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**MAYOR LORI LIGHTFOOT AND CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
ANNOUNCE CITYWIDE COVID-19 TESTING EXPANSION**

*Strategic partnerships with CORE and Curative will bring six new sites online by end of
May, marks critical step toward goal of 10,000 tests per day*

CHICAGO ---- Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today joined Chicago Department of Public Health Commissioner Dr. Allison Arwady, M.D., aldermen, and community and site partners to announce plans for the citywide expansion of COVID-19 testing, focusing on communities most impacted by the pandemic. Through strategic partnerships with Community Organized Relief Effort (CORE) and Curative-Korva, the city is working toward its goal to increase testing per day from roughly 3,000 tests to 10,000 tests – a critical benchmark to better understand the COVID-19 pandemic and an instrument to help guide the City's reopening strategy.

"Since the beginning of this public health crisis we have taken a data focused approach to combat COVID-19, and while this has led the City to make many difficult decisions, it has also meant saving thousands of lives and protecting our healthcare system," said Mayor Lightfoot. "As we look toward Chicago's gradual re-opening, a crucial piece will be increased testing so that we can better understand COVID-19 and know when to safely move to the next phase. I am pleased to be announcing several key partnerships today that will help the City work toward its critical testing goal with a key focus on the communities that need it most."

In partnership with the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and the Racial Equity Rapid Response (RERR) team, the City has identified six new testing sites throughout Chicago that will bring testing to communities disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 global pandemic. One of the six new testing sites, located in the parking lot at Guaranteed Rate Field, will specifically serve asymptomatic first responders, healthcare and other essential workers on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic in Chicago. The other five sites will be embedded within Chicago's Latinx and African American communities, where testing is most needed, to serve symptomatic residents – those site locations



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are Maria Saucedo Scholastic and Dr. Jorge Prieto Math and Science academies, Kennedy-King College, and Senka and Gately parks.

“Testing remains one of the most powerful mechanisms for us to understand the complexities of COVID-19 and its spread in the community,” said Dr. Arwady. “This creative solution will allow the City to increase testing capacity without putting additional stress on resources that are in limited demand, while allowing Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) to also increase efforts so we can reach a critical mass of tests.”

Sites have been selected not only based on community testing needs, but also on accessibility as the City has worked to identify locations near public transportation that are also easily accessible by vehicles, and ones that utilize large, pre-existing spaces to allow for proper social distancing. The site for first responders, healthcare and other essential workers will be a drive thru site, accessible by vehicle, while the five community sites have all been evaluated on the level of accessibility and will offer access to visitors via drive thru and walk up testing.

“Our collaborative model between local government and community organizations has proven to be expeditious to set up and efficient to execute,” said CORE Co-founders Sean Penn and Ann Lee. “We applaud Mayor Lightfoot for leading the effort to bring these testing sites to Chicago’s underserved communities while also providing critical testing to front line workers and first responders.”

The City will leverage two key partnerships with the Community Organized Relief Effort (CORE) and Curative-Korva to assist in the creation and operation of these six testing sites. With each of the six identified sites, CORE will help the City in identifying and procuring the necessary supplies as well as overseeing site operations including but not limited to recruiting and hiring staff and overseeing the safety and security on site. CORE will draw from best practices identified at their California and Atlanta testing sites and a pre-existing partnership with Curative. Curative will offer support in procuring the testing materials and managing the lab testing and data reporting. Curative will also be working alongside the City to create a registration site where symptomatic residents and asymptomatic first responders, healthcare and essential workers can register for a test – while pre-registration will not be required, it will be strongly recommended.

“We’re proud to work with the U.S. Air Force and cities and states across the country including Chicago, Los Angeles and Delaware to dramatically increase the public’s access to COVID-19 testing,” said Fred Turner, CEO, Curative. “It is critical that we understand the spread of COVID-19 throughout our communities, and systemic testing is our greatest tool in this effort. We developed our oral swab test to not only



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be easy-to-use, but also highly scalable with no requirement for excess PPE use so cities like Chicago can quickly scale testing to all residents.”

Additionally, the City will identify key partnerships with organizations in each community that will assist in communicating with residents to ensure all members of the community are able to be reached and to break down potential barriers to entry. Community partners will help promote employment opportunities at the sites and the hiring of staff members from within the local communities. Groups will also help with reporting test results, which will be available in English and Spanish on the online registration site and community partners will work alongside Curative to reach residents without access to a computer.

“We are pleased to join Mayor Lightfoot in this effort to bring increased testing capacity to neighborhoods that are being disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 virus,” said Yusef Jackson, Board Secretary of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition. “We look forward to a collaborative partnership as this effort moves forward to find meaningful solutions for residents while reducing the further spread of the COVID-19 virus, particularly in our communities that have been disproportionately impacted.”

This announcement comes on the heels of Mayor Lightfoot’s recently revealed “Protecting Chicago” five-phase reopening framework. The framework, which is meant to gradually reopen the City’s economy while preventing a new surge in COVID-19 cases, relies heavily upon increased testing to move between the phases – specifically two and three. Through these partnerships and bringing additional testing sites online, the City will be able to reach its benchmark of 4,500 tests per day, one of the metrics to move between the second and third phase. Ultimately, the City continues to build toward the goal of 10,000 tests per day to more effectively understand the universe of the COVID-19 pandemic and more efficiently move through re-opening phases.

As part of the City’s larger efforts to be prepared for a potential reopening of the city, on April 23, Mayor Lightfoot announced the creation of the COVID-19 Recovery Taskforce to advise city government as economic recovery planning efforts get underway in the wake of COVID-19. For more information about the reopening framework and efforts the City is taking in its COVID-19 response, text COVID19 to 78015, email coronavirus@chicago.gov or visit Chicago.gov/coronavirus.

ABOUT CORE

CORE (Community Organized Relief Effort) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving lives and strengthening communities affected by or vulnerable to crisis. Within hours of the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, founder Sean Penn mobilized a



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powerful network to take immediate action. More than 10 years later, CORE continues to lead sustainable programs focused on four pillars: emergency relief, disaster preparedness, environmental resiliency and community building. The organization has expanded beyond Haiti to support communities in The Bahamas, Puerto Rico and the United States. CORE has taken a leadership position in the COVID-19 response to provide free testing for high-risk individuals and vulnerable communities. More information: www.coreresponse.org/COVID19 and follow CORE on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter.