From:	DHSS Public Info
Subject:	News Release: Initial COVID-19 results in from asymptomatic testing from Buchanan County food plant
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For Immediate Release:
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Media Contact:
Lisa Cox
Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
Lisa.Cox@health.mo.gov

Initial COVID-19 results in from asymptomatic testing from Buchanan County food plant

JEFFERSON CITY, MO – The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) partnered with the City of St. Joseph Health Department, Northwest Health Services and Mosaic Life Care to offer COVID-19 testing to all employees at Triumph Foods in St. Joseph.

707 employees, who presented asymptomatically, had samples collected for testing at work on Monday. Results were received today, and 92 of those are positive for the virus that causes COVID-19. Additionally, 34 of the plant's employees had received positive results after being tested prior to this week.

Cases are counted by county of the patient's residence, not by location of the employer or where the test was conducted. Not all cases among Triumph Foods employees will be counted in Buchanan County's total case count as they are not all county residents.

Approximately 1,500 employees had samples collected for testing on Tuesday and Wednesday, and those results are pending. Employees with positive results are being notified by the City of St. Joseph Health Department. Those with positive results will be told to isolate, and public health professionals will assist these patients with notifications of those determined to be close contacts. Triumph Foods is making notifications to those who have tested negative. All who were tested will be notified with their results by Saturday.

"Our mission remains to protect health and keep Missourians safe," said Dr. Randall Williams, director of DHSS. "We appreciate the willingness from employees of Triumph Foods to be tested and the collaboration with local health care providers to help prevent further spread of COVID-19 in this community. Partnering with providers

and local health departments to test people, both symptomatic and asymptomatic, is part of our “box-in” strategy with this virus moving forward.”

At the request of the City of St. Joseph Health Department, the State is sending staff support to assist with contact tracing efforts, and more testing is to be expected as close contacts of COVID-19 patients are notified.

“It is very important that patients with positive results follow the isolation guidance they are given,” said Williams. “Those with pending or negative results may continue to work while maintaining infection control measures we have recommended both at work and at home.”

Per CDC guidance, those who did not have COVID-19 symptoms but tested positive and are self-isolating can leave their “sick room” when at least 7 days have passed since the date of the first positive test and they continue to have no symptoms since the test. For 3 additional days, this group of people should continue to limit contact and wear a face covering for their nose and mouth when other people are present.

Williams added, “We are grateful that our purposeful testing strategy to increase capacity for testing allows us this opportunity to do comprehensive testing, and we will continue to work closely with the employees, elected local leaders and our partners at the City of St. Joseph Health Department, Northwest Health Services, Triumph Foods and Mosaic Life Care to protect the health of the community.”

Visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus or the DHSS website at www.health.mo.gov/coronavirus for more information or to ask questions using the state site’s COVID-19 interactive chatbot. A statewide COVID-19 hotline is also available at 877-435-8411.

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About the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services: The department seeks to be the leader in protecting health and keeping people safe. More information about DHSS can be found at http://health.mo.gov or find us on Facebook and Twitter @HealthyLivingMo

We aspire to protect health and keep the people of Missouri safe.

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