



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

GOVERNOR NED LAMONT

March 5, 2020

Dr. Robert R. Redfield, MD
Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road, NE
Mail Stop D-14
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Dr. Redfield:

On behalf of the residents of the State of Connecticut, thank you and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for the consistent updates and for keeping an open line of communication with the states concerning the public health response to COVID-19. Partnership with the CDC is critical to ensure a unified response from the federal level to the state and local level, where the impact of policy decisions is felt the most. To that end, I write both to share my concerns regarding the recent guidance relating to testing Patients Under Investigation (PUI), and to request additional testing kits to support the heightened demand for COVID-19 testing in Connecticut.

It is my duty in concert with Connecticut's Department of Public Health to communicate accurately and clearly with the public, ensure the state's continuity of operations remains intact, and ensure that our healthcare system is able to withstand new demands related to responding to coronavirus. Testing guidelines are critical to this effort. I am concerned that the most recent guidelines issued by CDC cast too broad a net at this point in time and will not ensure that the right people are being tested.

The most recent guidance allows for clinicians to use their judgment to determine if a patient has signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19, and whether the patient should be tested. The guidance suggests that decisions on which patients receive testing should be based on the local epidemiology of COVID-19. While on the surface, this approach seems reasonable, the resources available to meet this new demand are simply not adequate to ensure people most at risk get tested.

Connecticut, like many other states, received test kits capable of testing hundreds of people. To date, our Connecticut Department of Public Health Laboratory has prioritized the use of those tests to those who have tested negative for influenza and who are sick with fever, cough, shortness of breath and other symptoms of pneumonia or Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS). Public health experts have advised my administration that this new guidance could lead to an unrealistic expectation that many whose symptoms and signs are common to other illnesses will receive a test for which the state has a very limited supply.

Therefore, in order to maintain alignment with national messaging, I respectfully request the ability to access additional testing kits to support the heightened demand for COVID-19 testing in Connecticut.

We must assure the public that we are using our resources wisely, and this is especially true when it is public health as the main concern. Again, thank you for your tremendous efforts to contain and mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on our country and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ned Lamont". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ned" being more prominent than the last name "Lamont".

Ned Lamont
Governor