NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: **CONTACT:**
December 29, 2021   nancy.nydam@dph.ga.gov

DPH Urges Georgians NOT to Go to Hospital Emergency Departments for COVID Testing

Atlanta – To help keep hospital emergency departments open to treat medical emergencies, individuals seeking COVID testing **should not** go to hospital emergency departments, unless they are experiencing severe COVID-19 symptoms requiring urgent medical attention. Asymptomatic individuals or individuals with mild symptoms should find testing sites other than hospital emergency departments.

COVID-19 testing locations are available throughout Georgia and can be found on the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) website at https://dph.georgia.gov/covidtesting. We are working with our lab partners to expand testing hours and add testing sites, however, lines will continue to be long as thousands of Georgians want to get tested.

To help alleviate delays at testing sites, it is critical that people register **BEFORE** going to a DPH test site. Online registration (https://dph.georgia.gov/covidtesting) will help alleviate back-ups at test sites and free up staff to do more testing if they aren't doing registration paperwork.

COVID vaccination is available statewide and is our best tool for ending this pandemic and reducing the overwhelming strain on the healthcare system and healthcare providers. To find a COVID vaccination location, visit https://dph.georgia.gov/covid-vaccine. Georgians aged 5 and older are eligible for vaccination. Georgians 16 and older are eligible for boosters six months after completing their primary vaccine series of either Moderna or Pfizer (only Pfizer is authorized for booster doses in 16- and 17- year-olds) and two months after their J&J vaccine.

Basic prevention measures should also be followed to help prevent further spread of COVID and mitigate outbreaks of infection, especially in public settings: wear a mask, physically distance, and wash your hands frequently with soap and water.

For updates on COVID-19, follow @GaDPH and @GovKemp on Twitter and @GaDPH and @GovKemp on Facebook.

                                         ##

We protect lives.