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City partnering with VDH, Sentara to offer testing in diverse neighborhoods

HARRISONBURG, Va. – The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and Sentara Healthcare, in partnership with the City of Harrisonburg, will bring a mobile COVID-19 testing effort to two neighborhoods in the coming days focused on increasing the amount of testing available in diverse communities.

Up to 100 tests will take place combined in the Mosby Court and Northeast neighborhoods on Saturday, May 2. The effort, which has already been conducted in other culturally diverse communities in Virginia, will help VDH gain a hyper-focused view on how different communities are being impacted by COVID-19. It also will help individuals who may otherwise not have easy access to tests understand how COVID-19 may be impacting their household.

"It is very important that residents in these communities take advantage of this free COVID-19 testing," Harrisonburg Mayor Deanna Reed said. "There will be interpreters on hand to help you with your questions, so please do not hesitate to come out if you need more information. We will only get through this if we all work together. Taking part in this weekend's effort is a key way of moving us in the right direction when it comes to testing and having a better understanding of what is happening in our community."

Testing will be available on a first-come, first-served basis for residents of the two communities. Individuals should have not been tested before, and should be experiencing at least one of these COVID-19 symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, fever and diarrhea. Only one person in each household will be allowed to be tested.

- **The City of Harrisonburg is urging all residents to follow VDH and Centers for Disease Control guidelines when it comes to responding to COVID-19. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or use the inside of your elbow. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. Avoid close contact with people who are sick, and stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care. Wear a mask when you go out.**

- **Put at least 6 feet of distance between yourself and other people at all times. All gatherings of more than 10 individuals have been banned in Virginia by Gov. Northam, and a Stay At Home order has instructed all to remain home as much as possible unless they are traveling for work, for medical care for themselves or a loved one, or essential travel such as grocery shopping or purchasing other needed supplies. Remember, even if you are not showing symptoms, you could still have COVID-19 and could pass it to someone else.**

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 54,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is available online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.