



Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
Atlanta GA 30329-4027

May 4, 2020

The Honorable Doug Lamborn
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Lamborn:

Thank you for your letter to Vice President Mike Pence and me regarding your request to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to include first responders as a top priority in Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) testing. I am responding on behalf of CDC.

We share your urgency in ensuring first responders are prioritized during this pandemic, and here you can find some of our guidance, which includes first responders in the top priority: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/clinical-criteria.html. Because most people have mild illness and are able to recover at home without medical care, and there is no treatment specifically approved for people who have COVID-19, they may not need to be tested. Please note there is now a priority testing group under the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Response Coordination Center (NRCC). FEMA, and the priority testing group under NRCC, can assist you with concerns related to access to COVID-19 testing.

We have applicable guidance to share for your first responders, *Interim Guidance for Emergency Medical Services Systems and 911 Public Safety Answering Points for COVID-19 in the United States* (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html). This guidance applies to all first responders, including law enforcement, fire services, emergency medical services, and emergency management officials, who anticipate close contact with persons with confirmed or possible COVID-19 in the course of their work.

Regarding ensuring first responders are prioritized for COVID-19 testing, we are committed to supporting them as we work together to respond to this pandemic. CDC's COVID-19 diagnostic tests have been successfully verified and are currently being used in one or more public health laboratories in all 50 states plus the District of Columbia, the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Please see CDC's public health laboratory testing website www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/testing-in-us for daily updates. Private and commercial laboratories also continue to substantially increase their testing capacity.

As you know, CDC and its federal partners are providing regular briefings for Congressional members and staff to keep policy makers informed on these rapidly evolving developments. In addition, the CDC Washington Office is sending daily updates to Congressional staff with case counts and information about new guidance for key stakeholders and other important updates. Please contact [REDACTED] in our CDC Washington Office at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] if you have further questions.

Thank you, again, for the work you do to protect the American people and for your interest in this ongoing response. We appreciate your support, and that of Congress, as we all work together. CDC remains committed to protecting the American public in the face of this pandemic. A copy of this response has been sent to the co-signers of your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robert R. Redfield MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" at the beginning.

Robert R. Redfield, MD
Director, CDC