



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES**  
*A Healthcare Service Agency*

NED LAMONT  
GOVERNOR

MIRIAM E. DELPHIN-RITTMON, Ph.D.  
COMMISSIONER

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** DMHAS Staff  
**From:** Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D.  
**Date:** May 13, 2020  
**Subject:** DMHAS COVID-19 Staff Update #17 Testing of All DMHAS Staff

Governor Lamont has recently announced planning for all state employees to be tested for COVID-19. Testing will be made available to all employees at DMHAS regardless of job site. The testing is **voluntary** but is being highly encouraged by DMHAS. It is our understanding that the Governor's Office will be using the aggregate information to better understand the prevalence of COVID-19 within the state, a metric for determining the overall health of the state. Test results will be confidential and will not be shared with DMHAS however they will be shared with the Department of Public Health (DPH) as required by law. Reports to DPH will allow contact tracing to help reduce the spread of the virus.

The testing will be conducted by Yale New Haven Hospital (YNH) and will be processed through their lab. The test used by YNH will determine if somebody is positive for COVID-19. Test results will be available the following day utilizing a secure patient portal. While precise details of the testing plan are evolving, the plan is expected to allow for staff to be re-tested on a regular basis. DMHAS' immediate priority will be to focus on employees that are involved in direct client care. DMHAS, in collaboration with YNH, will adhere to strict safety procedures that follow guidelines for social distancing, use of masks, and will involve self-swabbing. Clinicians will be observing the self-swabbing process to ensure the swab is done correctly. All supplies for the testing will be supplied by YNH.

The testing of state employees is moving very quickly. Testing will begin tomorrow onsite at Connecticut Valley Hospital (CVH) in Page Hall with a plan to start slowly, testing approximately 50 staff tomorrow and Friday. CVH leadership will be in touch with employees who have been prioritized for the initial testing. As DMHAS and YNH gain additional experience with the length of time needed for testing, it is expected that testing will increase with a goal of testing up to 1000 employees a week. It is our expectation that Whiting Forensic Hospital will be the next DMHAS facility to be tested. While details continue to be worked out, it is expected that the testing will proceed over a number of weeks. Each facility will

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disseminate more detailed facility-specific information regarding the testing location and procedures.

Finally, while your results are confidential, I want to remind you that if you test positive you should remain at home until you have been medically cleared to return to work. Employees who test positive should notify Human Resources in order to appropriately code time sheets and initiate contact tracing to keep other staff and patients safe.

I recognize that the implementation of procedures like this may raise anxiety but I feel strongly that this is an additional way we can help to protect you, your family and our clients, especially if you may have contracted the disease and are asymptomatic. The aggregate data can be extremely beneficial to the state providing baseline information regarding our state's overall health. I strongly encourage all staff to be tested and thank you for your participation in this statewide initiative.