

DRAFT

Resolution #: _____

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING EXPANSION OF COMMUNITY TESTING AND CONTACT TRACING FOR COVID-19.

- WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic poses a significant public health risk, with more than 640,000 documented cases in the United States and more than 30,000 documented fatalities;
- WHEREAS, the elderly and individuals with chronic conditions are especially vulnerable;
- WHEREAS, the ease of transmission and the rate of death associated with the COVID-19 virus require rigorous and sustained efforts to prevent, track, and treat the virus;
- WHEREAS, the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in more than 10,000 local residents in Buncombe County losing their jobs;
- WHEREAS, Buncombe County took early action to slow the spread of Covid-19, being the first county in North Carolina to declare a local emergency urging residents to avoid non-essential public gatherings and issuing a Stay Home–Stay Safe order;
- WHEREAS, current documented cases of Covid-19 are lower in Buncombe County than most other metropolitan regions of North Carolina and the country;
- WHEREAS, data from South Korea, Taiwan, Iceland, and other regions demonstrate that community testing is essential to suppressing Covid-19 while enabling the safe reopening of local businesses, schools and community activities;
- WHEREAS, a nation-wide shortage of testing kits and laboratory testing capacity have greatly limited the amount of Covid-19 testing conducted to date and supply chain constraints are expected to remain a significant challenge;
- WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners seeks to restore operations of local business sectors, community organizations, schools and other education institutions as soon as possible when it can be done in a safe manner and community testing is an essential component in that process;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of Buncombe County, North Carolina, as follows:

1. This Board requests staff to:

- a. Develop short-term and long-term plans for expanded Covid-19 community testing in Buncombe County to include but not limited to front-line medical and first responder staff, employees in Essential jobs that require a high degree of interaction with the public, such as cashiers at grocery stores and staff in nursing homes and long-term care facilities, and residents with documented symptoms of Covid-19;
 - b. Develop protocols regarding the types of tests we will use and how they will be used with the goal of accessing Covid-19 tests that can provide accurate, same-day results, while recognizing that tests that require more time for laboratory analysis may need to be utilized in the interim due to supply constraints,
 - c. Prepare strategies to secure access to antibody testing, which can ascertain which individuals have already experienced Covid-19 and may have immunity, as the technology is scientifically validated and supplies become available;
 - d. Continue and expand contact tracing;
 - e. Provide isolation and care services for residents who are known to have contracted or have a high likelihood of having contracted Covid-19 and are not able to safely isolate themselves in their own home;
 - f. Expand prevention and early detection efforts among high-risk individuals and vulnerable communities;
 - g. Develop protocols for utilizing testing as part of an overall plan for safely reopening the local economy and community; and
 - h. Seek collaborations with entities including but not limited to NCDHHS; local governments in Western NC; funding entities; health care providers and systems; and community-based organizations.
2. The Board authorizes up to \$_____ in funding the planning and start-up phases of expanded community testing;

This the 16th of April, 2020.

ATTEST

Lamar Joyner, Clerk

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FOR THE COUNTY OF BUNCOMBE

By: _____
Brownie Newman, Chairman

APPROVED AS TO FORM

County Attorney