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# MEMORANDUM

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Date: August 7, 2020

To: The Honorable Chairman and Members  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator 

Re: **County Public Health Regional Testing Update**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update on the Board of Supervisors on the range of testing activity across Pima County.

To date, Pima County residents have undergone 149,726 tests, representing 12 percent of total tests performed in the State of Arizona. The vast majority, (124,127 or 83 percent) have been diagnostic PCR (polymerase chain reaction) tests. The percent of tests that are positive (test positivity rate) is an indicator tracked to estimate the degree of potential community transmission. This indicator peaked at 16 percent during the first and second week of April, and has peaked during the current surge reaching 15 percent on the last week in June but is now slowly declining to (9 percent) last week.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Health Department has been critical to the facilitation of testing by supplying test kits, working with clinical care and laboratory partners, providing testing through our contractors, and by serving as the payer for some of these services. In total, the County has had an active role in approximately 52,322 test across the County. The current availability of testing now includes sites throughout the vast geography of Pima County and includes 56 fixed locations and 12 event specific sites. (Attachment 1)

### Elder and Congregate Settings

Our initial approach has been to prioritize testing resources in a way that protects the most vulnerable populations, specifically individuals 65 years of age or older and/or the medically frail. Specifically we have focused on congregate living facilities serving elders since these have proven to have the highest burden of infection, the most serious medical illness and the greatest number of deaths. These types of facilities have received 80 percent of the Health Department's testing kits.

The State of Arizona has more recently accelerated an action the County had already begun – that is to focus testing resources on patients and staff in Medicare Certified Skilled Nursing Facilities. Health Department staff has been working with these facilities since early March, facilitating testing of residents and providing ongoing technical assistance with infection control and staffing support resources. Federal and state partners are in the process of deploying rapid testing units at 20 of 25 skilled nursing facilities across the County over the next 12 weeks. These facilities are testing their residents and employees on an as needed

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basis, although there are state and federal efforts to increase the frequency and periodicity of this testing. Regardless, the testing of residents and employees in conjunction with restrictive visitation policies has led to a decrease in the number and severity of COVID infections in these facilities.

Regional testing efforts have focused on increasing the availability of testing throughout Pima County. This has been achieved in partnership with a range of clinical and laboratory partners across our community. To date the State Health Department now lists more than 60 testing sites ([ADHS Testing Sites](#)) distributed throughout Pima County. Testing is generally free to the patients who meet CDC testing criteria, although there may be a charge for those who do not.

#### Public Health Testing Centers

In response to the national and state reports of delays in test processing and results as well as local concerns about the capacity of current testing sites to accommodate timely appointments, the Health Department has stood up two testing centers to date. These centers strive to provide clinical results in 48 to 72 hours.

The first is operated in collaboration with the Stadium District and our contractor Paradigm Labs and located the Kino Event Center. Since July 3, it had offered testing Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Interested patients make an appointment through a web portal and are scheduled promptly. They arrive at the facility, which has been appropriately modified for infection control and physical distancing, and undergo a nasopharyngeal test collection by a trained and licensed health care worker. The Paradigm team communicates negative results, while positive results are transmitted directly to the health department who then contact the patient to initiate the case investigation and contact tracing process. As of today, this site has performed 9,500 tests.

The second site at Ellie Towne Flowing Wells Community Center is operated collaboratively with Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation, and our contractor ASU Biodesign Institute. This site stood up on July 29 and operates on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. This site offers saliva testing. Patients register on a patient portal and receive their result via automated messaging. Positive results and conveyed to the Health Department at the same time for prompt action. To date this site has performed more than 1,000 tests.

A third fixed site came on-line on today at Morris K. Udall Park. This location operated collaboratively with the City of Tucson Parks Department and our contractor Paradigm Labs. This site will offer naso-pharyngeal testing. This testing site will be open Tuesday through Sunday from 8AM to 5 PM.

Between these three fixed-location sites, testing is available from 7 days week. Testing hours range from 8 AM through 7PM.

Drive-up Testing Sites

In an effort to further increase, the geographic availability and reach of testing to vulnerable communities throughout Pima County a variety of mobile efforts are underway. In cooperation with the Arizona Department of Health Services and the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs, Pima County will initiate a drive-through COVID-19 PCR testing in a variety of locations throughout the community. This effort is supported through the US Department of Health & Human Services and will bring 20,000 additional tests to this community. These events involve substantial involvement across multiple internal Pima County departments including Health, Emergency Management, Transportation, Natural Resources & Parks, the Library, Stadium District. The table below includes the dates and locations of these testing events.

Date	Community	Address	Time
8/11/2020	Ajo/Sells	Ajo High School, 111 N Well Rd, Ajo, AZ, 85321	1000-1500
8/12/2020	Three Points	Robles Junction Community Center, 16150 W Ajo Hwy, Tucson, AZ 85735	1400-1800
8/13/2020	Marana/Avra Valley/Picture Rocks	Wheeler Taft Public Library, 7800 N Schisler Dr, Tucson, AZ 85743	1000-1800
8/14/2020	Green Valley/Sahuarita	Green Valley Recreation Desert Hills Center, 2980 S Camino Del Sol, Green Valley, AZ 85622	0900-1600
8/15/2020	Vail/Corona De Tucson	Pima County Fairgrounds, 11300 S. Houghton Rd, Tucson, AZ 85747	1000-1800
8/16/2020	Catalina/Oro Valley	Coronado K-8 School, 3401 E Wilds Rd, Tucson, AZ 85739	1000-1800
8/17/2020	Rillito Racetrack	4502 N 1st Ave, Tucson, AZ 85718	1000-1800
8/18/2020	Sunnyside High School	1725 E Bilby Rd, Tucson, AZ 85706	1000-1800
8/19/2020	Tucson Rodeo Grounds	4823 S 6th Ave, Tucson, AZ 85714	1000-1800

These COVID-19 testing sites will be by drive up testing where the test is self-administered under medical supervision but in an individual's vehicle. The federal contractor will be responsible for specimen acquisition and handling, as well as laboratory processing and communication of results back to the patient. The result turnaround time with this contractor is approximately 4 days. The County and local partners will support the on-site logistics including traffic control and security. Preregistration is highly encouraged and available at [COVID Test Registration](#). Individuals need to enter the zip code of their preferred testing location for registration. On-site registration assistance will also be available.

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#### Mobile Testing for Vulnerable Populations

Mobile service approaches can bring testing services for vulnerable individuals not reached through current efforts. ADHS recently awarded the Health Department a grant to create an outreach model that combines mobile testing, using the Health Department mobile assets, with wrap-around services (e.g., transportation, food, housing assistance). Our approach is to partner with trusted community based organizations and faith communities test hard to reach low-income, minority, unhoused individuals while assessing their other social service needs. At full implementation, we anticipate testing 2000 hard-to-reach Pima County and connecting them with appropriate social support services.

Early pilot efforts with three churches in coordination with the Pima Interfaith Council have tested 235 individuals. An additional five sites are being finalized.

#### Linking Testing, Contact Tracing and Beyond

Testing is the first step in the epidemiological cascade that ideally culminates in contact tracing within 4 days of testing. When possible, testing results are available within 48 hours. Case investigation is then conducted within the next 24 hours, with case contacts identified through the case investigation process. Contacts are contacted within the next 24 hours for evaluation and appropriate recommendations about quarantine. Successful case investigation and contact tracing is dependent upon trusting relationships with the community, since positive cases are the source of epidemiological information about their own exposures as well as the names of their contacts.

In the last three weeks, Pima County has greatly expanded our case investigation and contract tracing capabilities. We anticipate having the capacity to initiate and complete case investigations and contact tracing on each case by the end of August. Currently, our contractor has hired over 130 people to support this endeavor. Our case investigators are identifying over two contacts per case that are then contacted.

#### Summary

Aside from mitigation measures (e.g. physical distancing, mask use, staying home when sick and wellness checks), testing for COVID-19 remains one of the most important interventions that the County can support in order to control the pandemic. Our efforts in this area have been nothing short of herculean and have resulted in some of the highest per capita test coverage in the state. We continue to refine this strategy and push our laboratory partners to deliver timely actionable results.

#### Attachment

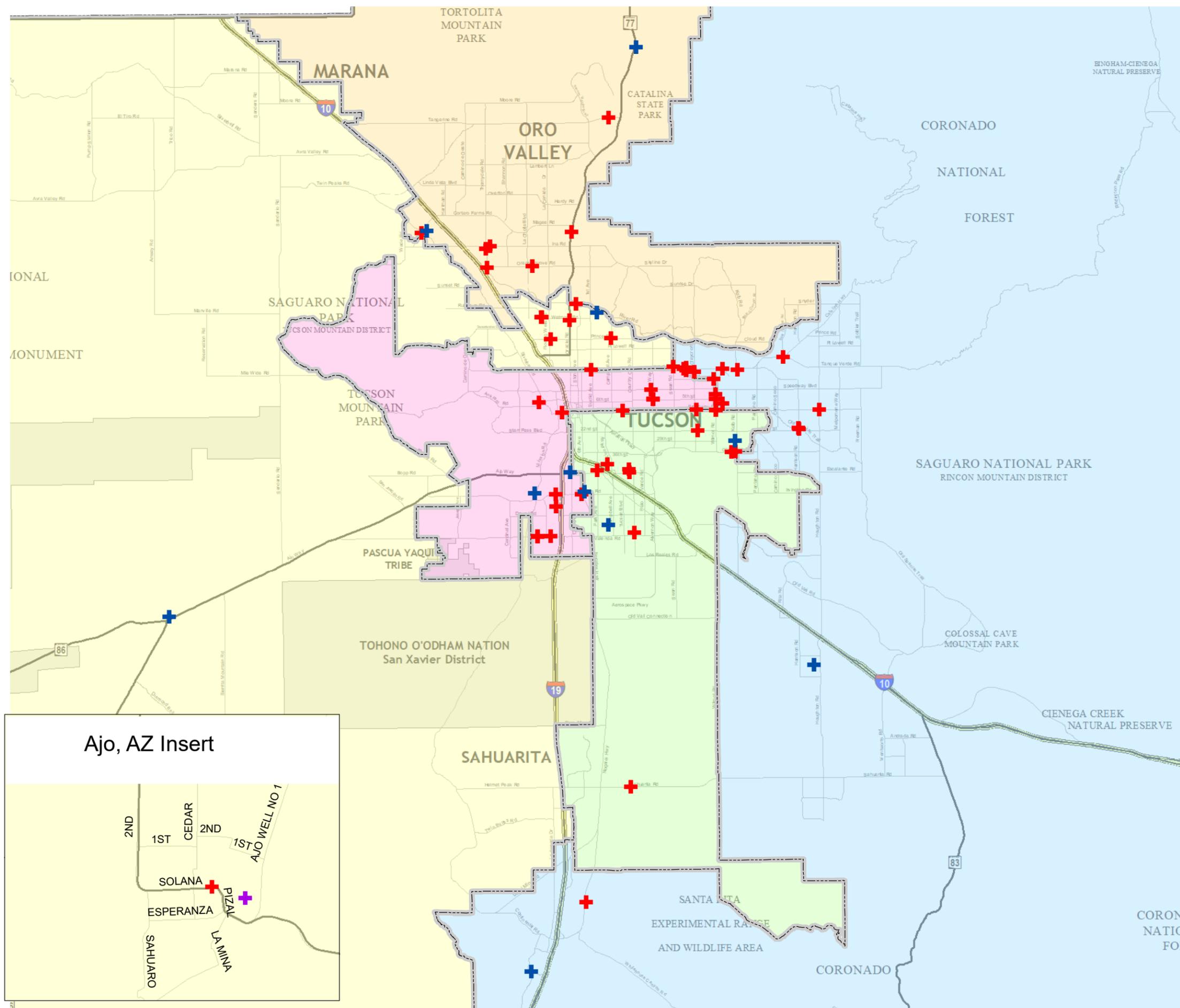
c: Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator  
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator and Chief Medical Officer,  
Health and Community Services  
Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator for Public Works  
Terry Cullen, MD, MS, Public Health Director, Pima County Health Department  
John Voorhees, Assistant County Administrator

# Pima County COVID-19 Testing Centers

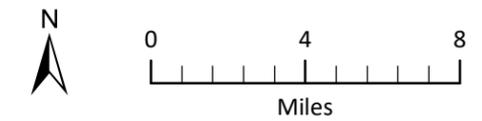
- + County operated test sites
- + Temporary/drive-through
- Indian Nations

## Board of Supervisors

- District 1
- District 2
- District 3
- District 4
- District 5



### Ajo, AZ Insert



GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Pima County Info. Tech. Dept.  
33 N. Stone Ave., 15th Floor  
Tucson, AZ 85701-1207  
phone: (520)740-6670  
fax: (520)798-3429

8/7/2020