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Agency/Point of Contact: Minnesota Department of Health/Margaret Kelly, Deputy Commissioner

Title of Request: Testing Operations

Date: 1/31/2023 **Request Amount:** \$ 84,400,000

Expenditure Time Period: 6/1/2022 to 2/15/2023 (no later than 2/15/2023)

Brief Summary of Request: (Summary must be complete on this page with supporting information attached)

This request amends a previous request for COVID-19 Management Funds that was approved on June 22, 2022.

The Minnesota Department of Health is requesting ~~\$29.7~~ \$84.4 million to continue its state-wide and community-based testing strategies. Since June 2020, we have been offering barrier free testing throughout the state, including enhanced testing in congregate settings such as long-term care, group homes, residential facilities, homeless shelters, and corrections.

Testing remains a key tool to slow the spread of the virus. It is critical that particularly in our most vulnerable settings including childcare and congregate care that we retain our testing infrastructure and options that best meet the needs of Minnesotans. MDH is working closely with the federal government, health care systems, pharmacies and local public health to fill gaps in the existing testing infrastructure and ensure Minnesotans have access to COVID tests.

Access to testing continues to be an important tool to minimize the impact of COVID-19. This request is to make funds available to maintain a limited number of state-run testing locations across the state and to provide tests and testing to high-risk populations and settings. Funds will be used to operate state run testing sites across the state, and address all related costs at these testing locations, including leases, tests and test providers, MDH and contracted staffing, and site logistics. These sites will continue to offer no-barrier testing to Minnesotans and some will also have a treatment component making them test-to-treat sites. The state-run testing sites provide access to testing for those who may have barriers to testing on their own.

Funds will also be used to supply tests, including rapid OTC tests, and on-site testing for high-risk settings such as incarcerated populations at Department of Corrections jails and local correctional facilities, and persons at shelters, long-term care facilities and childcare centers. Tests will also be provided through partners serving populations with barriers to testing including the COVID Community Coordinators (CCCs), Local Public Health, and Tribal Health. It will also allow us to continue to distribute tests in the community to meet a variety of needs while at the same time promoting and educating persons with insurance about the provider-covered options available to them in the private marketplace. In addition, funding will support the continuation of our mail order program that sends rapid OTC tests directly to an individual's home. Funding will cover the costs of operating testing distribution sites, testing supplies, shipping and MDH and contracted staffing.

Minnesota's testing program will continue to offer barrier free access to testing for all Minnesotans while also working to close gaps to access to those at high risk for severe illness.

Margaret Kelly
Digitally signed by Margaret Kelly
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Department Head Signature

1/31/2023
Date