



TOWN OF VERNON

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September 23, 2021

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Town of Vernon and Sema4 Labs Offer 'No Cost to You' COVID-19 Testing

(VERNON, Connecticut) – The Town of Vernon will offer “No Cost to You” drive-thru COVID-19 testing to area residents beginning this Sunday, September 26th, 2021, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Rockville High School. Testing will continue weekly on Sundays.

The Town will also offer “No Cost to You” testing to employees who face mandatory testing under Executive Order 13G.

The testing will be performed by staff from Sema4 Labs. Private insurance will be billed for those who have coverage, but there will be no out of pocket costs. People who do not have health insurance will not be charged.

Executive Order 13G, issued September 10th, 2021, requires all pre-kindergarten through 12th grade school staff, state employees, and childcare facility staff to receive a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine by September 27th, 2021. Those who do not get vaccinated due to certain exemptions must be tested weekly for COVID-19, according to the executive order.

“Because of these new mandatory testing requirements, we wanted to ensure testing was accessible, convenient and affordable for those who need it,” Vernon Mayor Dan Champagne said. “Sunday testing is open to Vernon residents and people from other communities.”

Vernon Town Administrator and Director of Emergency and Risk Management Michael Purcaro said Town leaders are continually assessing the Town’s ongoing pandemic response and recovery strategy.

“Early in the pandemic we saw a need for community-based testing and established multiple testing sites in Vernon,” Purcaro said. “When vaccine became available, we saw a need and established our nationally-recognized vaccination program to reach those who wanted to be vaccinated. This new testing initiative is the next natural step since testing is now mandatory for some in our community.”

Vernon Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph Macary said keeping schools safe and open is essential, and testing will be part of what makes that happen.

“Our top priority is always the health and safety of our staff, students and community,” Dr. Macary said. “By creating this testing program, we are working to keep our schools safe so that in-person learning can continue uninterrupted. We want children in school because that is the best place for students to learn. Students need to be face-to-face with teachers, peers and school support staff. That translates into a more engaging and successful learning experience for all students. We will keep searching for innovative and creative solutions so that we can maintain that momentum.”

Testing is an important tool in the battle against COVID-19, said Dr. Daksh Rampal, the medical director of Vernon’s COVID-19 vaccination program and Priority Urgent Care of Ellington. People who have symptoms or a known exposure to COVID-19 should be tested, regardless of vaccination status.

“To control community spread of COVID-19, people have to know whether they are infected,” Rampal said. “Testing also helps health officials track the prevalence of COVID-19 in the community.”

The Town has worked closely with Sema4 Labs, which conducted mass testing clinics at Rockville High School during the spring.

“Sema4 is thrilled to again partner with the Town of Vernon to offer COVID-19 testing to the community,” said Lisa Ives, Customer Success Manager for Sema4 Labs. “When we worked with Vernon in the spring, logistics were always well-planned and organized and the testing process was quick and efficient. We look forward to resuming testing and serving the greater Vernon region.”

In addition to testing on Sundays at Rockville High School, COVID-19 testing sites can be found by visiting www.211ct.org. Testing is available locally at the following locations (additional sites may become available):

Priority Urgent Care, 105 West Road, Ellington; Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; phone 860-454-0678; www.priorityuc.com.

GoHealth Urgent Care-Vernon, 35 Talcottville Road, Vernon; Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-8 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; phone 860-787-5774.

AFC Urgent Care, 179 Talcottville Road, Vernon; Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-8 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; phone 860-986-7600; <https://www.afcurgentcarevernon.com/>

Quest Diagnostics, 520 and 444 Hartford Turnpike, Vernon; Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 4 p.m., Saturday, 7 – 11 a.m.; <https://patient.questdiagnostics.com/no-cost-covid-test>

Walgreens, 188 Union Street, Vernon; appointment must be made through website, www.walgreens.com.

About the Town of Vernon

The Town of Vernon is a celebrated place to live, work and visit. From its beautiful parks and lakes, to its vast trails and historic homes and buildings, Vernon is a resilient and thriving community that promotes the health and wellbeing of its residents and values the natural environment. With a resident population of approximately 30,000 and occupying 18.03 square miles, Vernon combines a balanced appreciation of history, and a strong economic base for growth, both residential and commercial. Located 15 minutes east of the Connecticut capital of Hartford,

and 25 miles from the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, the Town of Vernon is strategically located in “New England's Knowledge Corridor” with close proximity to some of the top colleges and universities in the country.

Designated a certified Sustainable Community, the Town of Vernon offers a wide range of benefits and services to its residents. The Town of Vernon is a full-service municipality that practices a management philosophy of continuous quality improvement. To learn more about the Town of Vernon, please call (860) 870- 3670 or visit www.vernon-ct.gov.

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