



Y U R O K T R I B E

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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*COVID-19 test available once a week in Redwood Hotel Casino parking lot
Yurok Tribe collaborates with Del Norte County to bring important service to the community*

Starting on Wednesday, September 2, the Yurok Tribe will be offering drive-through COVID-19 tests in the Redwood Hotel Casino parking lot.

The Yurok Tribe's Incident Command team and Public Health Officer collaborated with Del Norte County to bring this much-needed resource to the reservation. The free tests will be offered every Wednesday between 9am and 2pm until the end of September. The highly accurate testing procedure is straightforward and painless. This service is available to tribal and non-tribal residents, who are not experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Individuals presenting with signs of COVID-19 must seek testing through their primary healthcare provider. Potential symptoms include: fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. Residents are asked to use the following web link to make an appointment for a test:

<https://www.projectbaseline.com/study/covid-19/>. For assistance with registering for a screening, please call Melissa Jarnaghan at 707-457-7201 or email her at mjarnaghan@yuroktribe.nsn.us.

Individuals can register at the site too if there are open appointments.

Public health experts universally agree that testing, in combination with practicing all of the personal safety recommendations, plays a pivotal role in preventing the spread of the virus.

“As a safety precaution, the Yurok Tribal Council encourages all residents to register for a COVID-19 test. By getting tested, you are taking an action that will keep those in your home and the whole community healthy,” said Joseph L. James, the Chairman of the Yurok Tribe. “We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with the county on providing this crucial service to our community at no cost.”

“We know that a certain percentage of COVID-19 carriers do not experience any symptoms, but still transmit the illness. Taking the test is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of the virus,” added Yurok Public Health Officer Angie Brown. “In terms of detecting the disease, the type of test that we are offering is proven to be one of the most reliable forms of testing.”

“Providing convenient testing is one part of a comprehensive plan to address the many facets of this public health emergency. In addition to safeguarding your loved ones, getting screened for COVID-19 will complement the Incident Command team’s effort to protect our most vulnerable citizens, including tribal elders. Those who get tested are directly helping to preserve our traditional culture, lifelines and heritage,” explained Yurok Incident Commander Serene Hayden.

Here is how the testing process works. On the day of the test, drive up to the first cone, where healthcare professionals will confirm the appointment. Please keep all vehicle windows rolled up at this point. At the second stop, another staff member, speaking loud enough to be heard through a closed window, will ask for your name and will put your completed registration paperwork on your windshield. At the third station, roll the driver’s side window down a couple inches to accept a small swab in a container. A trained medical staff member will walk you through the process of self-collecting a small mucus sample from the middle of the nasal cavity. Place the swab in the receptacle and return it to the attendant. The test only takes a few seconds and causes almost no discomfort. The confidential test results are sent out within one week. Verily, the state contractor facilitating the COVID-19 screening, has the capacity to complete 200 tests per day.

COVID-19 is a highly contagious virus that has infected nearly 6 million people in the United States. The illness represents an especially elevated risk to elderly individuals and those with preexisting medical conditions. To date, there have been no confirmed COVID-19 cases on the Yurok Reservation. However, Yurok citizens living off the reservation have suffered from the illness and were offered assistance from the Tribe. The Tribe has resources for all tribal citizens who test positive for the virus.

Recently, the number of COVID-19 infections has substantially increased in the Humboldt County area. Due to the increasing presence of the virus near the reservation, the Yurok Public Health Officer strongly recommends that residents take advantage of the testing opportunity and follow all personal safety recommendations:

- Maintain a minimum of 6-feet of personal space from individuals outside of the household
- Always wear a face covering outside of the home (Wash reusable mask frequently, only use single-use masks once)
- Shelter in place – traveling outside of the county is not recommended
- Due to the reservation closure order, accepting guests from outside of the area is not permitted
- Do not attend gatherings large or small, including visiting extended family and friends
- Avoid all contact with anyone exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms
- Disinfect common touch points in the home
- Practice cough and sneeze etiquette (cover your sneezes and coughs with your arm. Wash hands immediately after cough or sneeze for additional protection)
- Perform frequent handwashing – Wash hands every two hours for 20-30 seconds with water and soap)
- If you are ill, please self-isolate and contact your medical provider
- Reminder: If you feel even slightly unwell and have one or more of the common symptoms of COVID-19, it is advised that you stay home from work

On March 13, the Yurok Tribal Council proactively issued a state of emergency declaration to activate the Tribe's Incident Command Team, which has been working around the clock to address the many elements of this emergency. The Tribe has enacted a series of safety orders to curb the spread of COVID-19. The Tribal Council has also provided financial relief to tribal citizens and business owners. Currently, the reservation is closed to non-emergency personnel and all tribal offices and non-essential businesses are closed to the public. Additionally, there is an active order requiring all residents to wear masks when outside of the home.

What: Free COVID-19 testing for all residents

Where: Redwood Hotel Casino parking lot

When: 9am to 2pm on September 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30

For COVID-19 updates, please visit the Yurok Tribe's social media pages or Yurokoes.org.