

## Governor Walz Announces New COVID-19 Rapid Testing Sites Across Minnesota

With the support of the National Guard, state will launch rapid sites this week in Crookston, Hutchinson, and Stillwater to offer free rapid testing to Minnesotans

Additional rapid test sites in Inver Grover Heights, Wadena, Hibbing, and Albert Lea will launch next week

Existing community saliva testing sites in Moorhead, Saint Paul (Roy Wilkins), Brooklyn Park, and Duluth will also offer rapid testing beginning this week

Today, Governor Tim Walz announced a further expansion of rapid testing availability at community sites across Minnesota.

This week the state is launching new COVID-19 community rapid testing sites in Stillwater, Crookston, and Hutchinson. The site in Stillwater will open on Wednesday, October 20, and the sites in Crookston and Hutchinson will open on Thursday, October 21. New rapid testing sites will also launch next week in Inver Grove Heights, Wadena, Hibbing, and Albert Lea to serve Minnesotans in the community. The sites are being supported by the Minnesota National Guard.

The State will also begin offering rapid tests at existing community saliva testing locations in Moorhead and Saint Paul (Roy Wilkins) beginning on Wednesday, October 20 and in Brooklyn Park and Duluth beginning Friday, October 22. More details about rapid testing options at additional existing saliva sites will be available next week.

**“Minnesotans are working hard to navigate daycare, school, and work — and they need the reassurance and ease of rapid testing to keep their lives on track,”** said Governor Walz. **“That’s why we are expanding our testing offerings and launching new testing sites in the metro and Greater Minnesota to meet folks where they are. By helping Minnesotans get the speedy test results they need, we are taking action to make sure Minnesotans have access to rapid testing options at our free community testing network.”**

**“Testing for COVID-19 helps keep our kids safe in the classroom and workers protected on the job,”** said Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. **“Rapid testing is just what Minnesota parents need right now, and that’s why we are standing up new sites across Minnesota to get more free rapid tests to Minnesota families.”**

**"The Minnesota National Guard's motto is 'Always Ready, Always There' and demonstrates our commitment to support Minnesota citizens,"** said Army Major General Shawn Manke, Minnesota National Guard's Adjutant General. **"We have supported public health activities since March 2020 with varying levels of personnel and activities and are prepared to do so, again."**

**"On Wednesday, Governor Walz requested Minnesota National Guard support for community-based testing sites in the metro and outstate locations,"** said Army Colonel Scott Rohweder, Minnesota National Guard's Director of Operations. **"The service members will be broken into seven teams assisting civil authorities at various sites with conducting testing facility management, performing administrative tasks, and administering COVID-19 tests."**

To help Minnesotans access free, quick testing resources in their communities, the Governor has activated the National Guard to help stand up these new community rapid testing sites. These sites will allow Minnesotans experiencing COVID-19 symptoms to take an antigen test and receive results in a matter of hours.

In addition to the new state rapid testing sites and rapid options at existing state saliva sites, last week Governor Walz announced additional COVID-19 rapid testing opportunities in partnership with local public health (LPH) agencies around the state. Sixteen local public health agencies across the state are deploying rapid tests provided by the Minnesota Department of Health, some of which will be used at community testing clinics, while others will be used for targeted testing efforts. Participating agencies will announce their testing plans and appointments processes.

The Walz-Flanagan administration has steadily expanded testing capacity throughout Minnesota to meet increasing demand for COVID-19 tests. To tackle the Delta variant, the state has opened new community sites in Bloomington, Lino Lakes, Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and Morris since August. The state has added weekend testing and doubled capacity at the Duluth community testing site. Additionally, the state added Friday testing at the state sites in Mankato and St. Cloud, and Sunday testing at the Moorhead and Winona sites.

The state continues to assess current and projected testing needs and will work to execute its comprehensive approach to ensure every Minnesotan has access to free testing to keep their families and communities safe.

Testing is free at all of the state's community testing sites. Participants that have health insurance will be asked for their insurance information so the state can bill their insurance company on their behalf. If a person is uninsured or if insurance does not cover some or all of the cost, the state will cover the difference, ensuring testing remains open to all at no cost.

Testing at the state's new rapid sites is recommended for symptomatic Minnesotans and is open to Minnesotans with or without insurance.

While walk-ins are welcome, people seeking testing at state sites can schedule a test as well. Rapid test results will be available within approximately 1-3 hours of processing.