

RELEASE: UW System extends COVID-19 surge testing

University Relations <universityrelations@uwsa.edu>

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UW System extends COVID-19 surge testing

MADISON, Wis.— The University of Wisconsin System COVID-19 “surge testing” sites will operate at least until Christmas, System President Tommy Thompson announced today.

The 22 sites across Wisconsin located on or near UW System university campuses provide free rapid-response COVID-19 testing available to community members as well as students and employees. Since opening in early November, the sites have now administered about 100,000 Abbott BinaxNOW tests.

Originally, System officials estimated the sites would operate for about six weeks, or through mid-December. Thanks to added support from the United States Department of Health and Human Services to meet the demand, surge testing will continue up until at least Christmas. Days and hours vary by individual site.

“I applaud President Thompson, our chancellors, and all of the staff who have contributed to the success of these surge testing sites,” said UW System Board of Regents President Andrew S. Petersen. “We are pleased to provide this service to the people of Wisconsin at this difficult time and know it is making a difference.”

The UW System surge testing sites are the first in the country to use the new Abbott BinaxNOW tests. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has provided 250,000 of the tests, and staffing support is available through eTrueNorth.

Persons who want to receive a rapid-results test – available in about 15 minutes -- should register at www.doineedacovid19test.com. Those who test positive through the rapid-results test are urged to get a confirmatory PCR test.

Individuals do not have to be experiencing symptoms or be a close contact of someone with COVID-19 to get a test, nor do they need to live in the community where the testing site is located.

Individuals seeking to be tested will register online, proceed to the testing site, administer the test themselves under supervision, and label it for processing.

“As Wisconsinites struggle with this insidious disease, we will be in every part of the state to provide help with testing,” said President Thompson.

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The University of Wisconsin System serves approximately 165,000 students. Awarding nearly 37,000 degrees annually, the UW System is Wisconsin's talent pipeline, putting graduates in position to increase their earning power, contribute to their communities, and make Wisconsin a better place to live. Nearly 90 percent of in-state UW System graduates stay in Wisconsin five years after earning a degree. The UW System provides a 23:1 return on state investment. UW System institutions also contribute to the richness of Wisconsin's culture and economy with groundbreaking research, new companies and patents, and boundless creative intellectual energy.

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