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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

To: All Media
From: Joel Strasz, Public Health Officer – Bay County Health Department
Date: May 16, 2022
Re: **WITH CASES RISING LOCALLY, BAY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT PROVIDES RAPID TEST KITS**

BAY COUNTY, MICHIGAN – With cases of COVID-19 increasing in the past three weeks, the Bay County Health Department (BCHD) will provide free rapid antigen tests at the Bay County Health Department located at 1200 Washington Ave in downtown Bay City during normal business hours beginning Monday, May 16. No appointment will be necessary. The tests will be available per person and while supplies last.

As COVID-19 continues to increase with the presence of the highly contagious Omicron variants, getting vaccinated and boosted, as well as wearing a well-fitting mask over your mouth and nose in indoor public settings or crowds is crucial to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. [Vaccinations](#) remain the best way to protect a person from COVID and are a preventative measure to reduce severity of illness and risk of hospitalization or, even, death. BCHD also recommends upgrading your mask to a high filtration respirator, like KN95's, for ideal protection. Free KN95 masks have been made available throughout Michigan as part of the state's Mask Up, Mask Right campaign. Find additional distribution sites at [Michigan.gov/MaskUpMichigan](https://www.michigan.gov/MaskUpMichigan) or call the COVID-19 hotline at 888- 535-6136.

If you do test positive for COVID-19, antiviral medications may help you recover from COVID-19 faster or prevent you from becoming seriously ill. The medication can boost the immune system, helping it fight off COVID-19 infection. Antivirals are prescribed after a person has tested positive for COVID-19 and within 5 days of symptom onset. Contact your provider to discuss if antiviral medications or monoclonal antibodies are an option for you. You can also obtain more information on treatment options from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services here <https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/resources/therapeutics-information-page>

Please do your part and help minimize the spread of COVID-19. For the latest and most accurate information regarding the COVID-19 go to the Bay County Health Department website at <https://www.baycounty-mi.gov/Health/COVID19/>.

For more information regarding face masks, visit Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/types-of-masks.html>