides regional transportation options, by MetroBus, MetroLink and Metro Call-A-Ride, with multiple hourly stops at the Jackie Joyner Kersee Community Center seven days a week.

“Testing is knowledge and we stand ready to provide a convenient transportation option to the JJK Center at this critical time in our region,” **said Taulby Roach, President & CEO of Bi-State Development.** “To protect passengers and drivers on MetroLink and MetroBus vehicles, we have implemented numerous measures including rigorous daily deep cleanings, installing polycarbonate shields around all operator cabs on buses, asking riders to wear masks that cover their mouths and noses, and providing drivers with masks, gloves and other sanitizing materials.”

All individuals with symptoms are encouraged to seek testing at these Community Based Testing Sites. Additional accommodations have been made for the following individuals **with or without** COVID-like symptoms.

- Healthcare workers
- First Responders
- Employees of Correctional Facilities
- Individuals exposed to confirmed COVID-19 patients
- Employees that support Critical Infrastructure (grocery stores, pharmacies, restaurants, gas stations, public utilities, factories, childcare and sanitation)
- Individuals with compromised immune systems, chronic medical conditions

Definition of Symptoms

-Fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell

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Community Based Testing Sites

Harwood Heights	Bloomington	Markham
7:00am – 3:00pm while daily supplies last	9:00am – 5:00pm while daily supplies last	8:00am – 4:00pm while daily supplies last
6959 W. Forest Preserve Road, Chicago IL	1106 Interstate Drive Bloomington IL	3824 W.159th Place Markham IL
Aurora	Rockford	Waukegan
8:00am – 4:00pm while daily supplies last	8:00am – 4:00pm while daily supplies last	8:00am – 4:00pm while daily supplies last
1650 Premium Outlet Blvd Aurora IL	1601 Parkview Avenue Rockford IL	2161 Northwestern Avenue, Waukegan, IL
East St. Louis (Opens May 6)		
8:00am – 4:00pm while daily supplies last		
Jackie Joyner Kersee Ctr. Argonne Drive East St Louis, IL 62204		

Know Before You Go

This is a free service that can be obtained without a doctor’s referral. While this is a free service, you will be asked to show 1) photo identification and 2) healthcare employee or first responder ID/badge, if applicable.

Due to the demand for this service, we anticipate there could be significant wait times associated with these drive-thru community-based testing sites. Please be patient. If you are experiencing a medical emergency, you are urged to call your doctor or emergency department to seek immediate care and instructions.

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CBTS/4444

Dozens of additional commercial testing sites are also available throughout the state further adding to the state's testing capacity. For the most up-to-date list of these sites, visit <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/testing-sites>. There residents can also find information on eligibility for testing and contact information for each testing site.

For additional information related to COVID-19, please visit www.dph.illinois.gov. You can also get your COVID-19 questions answered at any time of day by calling the COVID-19 hotline at 1-800-889-3931. You can also email you questions to DPH.Sick@Illinois.gov.

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