

COVID-19 assessment centres opening at the National Arts Centre and McNabb Community Centre

This is a joint message from the following Ottawa COVID-19 Testing Taskforce partners: The Ottawa Hospital, Ottawa Public Health, City of Ottawa, National Arts Centre, Sandy Hill Community Health Centre, Somerset West Community Health Centre, and Centretown Community Health Centre.

Ottawa – November 13, 2020 – To better meet the needs of Ottawa’s downtown core, two COVID-19 assessment centres will open at the National Arts Centre (NAC) parking garage and McNabb Community Centre.

The current Drive-Thru Assessment Centre on Coventry Road will be relocated to City Hall and the NAC, which will begin operations on Thursday, November 19. The COVID-19 Drive-Thru Assessment Centre at the National Arts Centre will operate in the parking garage, providing shelter, comfort and warmth to Ottawa residents and staff over the winter months. To accommodate resources and staff transitioning to the site, the Coventry Drive-Thru Assessment Centre will formally close on Monday, November 16 at 6 p.m. To ensure residents in the downtown core, who do not have access to a car, can also access a COVID-19 test within walking distance, the COVID-19 Assessment Centre at McNabb Community Centre will open the following week.

“The Ottawa Hospital is committed to supporting Ottawa’s collective efforts to ensure residents have access to convenient and accessible COVID-19 testing options,” said Cameron Love, President and CEO of the Ottawa Hospital. “Both the NAC and McNabb Assessment Centres exemplify the ongoing collaboration between Ottawa’s health care system and community partners, each with the unified goal to serve and safeguard our city.”

These sites are operated by The Ottawa Hospital in partnership with Ottawa Public Health, the City of Ottawa and the NAC.

“I am pleased we have found a new site at the NAC and another one at the McNabb Community Centre,” said Mayor Jim Watson. “I want to thank our partners who have worked hard to make these downtown testing sites a reality. These two locations provide needed access to testing for our residents.”

“The performing arts offer emotional respite and encouragement to people in good times and bad,” said Christopher Deacon, President and CEO of the National Arts Centre. “Supporting the

health of our community aligns perfectly with the NAC's approach to the challenges posed by this pandemic. We're very proud to collaborate with Ottawa's health care system during the coming winter months."

As is the case everywhere in Ontario, it will be necessary to make an appointment before coming to an assessment centre for a COVID-19 test. Online booking will be made available through [a website](#) prior to the appointment and for those who do not have internet access, reservations can be made by calling 613-737-8193.

COVID-19 Drive-Thru Assessment Centre at the National Arts Centre (with validation of registration taking place in the City Hall parking garage)

Location: City Hall Parking Garage, Elgin Street Entrance

NAC Parking Garage, Albert Street Entrance

Hours: Seven days a week, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Residents will first validate their registration at the City Hall parking garage (P1 level) at the time of their scheduled booking. They will complete their registration process in their vehicle. They will then drive the short distance to the National Arts Centre parking garage entrance on Albert Street to undergo testing. No parking fees will apply.

COVID-19 Assessment Centre at McNabb Community Centre

Location: 180 Percy Street

Hours: Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Individuals who do not have phone or internet access may book a future appointment in-person at the COVID-19 Assessment Centre at McNabb Community Centre.

Testing at Ottawa's Community Health Centres:

Earlier in November, the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre, Somerset West Community Health Centre and Centretown Community Health Centre began providing COVID-19 testing to members of the downtown Ottawa community.

All three Community Health Centres (CHCs) serve and prioritize individuals who experience barriers accessing other COVID-19 testing sites in the city, whether that is due to language or accessibility barriers. The CHCs provide COVID-19 testing, health assessments and health education, and have a limited number of appointments available on a daily basis. Online booking is available through a website prior to the appointment day and individuals who do not have internet access may book an appointment over the phone by calling 613-789-1500 (Centretown CHC and Sandy Hill CHC) or 613-327-8145 (Somerset West CHC).

Engaging with people most disproportionately impacted by COVID-19:

Opening the NAC, McNabb Community Centre and three of Ottawa's CHCs to COVID-19 testing is part of the Ottawa COVID-19 Testing Taskforce's larger testing strategy to engage people most disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Ottawa's CHCs and Ottawa Public Health (OPH) have engaged in targeted outreach and community-based testing within some of the city's hardest hit communities. OPH data guides the community testing response to individuals, families and communities experiencing higher rates of COVID-19. These communities are provided with local approaches to education, access to testing where and when it is needed, and additional supports while individuals and families remain in isolation.

This community-based model is consistent with what other large cities have already determined to be effective in reaching people most disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Additionally, core elements of the model were designed with the community itself, and this locally coordinated and comprehensive approach:

- Addresses accessibility through flexible, responsive and local testing options;
- Enables coordinated outreach and education; and
- Activates a network of providers to offer wrap-around care for those who must remain isolated.

Community testing response teams have been active in Ottawa's shelters, congregate housing settings, and rooming houses where transmission of COVID-19 has occurred, as well as in neighborhoods experiencing higher rates of COVID-19. This work happens largely behind the scenes, but is nevertheless a critical component of the Taskforce's ongoing testing strategy.

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