

Test Iowa program to end operations on July 16

IDPH and SHL planning to provide free at-home test kits to Iowa residents

(Des Moines, IA) – Test Iowa, the state’s large-scale, free COVID-19 testing program which launched in April of last year, will end operations on July 16, 2021. Staggered closings of its drive-thru test sites and clinic locations statewide will occur over the next five weeks.

The five state-operated drive-thru locations will close when testing concludes at 4 p.m. on the following days:

- Wed., June 23: Pottawattamie County (3236 Nebraska Ave., Council Bluffs)
- Thurs., June 24: Linn County (Windstar Lines, 5755 Willow Creek Dr. SW, Cedar Rapids)
- Fri., June 25: Black Hawk County (4121 Alexandra Drive, Waterloo)
- Fri., July 16: Polk County (4475 NE 3rd St., Des Moines)
- Fri., July 16: Scott County (North Park Mall, 320 W. Kimberly Rd., Davenport)

Clinic site closures will be determined by provider, but will occur no later than Friday, July 16. Closing dates will be announced publicly and posted online at coronavirus.iowa.gov and testiowa.com.

Demand for testing is at its lowest levels in more than a year since vaccine is now widely available and virus activity has significantly decreased. However, ensuring the availability of free COVID-19 tests for Iowans remains a priority. The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and State Hygienic Lab (SHL) are finalizing plans now to provide at-home test kits free of charge to Iowa residents following the closure of the Test Iowa program. More details will be provided in the coming weeks. Additionally, COVID-19 testing will continue to be provided by health care providers, pharmacies, and other retail testing sites statewide.

Test Iowa is a public-private partnership between the State of Iowa, Nomi Health, Domo and Qualtrics that provided access to 540,000 PCR test kits plus the equipment and technology to automate the testing process. The program significantly improved Iowa’s testing capacity early on during the pandemic when supply nationwide was extremely limited.

Governor Reynolds announced the launch of Test Iowa during a press conference on April 21, 2020, just six weeks after Iowa’s first positive cases of COVID-19 were confirmed. The first drive-thru test site opened in Des Moines on April 25, and within a few weeks, the program expanded to include several more sites statewide. On May 27, the first clinic site opened in West Burlington, a collaboration between the state and local health care provider Great River Health to increase testing access in rural regions, a model which expanded to more than 20 clinic sites serving communities across the state.

Test Iowa also provided the state with a robust data platform to effectively manage its COVID-19 response. Real time data allowed the state to track trends in virus activity down to a zip code and respond with targeted strategies to contain it. The platform also enabled the state to share its data easily and transparently with Iowans throughout the course of the pandemic.

Since opening, nearly 644,000 individuals have been tested for COVID-19 at a Test Iowa site, making it Iowa's top testing option. Testing peaked on Nov. 23, 2020, when more than 6,700 individuals were tested on a single day. Approximately 400 total tests per day are now being conducted across all 17 drive-thru and clinic sites currently open.

Drive-thru test sites will continue to operate Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., while they remain open. Hours of operation vary by clinic site. For more information about locations, hours or scheduling a test, visit coronavirus.iowa.gov or testiowa.com.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to an individual who has tested positive and you have not yet been fully vaccinated, you should be tested and remain at home away from others until you know your results. If you are positive for the virus, follow the isolation instructions from your testing provider or local public health department.

IDPH encourages Iowans age 12 and up to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Information about vaccine providers and events statewide is available at vaccinateiowa.gov.