



For Immediate Release

Ford Airport to Serve as COVID-19 Testing Site

Grand Rapids, Michigan, December 9, 2020 – To better serve travelers and the West Michigan community, the Gerald R. Ford International Airport has partnered with TACKL Health to host a new COVID-19 testing site beginning Thursday, Dec. 10 – one of the first airports in the nation to do so.

The drive-up, no-appointment-needed site will offer both rapid antigen tests, which provide results in 15 minutes, and molecular PCR tests, which provide results in 24-48 hours. The testing site will initially be open from 4 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day. Those wishing to be tested do not need to have COVID-19 symptoms or a doctor's referral.

“As we head deeper into the holiday season, we hope this service will give community members greater peace of mind before traveling or visiting loved ones,” said Stephen Clark, director of business development for the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority. “With so many test sites in West Michigan overloaded, this new site should help increase testing capabilities, especially for those who might not otherwise qualify.

“The site is open to all in the community, not just those traveling through the Ford Airport. For our passengers, we hope the tests will let them fly more confidently. We look forward to partnering with TACKL to offer this service to the community.”

Airport officials emphasized how the onsite COVID testing will be particularly helpful for business travelers visiting international destinations where the PCR molecular test is required before entry.

“We know our business community is anticipating a return to international travel in the coming year, so having resources at the Airport to make their journey easier will be critical in the coming months,” Clark said. “Armed with test results, travelers will be able to board a flight in West Michigan with the confidence they can meet screening requirements in the country of their final destination.”

Testing will take place in the Airport's economy lot and will be on a first-come, first-served basis. When guests arrive, they will need to fill out an intake form using a QR code. If they are unable to access the form or need assistance, a technician will be available at the testing site.

Cost for the testing will be \$75 for the rapid antigen, \$125 for the molecular PCR or \$160 for both tests. TACKL Health does not currently accept health insurance.

TACKL Health provides full-service workplace health and COVID-19 solutions, including rapid mobilization for large-scale COVID-19 testing. The company is partnering with Grand Rapids-based NxGen MDx for lab testing.

TACKL is currently working with other airports, including Cleveland Hopkins International Airport and Pittsburgh International Airport, to launch similar testing sites.

“We couldn’t be more thankful to the entire team at Gerald R. Ford International Airport,” said Lauren Hetzel, TACKL’s vice president for business development. “From our first conversation, the Airport expressed its heartfelt desire to help as many people in the community as possible.

“Our goal at TACKL Health has always been to help businesses continue to operate safely. Through this partnership, we’re able to accomplish even more than that. From the families who can safely reunite and connect with their loved ones to the person who can return confidently to work knowing they’re COVID-19 free, it’s the human aspect that makes this endeavor with the Airport truly meaningful on multiple levels.”

For more information on the testing site, visit tacklhealth.com/grr.

About the Ford Airport

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport is the second busiest airport in Michigan, serving business and leisure travelers with nonstop and connecting flights on six airlines. The Ford Airport is managed and operated by the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority. For more information, visit www.flyford.org or follow the airport on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @FlyGRFord.

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