MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Please complete this form in accordance with the process instructions.

American Rescue Plan (ARP) State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) Request Form

Agency/Point of Contact: Minnesota Department of Health/Margaret Kelly

Title of Request: Rapid At Home Testing Program

Date: 12/8/2021 **Request Amount:** $ 2,490,000

Expenditure Time Period: 12/8/2021 **to** 6/30/2023 (no later than 6/30/2023)

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

The Minnesota Department of Health is requesting $2.49 million to continue and expand community based testing strategies. Since June 2020, we have been offering barrier free testing throughout the state, including testing in response to outbreaks, enhanced testing in congregate settings such as long term care, group homes, residential facilities, homeless shelters, and corrections. This fall we expanded availability of testing at K12 schools and child care facilities. In addition MDH continues to offer access to no cost barrier free testing throughout the state at community based testing locations with both PCR and rapid antigen tests.

Since early September 2021, new cases of SARS-CoV-2 have been increasing, from fewer than 5,000 cases per week during late July to more than 30,000 cases per week in mid-November. The statewide positivity rate (the proportion of tests that are positive) has increased during that same time period from about 5% and is now hovering around 10%. In addition, Minnesota was the second state in the country to identify a case of the Omicron variant. It is unknown how this new variant will impact Minnesota, but early data indicate it is more transmissible that other variants.

Testing remains a key tool to slow the spread of the virus. Up to 45% of cases are asymptomatic. People who develop symptoms are most contagious in the days prior to symptom onset. Given the current rates of community transmission, additional testing availability is critical to ensure barrier free and easy access. Particularly as Minnesotans are returning to the workplace in larger numbers and kids are back in school, Minnesotans must be able to continue to test regularly to identify cases early in order to take the proper precautions to slow the spread of the disease.

This funding will allow us to expand the state's testing program to include broader distribution of rapid over the counter tests - prioritizing those Minnesotans with the greatest barriers to accessing over the counter rapid tests. Funding will cover the costs of operating testing distribution sites, testing supplies, shipping and staffing costs.

Margaret Kelly Digitally signed by Margaret Kelly Date: 2021.12.08 13:28:59 -06'00'

Department Head Signature

Date