**HAMILTON COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH**
PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT.

Why is testing important?
Testing helps identify those who have COVID-19 so they can stay home (isolate) and not spread the disease to others. Testing helps healthcare professionals understand how many people have COVID-19 within our community. Testing also helps prepare our hospitals for potential COVID-19 admissions and helps our local health departments conduct contact tracing to prevent future spread of the virus.

Who needs to be tested?
If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone known to have COVID-19, you can get tested. *Exposure* is close contact (less than 6 feet), for more than 15 minutes, with someone who has COVID-19 (with or without a mask).

Do I need a test if I think I may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19?
No, but you DO need to stay home for 14 days (quarantine) whether you get tested or not. Even if you get a negative test result, you still need to say home for 14 days.

What should I do if I have been exposed?
Stay home for 14 days after exposure and maintain social distance (at least 6 feet) from others. Make sure to self-monitor for symptoms. Symptoms vary from person to person – they can include a lack of energy, loss of appetite or loss of taste or smell. Even if you get tested and have a negative result, you need to stay home for 14 days.

If I have a negative test after being exposed, do I still need to stay at home?
Yes! The incubation time for COVID-19 is often several days from exposure to symptom onset. This means it can take days for the symptoms of the disease to develop. A negative test on day 2, 3, or 4 does not mean a person will not develop symptoms on day 11, 12, 13, or even 14. Also, some infected people never develop symptoms. All contacts of a case of COVID-19 need to quarantine at home for 14-days from the last day of exposure to the virus.

If I am an employer, should I let a person who was exposed to COVID-19 return to work if they have a negative test result?
No. A negative test does not mean that a person in quarantine should return to work without staying home for the full 14 days. Symptoms can develop anytime within the 14-day incubation time, so a negative test on day 2, 3, or 4 does not mean a person will not develop symptoms on day 11, 12, 13, or even 14. All contacts of a case of COVID-19 need to quarantine at home for 14-days from the last day of exposure to the virus.

Why do I need to wait 72 hours after exposure to get a test?
This gives the virus enough time to build up in your system enough to show up in a test result.

How often do I need to be tested?
This depends on your symptoms, advice from your primary care doctor, or if a test is required by your employer before returning to work. According to the CDC, there is NO

When should I get it?	If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or have knowingly been exposed	If you have had COVID-19 and recovered	If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or have knowingly been exposed

What happens if I receive a negative result?
A negative result means that the virus that causes COVID-19 was not found in your sample. In the early or late stages of infection, it is possible that a low concentration of the virus will not be detected. Even with a negative result it is important to wear a mask in public, avoid close contact indoors with individuals outside your home and wash your hands frequently. If you receive negative results and are still under quarantine because you were a close contact to a confirmed case, you must remain in quarantine for the entire 14 days. You can become infectious at any time during the quarantine period.

What happens if I receive a positive result?
You may be contacted by your health care provider or by your local public health department. It is important to communicate with public health. Their job is to help prevent the spread of the virus. Public Health will ask you about who you were around and where you went so that they can identify others at risk of getting COVID-19. They will never ask you for sensitive personal information such as bank information or passwords. If you receive a call from a local health department- please tell the truth - you can directly impact the safety of your community and of your loved ones.

Depending on your local health department's capacity – contact tracing may take time. It is important to stay home so you do not get others sick if you receive a positive result. All contacts of a case of COVID-19 need to quarantine at home for 14-days from the last day of exposure to the virus.

Where can I find more information on COVID-19?
- **Indiana**: coronavirus.in.gov
- **Kentucky**: kycovid19.ky.gov
- **Ohio**: coronavirus.ohio.gov
- **United States**: cdc.gov/coronavirus
- Check your local health department website for additional details in your area