



Maryland

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

June 18, 2020

Dear County Leaders:

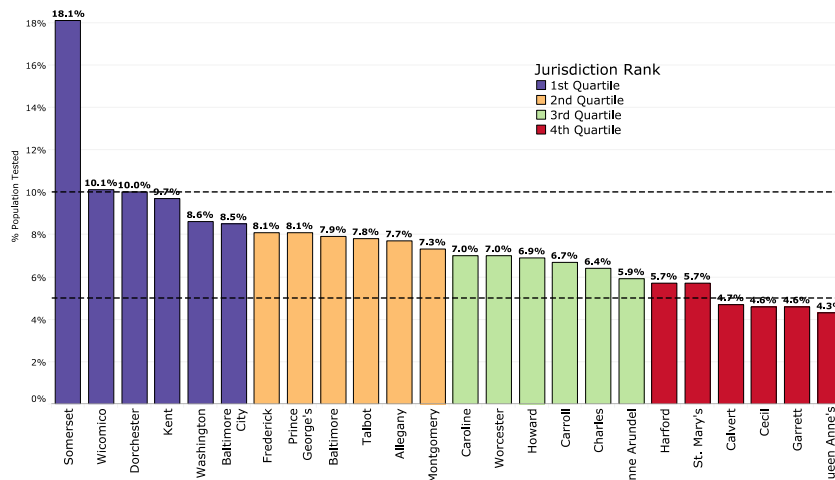
To continue making progress in our fight against COVID-19, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) is establishing the goal of testing 10% of the population in each jurisdiction and ensuring that vulnerable populations and areas identified as potential community outbreaks are tested without delay. To achieve this, MDH requires your respective administration's support and cooperation to deploy readily available COVID-19 specimen collection kits.

Since this crisis began, Maryland has significantly expanded the capacity and availability of COVID-19 testing as part of the state's long-term strategy. In recent weeks, the state has broadened the criteria for testing, authorized pharmacies to administer tests, opened additional high-volume testing sites, advanced agreements with CVS Health, Rite Aid, and Walmart for drive-thru locations, and opened a signature, state-of-the-art lab at the University of Maryland School of Medicine's Institute for Genome Sciences. The state plans to open additional high-volume testing sites in the coming weeks.

As part of our COVID-19 testing expansion, Maryland continues to make large quantities of specimen collection kits directly available to local health departments. Given that the state has a long-term strategic supply of tests, there is no need to stockpile these resources or turn away our allocations. Instead, we ask that your local health departments use these tests to increase the number and capacity of community-based testing sites. We urge you to make every effort and come up with innovative ways to provide your residents and businesses with open and convenient access to testing.

To help you and your constituents track this progress, we will begin posting daily percentages of population tested by jurisdiction on coronavirus.maryland.gov. As of Thursday, June 18, 2020:

Percent of Population Tested for COVID-19 in Maryland Counties



Maryland's laboratories are now conducting approximately 10,000 COVID-19 tests per day and we are progressing toward Maryland's statewide goal of 20,000 COVID-19 tests per day. As we stated in MDH's [Amended Directive and Order Regarding Various Healthcare Matters](#) issued on June 12, 2020, the following populations should now be prioritized for testing:

- Any symptomatic individual
- Asymptomatic individuals where COVID-19 exposure may be possible, including:
 - contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases
 - residents and staff of congregate living settings and long-term care facilities
 - healthcare workers and first responders
 - patients, especially high-risk unstable patients, whose care would be altered by a diagnosis of COVID-19
 - individuals employed in close contact settings
 - individuals previously in a large gathering
 - individuals directed to be tested by MDH who are associated with a cluster, outbreak or contact investigation

To deploy the increased capacity available now in the state, Maryland has more than 150 venues where testing occurs, including community-based testing sites (e.g., retail, pharmacies, and community centers), hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, detention centers, and urgent cares and other private locations. Information for major testing locations are available to the public at coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/symptoms-testing.

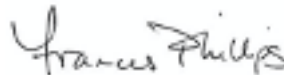
We deeply value our ongoing partnerships with local health departments—your invaluable efforts in assisting with specimen collection sites and in contact tracing have been vital to flattening the curve. However, it is absolutely critical to step up local COVID-19 testing response efforts so that we may continue to move forward on the road to recovery.

As always, we stand ready to assist and work with you in any way that we can. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,



Robert R. Neall
Secretary



Frances B. Phillips
Deputy Secretary, Public Health Services