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Wichita State offering free COVID-19 testing

By Sara Ornelas, Marketing Content Strategist

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Those interested in being tested can drive to the Metroplex at the corner of 29th and Oliver streets and stay in their car (follow the signs). They will then call a special COVID-19 testing phone number posted in the parking lot, and a trained employee will collect demographic information over the phone.

The patient will then be invited to enter the building while carefully observing physical distancing, and a saliva specimen will be collected. The specimen will be taken to [Wichita State's Molecular Diagnostics Lab (MDL)](#) for processing, and most results will be available within 24 hours. Patients will be notified that their results are ready via email.

Testing is available from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

"We are excited to partner with the Metroplex to be able to offer a new collection site for testing with MDL," said Sarah Nickel, technical director of the MDL. "In order to truly stay ahead of the virus, it is important that community members test as often as needed and that they get results very quickly."

Since it started testing in November, the MDL has been a powerful weapon against COVID-19. The lab's high-volume capabilities and quick turnaround have helped to mitigate the spread of the virus.

The lab has contracted with the state of Kansas to use federal CARES funding from the state of Kansas SPARK fund to cover the cost of testing to ensure our state can continue to operate safely. MDL's increased testing capacity enables Kansas to live with the pandemic and aid our community in returning to work and school.

The lab is currently processing about 2,000 COVID-19 tests per day but has the capacity of 3,500 tests per day.

"We have not reached our capacity at MDL and can continue to grow in our test volume and still get results back within 24 hours," Nickel said. "We hope the community will take advantage of this easy access location for free COVID-19 testing to ensure they test when needed to help prevent the spread of the virus."

Nickels said it's particularly important for people to get tested in light of the COVID-19 variants that have recently been identified.

"We are ready to help as we can to keep as many people in work and school as possible. By testing, we can help identify where the virus is in our community and help try to prevent its spread," she said.