



Dorchester County Health Department

“Working for Healthier People”

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Dorchester County Health Department to Provide Free COVID-19 Testing and Face Masks on November 18th and 23rd to help prevent spread before Thanksgiving

Cambridge, MD (November 16, 2020) – The Dorchester County Health Department (DCHD) is providing free, drive-thru COVID-19 testing on Wednesday, November 18th and Monday, November 23rd from 9:30am to 12:30pm. Testing is weather permitting, open to the public, and does not require an appointment, doctor’s order, or insurance. Spanish interpreters will be on site. In addition to COVID-19 testing, the health department is offering free cloth face coverings to participants, while supplies last.

The mask distribution is part of the Maryland Department of Health’s #MasksOnMaryland campaign to encourage all Marylanders to wear face coverings in public places to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Each vehicle visiting the testing events before Thanksgiving will receive a package of five cloth face coverings at no cost until all of the packages have been distributed. Residents do not have to get tested to receive the face coverings, but should notify health department staff upon arrival if only interested in masks.

“With worsening statewide metrics and the upcoming holidays, we are at a critical point,” said Roger Harrell, Dorchester County Health Officer. “Thanksgiving is a time to gather with loved ones and celebrate all that you’re thankful for, but we know family gatherings are a leading risk factor for COVID-19.” The DCHD is offering the following guidance to help make Thanksgiving safer and lower the risk of developing COVID-19:

- **Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others.** If hosting a gathering, consider limiting the number of guests and length of time. Talk with guests ahead of time to set expectations for celebrating together. Have one person serve food and hold your meal outdoors if possible. Limit contact with others for 14 days before gathering. Travel increases the chance of spreading COVID-19. If you do travel, get tested prior to Thanksgiving. Stay home if you do not feel well.
- **Deliver dinner to those at high-risk for COVID-19.** Prepare meals for family and neighbors, especially those at higher risk of severe illness, and deliver them in a way that does not involve contact. Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially prior to cooking and eating.
- **Watch sports, parades, and movies from home** with members of your immediate household. Participate in a virtual gratitude activity with extended family and friends.

- **Shop online** rather than in the store. Shopping indoors with big crowds is a high-risk activity. If you do shop in person, wear a face covering and stay at least six feet away from others.
- **Report non-compliance concerns by contacting DCHD** at 410-228-3223 (phone) or mdh.dorchester-covid-19@maryland.gov (email).

For Maryland Department of Health information and resources about COVID-19, please visit covidlink.maryland.gov and coronavirus.maryland.gov. For the most up-to-date local information, visit dorchesterhealth.org and follow Dorchester County Health Department's Emergency Preparedness Facebook page at www.facebook.com/dorchesterhealthemergencypreparedness.

Dorchester County residents with general questions or concerns about COVID-19 can call the Dorchester County Health Department at 410-228-3223 Monday through Friday, 8am-4:30pm or 2-1-1 after hours.

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