


Memorandum



Date: May 24, 2022

To: Honorable Chairman Jose “Pepe” Diaz
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Daniella Levine Cava
Mayor 

Subject: Creation and Report of an online resource available on the County’s website or other platform that displays Estimated Wait Times for Services at county-operated Coronavirus Disease 2019 Testing Sites – Directive 220210

Summary

The following information is provided in response to Resolution No. R-167-22 sponsored by Commissioner Cohen Higgins and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners (Board) on February 15, 2022, directing the County Mayor to create an online resource available on the County’s website or other platform that displays estimated wait times for services at the county-operated Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) testing sites.

Throughout the pandemic, we have worked tirelessly to make COVID testing as accessible as possible to residents across the County. During periods of increased positivity and peak testing demand that we saw in recent months, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue (MDFR) worked hard alongside Nomi Health to rapidly open additional testing sites and expand hours at our existing sites. An estimated wait time tool would further support our efforts to make testing readily accessible by helping residents access information about likely wait times to find the most convenient testing site near them.

The recommended vendor to create the online resource would be Nomi Health. The digital display would be available to all County residents, and Nomi Health is offering to provide this service free of charge to the County. There is a cost to the county for this service if the other vendors submitting proposals are selected. Miami-Dade County Information Technology Department (ITD) currently displays the COVID-19 Testing Site Finder on the County’s website. The addition of an Estimated Wait Time could be incorporated into this existing system.

Background

The management and operations of the collection testing sites in Miami-Dade County requires continuous coordination amongst several County departments and the vendors operating these sites. As of May 6th, Miami-Dade County has 49 COVID-19 testing sites of which 27 sites are managed and operated by Nomi Health.

MDFR is monitoring the daily operations of the collection testing sites throughout the County and is coordinating with the vendors. At the executive level, County leadership ensures that the testing sites are appropriately staffed and providing satisfactory collection testing services. The volume of residents at the testing sites and the wait times are being monitored at both the operational and executive level.

Three vendors (Nomi Health, Merit ReadyNow Solutions, and Tetra Tech) submitted proposals along with an estimated cost to implement this project.

Nomi Health proposed two options: The first would be to develop a testing platform that will rely on the data of pre-registered clients to calculate the wait times at the COVID-19 testing sites. This option would utilize signage at various sites that would read “wait time from this point: xx minutes”. The second option would be an automated process relying on new software, which would enable staff to scan a pre-registered clients upon arrival to a site. The time differential between entry at the specific site and completion of the COVID-19 test will be posted to a digital dashboard that will reflect the wait times for each site.

There is no fiscal impact to the County with either of Nomi Health’s options. Nomi would deploy staff, as needed, to the testing sites that are experiencing wait times and their staff would complete the up-front scanning, as well as assist with registration and/or any general questions that clients may have.

Merit ReadyNow Solution would display wait times digitally. The base development cost is \$60,000. Merit would provide an estimated 35 staff per day which includes three (3) Site Leads to manage the data collection and sharing activities. Additionally, two (2) Project Managers would provide web development and communications support. The estimated cost for support staff is \$534,000 monthly.

Tetra Tech offered two (2) potential solutions: The first is a full-service option that includes a Project Manager, two (2) Data Managers and 32 staff as Site Monitors and the estimated daily rate for option #1 is \$22,291. The second is an equipment-only option with limited Tetra Tech personnel which includes one (1) Project Manager and two (2) Data Managers along with 32 handheld devices that would be distributed to the County for uploading the necessary data for calculating the wait times. The estimated daily rate for option #2 is \$5,523.

The Miami-Dade County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) will work with ITD on incorporating the wait time data on the County’s Testing Site Finder Application. This information will then be available for all County residents prior to arriving at one of the testing locations.

Reimbursement through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA) grant program is necessary to properly execute and manage the options offered for implementation of this project and based on the review of the guidance available these options would be eligible for reimbursement. However, on March 1, 2022, FEMA announced that the 100% reimbursement for COVID-19 eligible work will be ending on July 1, 2022. After this date, the available reimbursement through FEMA PA will be 90% Federal and 10% State/County cost shares.

As of May 6th, the seven-day average COVID-19 Positivity Rate in Miami-Dade County is 13%. Miami-Dade County is still actively providing testing and vaccinations services throughout the County, and it is likely that these services will continue into the foreseeable future.

Additional Concerns

Reimbursement through the FEMA PA grant guidance is necessary in order to properly execute and manage the options offered for implementation. The following guidance documents were reviewed to address the question of eligibility for reimbursement: Work Eligible for Public Assistance (Interim) Policy; Medical Care Costs Eligible for Public Assistance Policy, and the FEMA Funds Community Engagement for COVID-19 Vaccinations.

Under the Work Eligible for Public Assistance (Interim) Policy, FEMA defined the types of eligible work and one example that is relevant, is the communications to disseminate public information regarding health and safety measures. The use of a wait time application at the COVID-19 testing sites would be considered a communications tool disseminating public information to the general public.

The Medical Care Costs Eligible for Public Assistance Policy addresses Temporary and Expanded Medical Facilities that are providing triage, as well as medically necessary tests and diagnosis related to COVID-19 patients. Miami-Dade County has opened several of these sites throughout the County. Eligible activities defined in this policy includes administrative activities and the associated costs, such as the proposed wait time application.

If in the future, the wait time application is used for vaccination activities then the FEMA Funds Community Engagement for COVID-19 Vaccinations’ guidance would be applicable. This guidance states that vaccination information sharing activities are eligible for reimbursement. This includes the use of a website and the supporting contracting costs to maintain this type of tool.

To ensure reimbursement through the Public Assistance program, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) will work with relevant County departments to ensure that they are abiding by the following general criteria:

- Actions taken were reasonable and necessary;
- Any contract executed should abide by FEMA contracting guidelines;
- Adequate documentation on labor costs must be kept.

However, on March 1, 2022, FEMA announced that the 100% reimbursement for COVID-19 eligible work will be ending on July 1, 2022. Thereafter, the Federal cost share will be 90% and the State/local cost share will be 10%. The State of Florida will be responsible for 5% and Miami-Dade County would be responsible for the remaining 5%.

Recommendation

The recommended option would be to utilize Nomi Health’s automated process that would display this information via a digital dashboard that would be available to all County residents. Nomi Health is offering to provide this service free of charge to the County.

ITD displays the COVID-19 Testing Site Finder on the County’s website. The addition of an Estimated Wait Time could be incorporated into this existing system.

Nomi Health has been funding testing operations through the Federal Health Resources and Services Administration’s Uninsured program; however, this program ended on April 5, 2022. As a result, any testing operations will now fall financially on Miami-Dade County. Nomi Health has already informed the County that they will be billing Miami-Dade County for their services. Therefore, the County will in turn seek reimbursement for testing site operations through the FEMA Public Assistance program.

Per Ordinance 14-65, this report shall be placed on the next available Board of County Commissioners Agenda Meeting.

Should you have any questions, please contact Charles Cyrille at (305) 468-5406 or cyrille@miamidade.gov.

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