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Press Release

New COVID-19 Community Testing Hub Opens Wednesday in Richmond

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Tuesday, August 25, 2020

West Contra Costa residents looking for fast, free COVID-19 testing will have a convenient new option beginning Wednesday, when Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) opens a new community testing hub at Richmond's Civic Center Plaza.

The new testing site, in a parking lot with the entrance at the corner of 25th Street and Nevin Avenue, accepts appointments and walk-in patients. In September CCHS will add drive-through service, allowing the location to test as many as 400 people per day.

"Our testing program has already shown that communities of color, and specifically some neighborhoods in West County, are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic," said Dr. Chris Farnitano, Contra Costa County Health Officer. "Accessible, timely testing is critical to reduce transmission of the virus and protect the community."

Contra Costa offers COVID-19 testing to anyone who lives or works in the county, regardless of insurance, ability to pay or whether they have symptoms or not.

Drive-through appointments continue to be available at West County Health Center in San Pablo, and at a site near the corner of Second Street and Ruby Avenue in North Richmond,

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where no-appointment, walk-in testing is available Tuesday and Friday afternoons.

The Civic Center site replaces a smaller county testing location at Kennedy High School in south Richmond, opened over the summer in partnership with West Contra Costa Unified School District.

The expansion of public testing service in West County coincides with an increase in laboratory testing capacity and improved turnaround time in Contra Costa, where many patients this summer waited two weeks or longer for their results due to a national shortage of reagents needed to process specimens.

The primary private laboratory contracted by Contra Costa to process tests was reporting a turnaround time of two to five days as of Monday. The county has also contracted with additional labs, which are now preparing to process county specimens, and its Public Health Laboratory this month received new equipment from the state allowing it to process hundreds more tests in-house daily. Turnaround times at the county's in-house lab average two to three days.

CCHS now operates nine free community testing sites, and the state runs another three in Contra Costa County. Testing appointments are available for all county sites by calling 1-844-421-0804 (8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily) or visiting [coronavirus.cchealth.org/get-tested](https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/get-tested) (<https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/get-tested>) to schedule online. The new site also accepts walk-in patients without appointments. (*Note: Testing clinics operated by Contra Costa County may close during the afternoon this week depending on current air quality.*)

While you don't need symptoms to get tested, symptoms that may warrant a test include cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, fatigue, muscle ache, sore throat, headache, vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, recent loss of taste or smell, or confusion, particularly in older adults.

There is no up-front cost for testing and patients do not need medical insurance or government-

issued identification to get tested. However, if you have health insurance, your insurance will be billed.

CCHS does request identification during appointment registration as part of its process to receive federal reimbursement for testing, but ID is not required to receive a test. Patient information is confidential and not shared with law enforcement or other government agencies.

Patients receive their test results via secure text, or in the mail if they cannot receive texts. Patients who test positive for COVID-19 also will be contacted by Contra Costa Public Health with important next steps, including information to help prevent spreading the virus to others.

Visit [coronavirus.cchealth.org/get-tested](https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/get-tested) (<https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/get-tested>) for details about community testing, including site locations.

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