

To: Vermont Joint Fiscal Committee
From: Michael K. Smith, Secretary, Agency of Human Services
Re: CRF Request for reallocation of \$8,500,000 for COVID-19 testing
Date: November 18th, 2020

The Agency of Human Services requests the following CRF reallocation.

Total Amount Requested: \$8,500,000. The Agency of Human Services is seeking additional funding for COVID-19 testing through December 30, 2020.

Response to the Pandemic: Testing for COVID-19 is essential to Vermont's response to containing and mitigating the spread of the virus. Vermont's aggressive testing and tracing program has helped to protect high risk congregate settings such as long-term care and correctional facilities. As stated in the November 5th memo to the Joint Fiscal Committee (JFC), the State continues to update the testing strategy to ensure that Vermonters have access to regularly scheduled community testing and to augment the surveillance testing that has taken place throughout the pandemic. As Vermonters begin to return indoors with the winter months approaching, it is more important than ever to increase testing capacity and accessibility for Vermonters.

Proposed Use of Reallocation: The state is continuing its work to increase the capacity and availability of testing throughout Vermont. In addition to the work cited in the [November 5th memo to JFC](#), the Agency of Human Services is adding additional testing capacity to address the recent rise in COVID positive cases and to proactively address upcoming events that the Department of Health has indicated are critical for containing and mitigating the spread of the virus. The proposed testing strategies are as follows:

- Creating testing availability for teachers and school staff (20,000+ individuals) the week before Thanksgiving.
- Following the Thanksgiving break, implement surveillance testing for teachers and school staff. One quarter of the teacher and staff population will be tested each week through December 30th (6 weeks).
- Increase the DOC weekly testing capacity.
- Increase the number of community testing locations (pop up sites) to cover all 14 hospital areas. Plan is to have capacity to administer up to 29,400 per week.

Vermont continues to lead the nation in per capita testing, but additional testing is needed to ensure that public health officials can monitor the spread of the virus, address outbreaks in communities, and make sure there is capacity to address community demand.



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The reallocation of funds will allow for the current testing capacity to continue, while augmenting surveillance testing, community testing opportunities, and protecting the most vulnerable populations in environments where the virus can spread rapidly.

Confirmation Proposal Complies with CARES Act CRF Guidelines: COVID-19 testing is explicitly stated as an acceptable use in the CRF guidance, and it has previously been vetted by both legislative counsel and the Administration's CRF contractor.

