

# Free testing continues to be offered in Western Mass.

**By Shelby Macri**  
*smacri@turley.com*

HOLYOKE – While testing has ended in Agawam, there are still locations close by where area residents can go for COVID-19 testing.

The state and the City of Holyoke asked Holyoke Community College if the college could house a COVID testing site, and they agreed. The free testing at the HCC campus is being served as a drive through station for all residents.

The campus has been offering testing since Aug. 26 and the city's board of health has extended the test site to Oct. 31. Though the site was supposed to stop running on Sept. 12 it was extended to

the end of Sept. and extended again to the end of Oct.

The tests are being conducted as drive through tests outside HCC's Bartley Center for Athletics and Recreation, the testing will be done by the Fallon Ambulance in partnership with the Holyoke Board of Health and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The testing is available six days a week at different times to accommodate different schedules people may have.

Testing will be conducted on a first-come, first-served basis with no appointments, costs, or referrals needed. Testing hours include 7-11 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday,

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The Bartley Center parking lot is the site of free COVID testing for the remainder of the month.

*File photo*

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Friday, and Saturday; and 2-7 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday. HCC asks people to enter the campus from Homestead Avenue and follow the signs to M lot, where the in-car testing will be held. The results from testing will typically come in within four days.

Those headed to the HCC campus don't have to worry about coming in contact with students as most of HCC's classes are being held remotely this semester. The exception of this being a non credit EMT training

program that requires some face to face training at the HCC Center for Health Education and Stimulation on Jarvis Avenue. Other classes that need face to face learning include clinical conditions such as nursing, radiological technology, veterinary technician, and medical assisting, though those classes will not be held in the same area that the testing is occurring.

Residents are encouraged to visit the testing site at HCC as it will be held until the end of October and it is free. Additionally, residents can stay in their cars and will have minimal contact with others.