



**The Building Trades Welfare Foundation-Mayo Clinic Laboratories
COVID-19 RESILIENCE PROJECT
May 1, 2021**

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” Margaret Mead

Substantial Challenges Remain and Gathering Information Remains Important to Understand and Contain the Virus

- COVID-19 remains a real and important health issue in the United States. As of April 30, 2021, only 30% of the US population has been fully vaccinated against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Five Midwestern states (Michigan, Illinois, Minnesota, Ohio and Indiana) have some of the highest daily case rates in the nation (Michigan is second only to Florida) and young individuals now make up the largest demographic being harmed by the disease, unlike earlier phases of the pandemic in which elderly individuals were more significantly impacted.
- At least 25% of Americans have said they will refuse vaccination under any circumstances. As most public health experts believe that the United States will need to achieve at least 80-85% immunity in order for the virus to stop spreading, it is likely that COVID-19 will, regrettably, be with us and remain a considerable threat for the foreseeable future.
- We need to gather as much information as possible to help protect individuals and groups, to better understand the behavior of SARS-CoV-2, and to contain this virus.

The Resilience Project and Why it is Important

- **Preliminary Findings Are Already Revealing Interesting Results:** We are already seeing interesting data emerging from the Resilience Project. Previously published studies have suggested that overall COVID-19 positivity rates across the United States in the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic were less than 10%. Preliminary analysis of individuals participating in our Resilience Project to date suggest a significantly higher baseline positivity rate, *possibly* suggesting that the demographic, living, work, social, or disease preventative conditions associated with this population (building and construction trades workers, their families, and retirees in Ohio, Michigan, Kentucky, and Indiana who are participants in multiemployer funds), are associated with increased risk of SARS-CoV-2 exposure. This information is critically important to investigators who are attempting to understand and reduce risk of COVID-19 spread.

- **The Population We are Testing is Unique and Significant:** By testing participants and eligible dependents in multiple states, the Resilience Project is testing a unique multi-generational group over a large geographic area, which means it is largely representative of the general population.
 - In unvaccinated patients, there have been few updated analyses of such groups, which makes it difficult to assess the true risk of COVID-19 exposure and possible infection in different areas of the country.
 - In vaccinated patients, existing analyses have been conducted in selected populations of individuals, who typically represent younger, healthier populations who have been administered a single, specific vaccine. In summary, to date, few if any large scale studies have examined the positivity rate in groups that are representative of the general population.
 - Although other investigators affiliated with various national groups such as the pharmaceutical industry, the CDC, and Universities are conducting COVID-19 antibody tests, few studies to date have had the ability to examine representative populations such as the building trades coalition represented here.
 - Thus, compiling data from the population represented by the Resilience Project, it is hoped, will yield vital and more relevant information about the spread and prevention of COVID-19.

- **Opportunity to Retest:** It remains uncertain how long antibody protection may last. Preliminary studies suggest such protection may last for up to 6 months. As part of the Resilience Project, we are asking those who test positive to come back for follow up tests approximately every 4 months. Therefore, participation will provide both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals with information about the durability of their antibody response.

- **Quality of Test:** Some COVID-19 antibody studies have employed antibody tests with varying degrees of accuracy. The tests used in this Project represent some of the highest reliability tests available and are being provided by one of the most well-respected research laboratories in the world - Mayo Clinic Labs.

- **Organized Labor:** The Building Trades Welfare Foundation-Mayo Clinic Laboratories COVID-19 Resilience Project is an enormous and ambitious undertaking, and we have made significant progress to date. You and your brothers and sisters are in a unique position to support this endeavor due to the essential collaborative nature of organized labor. As you are likely aware, our national and regional government responses to the COVID-19 crisis have been inconsistent and variably effective. Leaders from all walks of life need to develop intelligent methods for individuals and groups to help address this tremendous healthcare challenge.

Additional Information

- Entities Affiliated with the Project:
 - Mayo Clinic: Laboratory, logistical, and scientific support
 - Oracle Corporation (Information Technology support)
 - Any Lab Test Now (ALTN) Corp: Specimen collection

- Should you agree to participate, you will register for the program on Sign Up Genius (a link will be provided). You will be asked to provide basic information about yourself.
- You will then receive an email from the Oracle COVID-19 Patient Monitoring System (Oracle) to register on the Oracle website, where you will provide basic information about your general health, your potential exposure to SARS-CoV-2, and a few other questions to help us understand your relative risk of developing COVID-19. After registering, you will receive an email from Oracle confirming your data (name, etc.).
- You may also register your eligible spouse and children (at least 5 years of age) should they choose to participate.
- You will also be asked to participate in a brief Oracle daily survey to help determine if you are developing symptoms consistent with COVID-19. This daily survey is optional, but you are strongly encouraged to participate – again, the more information gathered the better! Should the survey detect suspicious symptoms, you will automatically receive a notification to contact a healthcare provider for further evaluation.
- If your initial test is negative, you will not have another test. However, even if your initial test is negative, we will request that you continue to report COVID symptoms in response to the daily Oracle email. You may be eligible for other testing as the Project progresses.
- If your initial test is positive, you will be asked to have another blood test in 4 months to see if your protective antibodies have remained stable or declined. The current intention is to continue testing positive participants every 4 months for the first 12 months of the Project to help determine if their antibody levels remain stable (i.e., if they continue to maintain presumed protection from the virus.)
- **The follow up tests are key to the Project, so please be prepared to commit to these follow up tests if you are asked to do so.**
- The data, once de-identified, will be evaluated for purposes of this Project. De-identified means your privacy is protected. As part of a national effort to combat this virus, de-identified information in the Oracle Patient Monitoring System, including the de-identified information gathered as part of this Project, will be shared with the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to accomplish essential public health goals. According to HHS, entry of patient information into this Oracle system is fully compliant with HIPAA.

With your support and cooperation, we can get this project done and be proud to be part of the solution!

This is a summary of information provided for informational purposes. It is not intended to be specific medical advice.

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