



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR-PRESIDENT Sharon Weston Broome

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Mayor Broome Announces Community Testing Center for COVID-19

Baton Rouge, LA – March 16, 2020 – Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome announced the opening of a community testing center Monday, as part of her coordinated effort with area healthcare providers to respond to COVID-19. The Mayor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness is standing up the drive through testing center to help alleviate some of the pressure on area emergency rooms and healthcare facilities.

These types of centers have been successful in other parts of the country and world. Centers like this help reduce the risk of exposure to patients, visitors and medical staff by eliminating the need for someone to leave their vehicle and interact with medical personnel.

The center is being staffed by clinicians from Baton Rouge Clinic, Baton Rouge General, Ochsner-Baton Rouge, Our Lady of the Lake, and Woman’s Hospital.

Any individual with signs or symptoms of the flu or coronavirus must call their medical provider for a referral to the community testing center. Only patients with a provider order, faxed to the testing center, will be administered a COVID-19 test. Upon arrival, patients will show their provider order, state issued ID,

insurance card, and remain in their vehicle while healthcare professionals administer the test. If you are bringing a child for testing, the guardians name must match the name on the provider order.

Individuals who do not have a primary doctor should call 211 for support in connecting to a healthcare provider.

Processing the tests will take three to four businesses days, with the results sent to the health care provider who ordered the test. While awaiting results, patients, when possible, should isolate themselves in a separate room, and use a separate bathroom. If symptoms worsen, patients should contact their healthcare provider.

The community testing center will be located outside Baton Rouge General-Mid City Campus, accessible from Wabash Street. It will operate Monday through Friday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., with those hours subject to change. Currently there are limited resources to test for COVID-19, but more are being secured. This is why only patients with a provider order will be given a COVID-19 test.

Baton Rouge Police will be on site to provide traffic management and security.

“The public should take seriously the COVID-19 pandemic as people in Louisiana have already lost their lives. This is a fluid situation but we are prepared,” said Mayor Broome. “I strongly urge the public to practice good hygiene and social distancing by avoiding crowds. I will enforce Governor Edwards’ ban on gatherings of a certain size.”

Slowing the spread of COVID-19 is essential to protecting lives. Not everyone who is infected will have symptoms or need to be hospitalized, but some will. The aim is to keep the number of cases reported each day as low as possible, so that area healthcare facilities do not become overwhelmed.

Social distancing are actions that stop or slow the spread of a highly contagious disease like COVID-19. Social distancing measures include limiting large groups of people coming together, closing buildings and canceling events. The CDC recommends staying 6 feet away from other individuals.

Individuals showing symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, fever, or shortness of breath) should call their medical provider and schedule a screening.

Other Actions taken by Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome

- March 12, 2020 – postponed permitted events in East Baton Rouge Parish until further notice.
- March 12, 2020 – signed executive order declaring public health emergency in East Baton Rouge Parish and directing the Mayor’s Office of

Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness to coordinate the City-Parish's response.

- March 13, 2020 – signed an Administrative Regulation Leave Policy specific to COVID-19, providing for telework and other arrangements for City-Parish personnel.
- March 13, 2020 – signed an executive order aligned with the Public Service Commission to ensure no public utilities are disconnected in East Baton Rouge Parish.
- March 13, 2020 – signed executive order restricting all City-Parish related travel until further notice.
- March 14, 2020 – signed a parish-wide Emergency Disaster Declaration, declaring a local public health emergency in East Baton Rouge Parish.
- Income eligible residents can receive rent and mortgage assistance from the Office of Social Services.
- Asking landlords to demonstrate compassion during this season as it relates to potential evictions.

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