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News Release

Unified Government Public Health Department
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 22, 2020

COVID-19 Testing for People Experiencing Homelessness

Four Opportunities to Get Tested in Wyandotte County This Week

COVID-19 testing special events are coming up this week focused on providing COVID-19 testing for individuals in Wyandotte County who are experiencing homelessness.

Testing will be held this Thursday and Friday, at two different community locations on both days:

- Frank Williams Outreach Center, 7th and Nebraska in KCK
 - 8 AM – 10 AM
 - July 23rd and 24th
- Cross-Lines Community Outreach (food kitchen), 7th and Shawnee in KCK
 - 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM
 - July 23rd and 24th

Test results from these events will be available at the respective testing locations on Monday, July 27th, and Tuesday, July 28th.

“We know that people experiencing homelessness are at increased risk for serious illness from Covid-19. It is vital for us as a community to help keep them safe from the virus,” said Rob Santel, Director of Client Services with Cross-Lines Community Outreach. “Increasing access to testing opportunities for this vulnerable population is essential to stop the spread.”

“It’s important to provide testing that specifically aims to serve people experiencing homelessness, and to hold the testing events at locations where people can access other services they may need. Meeting people in the community, where they are already receiving services, allows us to identify vulnerable people who might need isolation or critical care,” said Rachel Erpelding, Senior Director of Housing and Employment Services with Wyandot Center for Community Behavioral Healthcare (Frank Williams Outreach Center is a service of Wyandot Center).

“It’s not just about testing, but how do people quarantine while they wait for their results, or isolate if they test positive? That’s why we’ve partnered with a hotel in the area to provide a sheltering option for people who get tested at these events,” said Nicole Garner, COVID-19 Project Coordinator with the Unified Government Public Health Department. “As we continue to expand COVID-19 testing, this is not only critically important for those experiencing homelessness, but we are also exploring how this can help those who may have challenges isolating themselves from others in their household, like a large family in a small space with a shared bathroom.”

These events are done in partnership with: the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Department of Emergency Management, Kansas Department for Children & Families, Frank Williams Center, Cross-lines Community Outreach, Greater Kansas City Coalition to End Homelessness (GKCCEH), Care Beyond the Boulevard, Kansas City, KS Police Department, the Unified Government Public Health Department, and the Wyandotte County Health Equity Task Force.

Learn more about Frank Williams Outreach Center at facebook.com/FrankWilliamsOutreachCenter

Learn more about Cross-Lines Community Outreach at cross-lines.org

Learn more about COVID-19 in Wyandotte County, including the latest data and resources for residents and businesses, at wycokck.org/COVID-19, or by calling 3-1-1.

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