

**January 11, 2022**

**\*\*\*CONSUMER ALERT\*\*\***

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL ENCOURAGES ILLINOIS RESIDENTS TO BE CAUTIOUS OF POP-UP COVID TESTING SITES**

**Chicago** — As the omicron variant continues to spread, increasing the number of positive COVID-19 cases throughout Illinois, Attorney General Kwame Raoul today issued guidance regarding “pop-up” COVID-19 testing sites and price gouging of at-home rapid tests.

A nationwide shortage of COVID-19 tests and available testing appointments has led many Illinois residents to turn to what are known as “pop-up” testing sites. These testing sites are not licensed or regulated by any government agency, and the Attorney General’s office cannot confirm the legitimacy of individual pop-up testing locations. The Attorney General’s office is offering guidance and encouraging people to exercise caution before visiting any testing site.

“The omicron variant has compelled many residents to seek COVID-19 testing in order to protect themselves and their families. The increased need for testing has also resulted in testing shortages, leading people to visit so-called ‘pop-up’ testing locations,” Raoul said. “It is important for people to know that these sites are not licensed or regulated by a government agency, and they should ask questions before visiting a pop-up testing location – or try to utilize a state-sponsored testing site.”

Attorney General Raoul recommends that people first try to utilize a state-sponsored testing site to the extent possible. Individuals can contact their health care providers for testing or testing center recommendations. People can also find a testing location by visiting the [Illinois Department of Public Health’s website](#), the [Cook County Department of Health’s website](#) and the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ website](#).

The Attorney General’s office is encouraging individuals who choose to use a testing site that is not included on state-sponsored lists or recommended by a primary care provider to first consider the following:

- What tests does the site administer?
- Who analyzes the results?
- What laboratory does the site use? Visit <https://www.cdc.gov/clia/LabSearch.html> to determine whether the lab being used is CLIA certified.
- When will test results be communicated to you, and how/from whom will you receive that communication?
- Who can you call with questions or concerns about results?
- What type of personal information will the site ask you to provide?
- Does the site charge any out-of-pocket fee?
- Does the site appear to observe the CDC’s recommendations to protect against COVID-19? For instance, do workers maintain a distance of six feet between people and wear masks indoors in areas of substantial or high transmission? <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

Attorney General Raoul says people should be aware that testing sites often ask for insurance information and identifying information, such as a state-issued ID. If asked for information you are not comfortable providing, the Attorney General’s office encourages people to ask whether they can obtain the test without providing it. Additionally, people should be aware that most testing sites will not request payment out of pocket and will instead bill insurance companies, or, if individuals are uninsured, seek reimbursement from a

federal fund. Raoul says that being asked to pay out of pocket is a red flag, and people should exercise caution if a site requests cash out-of-pocket or upfront credit or debit card payments for a test.

Raoul urges people to choose a different testing site if they visit one where something does not seem right. Individuals are encouraged to file a complaint on the [Attorney General's website](#) if they believe they have been the victim of fraud, or if they were not charged at the time of a COVID-19 test but later receive a bill for testing services.

As Illinois residents opt to use at-home rapid testing, the Attorney General's office is also warning of bad actors potentially seeking to profit from the pandemic. Attorney General Kwame Raoul is [reminding](#) businesses and individuals to maintain fair prices and refrain from price gouging on goods that are crucial to stopping the spread of COVID-19, including at-home rapid tests. Raoul is also warning people to be aware of potential fake test kits offered for sale and is encouraging individuals to visit the [FDA's website](#) for a list of approved at-home test kits. Consumers should expect to pay between \$14 and \$25 for packs of at-home rapid test kits, such as those from iHealth or Binax NOW.

Attorney General Raoul urges Illinois consumers who believe they have experienced or witnessed price gouging, or believe they have purchased fraudulent test kits to file a complaint by visiting the [Attorney General's website](#).