

# Contractors sought to support COVID-19 testing at long-term care facilities

The Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) and Oregon Health Authority (OHA) are putting the call out for organizations interested in helping the state implement its state-wide plan to test all staff and residents of long-term care facilities.

The request for applications (RFA) that OHA issued Monday is authorized as part of Gov. Kate Brown's March 8 emergency declaration under a statute, ORS 279B.080, that allows for emergency procurement of services.

The RFA, which closes July 31, 2021, seeks applicants that can perform specimen collection and diagnostic testing for

COVID-19 infection in Oregon as part of the state's effort to test all long-term care facility staff and offer testing to all residents by Sept. 30.

Although the closing date for the RFA is July 31, 2021, OHA plans to enter into contracts with approved applicants as soon as possible and on an ongoing basis to meet multiple testing service needs of Oregonians throughout the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bringing on additional test-service contractors will allow for faster implementation of the plan, which launched in late June.

The RFA, including application requirements and attachments, can be accessed

and downloaded from ORPIN website, <http://orpin.oregon.gov/open.dll/welcome>, and specifically from ORPIN Opportunity #OHA-5050-20.

The plan is being implemented in two phases. In the first phase, every facility will test all staff and offer testing to all residents. This phase, which began in late June and concludes by Sept. 30, covers more than 680 large long-term care facilities statewide, which combined provide care for an estimated 31,000 residents and employ 29,000 staff.

Facilities may begin testing whenever they are ready to do so. In addition, any resident or staff member who can be documented as

having been tested on, or after June 1, 2020, will count toward the goal of having all staff and residents tested at least once by Sept. 30.

Once a facility completes an initial round of comprehensive testing, they will need to develop and implement a plan for ongoing monitoring and testing, including testing all staff at least once per month.

Facilities' plans for this ongoing staff testing, which is the second phase of the plan, will be approved by the DHS Office of Aging and People with Disabilities, with implementation required to begin within 30 days of completing the first round of testing.

According to the RFP,

contractors must supply "sufficient, qualified professionals and services to operate COVID-19 specimen collection and other optional related services, including but not limited to laboratory testing, counseling, billing and reporting, as well as related services at residential care and possibly other facilities throughout Oregon."

Contractors must also present plans and operational procedures for specimen collection sites, and plan for providing medical consultation before specimen collection and after receiving results.

They also must maintain patient confidentiality, obtain appropriate consent

for testing, ensure staff, patients and contractors are protected from COVID-19, and provide required personal protective equipment (PPE).

In addition, contractors will gather patient demographic data such as race, ethnicity, language and disability.

Finally, according to the RFA, the state "is looking for the fastest turnaround time of (test) results to support contact tracing," with a maximum acceptable turnaround time of seven days.

However, the state is aiming for a turnaround time of between 24 and 48 hours.

## SCHOOLS from A8

instruction to build the literacy and math skills critical for lifelong learning. Schools in remote and rural communities are less likely to contribute to the community spread of COVID-19

cases that cannot be traced and contained."

While student safety needs to be taken into consideration, Curtis said that returning to in-person instruction will have a notable impact on the quality of education as well.

"We all want to get kids

back in school as soon as possible," she said. "We know we can do our best teaching and learning when students are in the school with us."

Curtis said she feels that a community effort can see this happen by bringing COVID-19 cases down.

"So, to me it's very simple: make sure we abide by social distancing, washing our hands often and wearing our face coverings and masks," she said. "And it's dependent on whether everybody is taking responsibility for doing that together."

Starting today (July 30), the district will begin outreach efforts to collect information and community feedback on steps moving forward.

"We want to know what we can do to help support parents, families and guardians in ensuring their students get

the education they need - and what we can do to ensure care and connection," said Curtis.

More information on the school district's plans can be found online at [www.slane.k12.or.us](http://www.slane.k12.or.us).

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