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Cayuga Health and Tompkins County Open
New COVID-19 Sampling Center in Ithaca

March 23, 2020 Ithaca, New York — Cayuga Health (CH) and Tompkins County officials announced today that they are opening a new COVID-19 sampling center location for patients who meet screening criteria for testing to handle more widespread screening.

The Sampling Center will be open starting Tuesday, March 24 from 10am-3pm, Monday-Friday. A new website with on-line registration is available at www.cayugahealth.org for patients to review the screening criteria and pre-register before their arrival, allowing greater efficiencies with patient volume and decreased wait times. In addition, a call center has been set up for patients who may not have access to Internet, need assistance registering, or have questions. The call center number is 607-319-5708. Individuals are strongly encouraged to pre-register prior to coming to the site.

“Testing for COVID-19 has rapidly evolved. Last week we were successful with opening one of the first COVID-19 sampling centers in New York State and we will continue to do what it takes to meet the healthcare needs of our community,” states Martin Stallone, President & CEO of Cayuga Health. "I want to thank The Shops at Ithaca Mall and our Tompkins County officials for their efforts and support in making this Sampling Center come together so quickly. I would also like to thank the entire Cayuga Health staff for their tireless dedication and hard work over the past several weeks.”

“This new sampling center is another way for us to do our part to flatten the curve, get people tested, and keep our community safe,” states Frank Kruppa, Tompkins County Public Health Director. “We recognize there are limitations to this sampling site and we will continue to work to find solutions to ensure that everyone who needs to get tested is able to receive this service. I would like to thank Dr. Stallone and his entire team for leading this effort for the Sampling Center.”
The criteria for testing includes two questions:
1) Have you had a recent onset of fever, cough, shortness of breath, or body aches?
2) Have you been in the same room with a person confirmed positive with COVID-19 in the last 14 days?

For those tested, they must go straight home, as they will be on mandatory home isolation as directed by the Health Department. Individuals will be contacted in about one week with the test result. Someone will contact individuals daily on behalf of the Health Department to ensure that there is compliance with mandatory home isolation.

The Sampling Center is located in portable structures at The Shops at Ithaca Mall parking lot and will be staffed by experienced and knowledgeable employees. Screening will include swabbing the throat and nose and will be sent to offsite designated testing centers for results. The new Sampling Center will replace the previous sampling facility, which opened on March 16.

Patients entering the screening location by car can tune into FM 96.3 to receive instructions about driving through the Sampling Center. In addition, signs will convey important information to assist with traffic control. If you do not have transportation, please do not take public transportation to the sampling center. Cayuga Health and Tompkins County officials are working closely to determine if mobile sampling is available or other transportation options. The public will be updated about these options.

The Sampling Center will open starting Tuesday, March 24, and will be open into the foreseeable future as needed. Hours will initially be 10:00 am - 3:00 pm Monday through Friday. The website can be found at www.cayugahealth.org. As directed by Governor Cuomo, COVID-19 testing is free for all New Yorkers, regardless of health insurance. Additionally, individuals who seek testing will not be asked for photo identification.

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**About Cayuga Health**

Cayuga Health (CH) has two hospitals, Cayuga Medical Center and Schuyler Hospital, as well as a multi-specialty group, Cayuga Medical Associates. Combined employment, including affiliated organizations, is over 2,200 employees. CHS is clinically linked to Mayo Medical Laboratories, Rochester Regional Health for cardiac services, Roswell Park for cancer services, and the University of Rochester for neurosciences.

The Tompkins County Health Department is your partner for a healthy community.

For more information call the Health Department at 607-274-6600, or go to TompkinsCountyNY.gov/health/factsheets/coronavirus

Find us online at TompkinsCountyNY.gov/health, and follow us on Facebook at Facebook.com/TompkinsPublicHealth and on Twitter at @TompkinsHealth