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Putnam County Holds Fourth Drive-Through COVID-19 Testing Event

APRIL 7, 2020 BY [ABBY LUBY](#)

Drivers and passengers in about 25 cars lined up in front of the Putnam County Department of Health in Brewster Tuesday to get tested for COVID-19.

A team of public health nurses stood ready to get a sample of saliva from county residents who had registered for the testing. The samples are being sent to the Wadsworth Laboratory in Albany. Results are expected in one to three days.

“We have 100 tests for people who responded to our online application,” said Putnam County Health Commissioner Dr. Michael J. Nesheiwat. “This is our



Public health nurses testing Putnam County residents for COVID-19 Tuesday afternoon at the Department of Health in Brewster.

fourth drive-through testing event.”

Previous drive-through tests were held Mar. 14, 18 and 21. As of Tuesday, the Putnam County Department of Health had confirmed 402 lab-confirmed COVID-19 cases.

About 200 Putnam County residents had submitted an application to get tested. The county’s Department of Health called all 200 applicants beforehand to make sure they had COVID-19 symptoms. Out of those, 100 residents were selected for today’s testing. Before Tuesday, 1,381 Putnam County residents have been tested for the virus.

Those who test positive will be contacted by the county Department of Health and advised to call their doctor for further evaluation.

“If residents are symptomatic, they will either be treated at home or, depending on their symptoms, they could be sent to the emergency room,” said Nesheiwat.

The department will also ascertain if people testing positive have been out in public in case others need to be notified.

Testing was done from 2 to 4 p.m. in half-hour blocks, allowing for 25 cars every 30 minutes. Two teams of public health nurses handled two cars at a time. It took two minutes from the time a car pulled into the Department of Health driveway to be identified and tested.

One person from Cold Spring said he had been having symptoms for a couple of weeks. Another from Lake Peekskill said he had symptoms for three or four days. A Brewster resident had run a fever and thought it was just a head cold.

Nesheiwat said those who are able might reach out to the elderly who live alone.

“That kind of supportive care means a lot, especially if they need special services. This is a time of high emotional stress,” he said.

Anyone with symptoms or direct contact with a person who had a lab-confirmed positive case and would like to be tested should visit www.covid19screening.health.ny.gov or call the state Department of Health hotline at 1-888-364-3065 to complete an assessment.