

# Mayor Adams to Distribute 6.3 Million At-Home COVID-19 Tests, as Federal Government Stalls on Providing Billions in Emergency Funds

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Video available at: <https://youtu.be/uEJ5E-2IzIc>

*Absence of \$15 Billion in Ongoing Funding Could Lead to Increased Demand on City-Run Services to Test, Treat, and Vaccinate New Yorkers*

*City Stepping Up, Distributing At-Home Test Kits to Boost Ongoing Preparedness*

**NEW YORK** – New York City Mayor Adams and city health leaders today called on all members of Congress to appropriate more than \$15 billion in emergency funding for COVID-19. While New York City will continue providing testing and vaccine services to New Yorkers at no cost through NYC Health + Hospitals, gridlock in Washington, DC has threatened the health of communities across New York and the rest of the nation. Earlier this week, Mayor Adams met with the New York City congressional delegation and urged them to push for immediate passage of the COVID-19 aid package. As the city and the nation wait for action from certain members of Congress to protect Americans' health, New York is taking action to bolster preparedness efforts. Specifically, the NYC Test & Trace Corps will provide an additional 6.3 million free at-home tests in April to over 2,500 community organizations, libraries, cultural institutions, houses of worship, and elected offices across the city.

"We have more tools than ever to fight COVID-19, but *now is not the time to scale back*," said **Mayor Adams**. "As we step up and provide more than 6 million at-home

tests to keep our residents safe, we need our federal government to continue pushing for much-needed resources. We remain committed to assisting the New York City congressional delegation as they work to secure COVID-19 supplemental funding, but inaction by certain members of Congress right now puts the whole country at risk. We need federal action now before we left to fend for ourselves if another surge hits our city.”

Test & Trace has distributed nearly 11 million at-home tests to date, with approximately 7 million tests delivered to New York City schools. Test & Trace currently maintains a stockpile of tens of millions of tests that can be rapidly distributed in the event of a surge.

Making at-home testing widely available *ensures New Yorkers can test themselves immediately if they have symptoms so they can safely head to work, school, or other gatherings with family and friends, or quickly receive treatment, if needed.*

The more than \$15 billion in funding Congress has yet to authorize has the potential to:

- Impact the federal supply of vaccines and treatments;
- Eliminate federal reimbursement to private providers for vaccination, testing, and outpatient treatment provided to uninsured people;
- Reduce immediate access to services for testing, treatment, and vaccination, which could lead to delays in testing and care; and
- Put the country at risk of losing its ability to develop and distribute vaccines for new variants in the future.

Last night, rumors began to surface that Congress may soon consider an aid package valued at approximately \$10 billion — less than half of the \$22.5 billion President Joseph Biden had initially sought to continue the fight against COVID-19.

“New York City is well positioned to respond to the increase in cases through a robust testing network, including the distribution of over 6 million at home tests through community-based partnerships” said **Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Anne Williams-Isom**. “I urge all New Yorkers to take the necessary precautions, including getting vaccinated, boosted, and wearing a mask, in order to protect their health, the health of their families, and school communities.”

“Cases are rising, and we expect to see a steady increase in transmission as BA.2 continues to circulate around the city,” said **New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan**. “We’ve all been through so much the last couple years and we need every tool available to us. It’s crucial we all take the steps we know work to keep us safe and healthy, like getting vaccinated, boosted, tested, and wearing masks in settings where the vaccination status of those around you are unknown. ”

“At NYC Health + Hospitals, we believe that health care is a human right and we serve every New Yorker regardless of their ability to pay or their immigration status,” said **Dr. Mitchell Katz, president and CEO, NYC Health + Hospitals**. “The COVID-19 federal funding pool helped us take care of hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers without disrupting our non-COVID care. This funding ensures that everyone can access a COVID-19 test and a vaccination so they can remain healthy.”

“We want every New Yorker to have access to home tests so you can know if you have COVID before you go to work, school, or see friends and loved ones,” said **Dr. Ted Long, executive director, NYC Test & Trace Corps; senior vice president of Ambulatory Care and Population Health, NYC Health + Hospitals**. “Thanks to our thousands of program partners, we are prepared for the BA.2 variant with at-home tests accessible at locations for all the city’s diverse communities. I urge the federal government to renew emergency funding so that they can continue to assist us with our critical mission to provide ready access to testing, treatments and vaccination, and to end the pandemic.”

Earlier this week, President Biden warned there may not be enough vaccine supply to guarantee free access to vaccines for those who want them this fall, just as the federal government approved a second booster dose for adults aged 50 and older, making this federal funding even more dire. In addition, the federal government is already scaling back allocations for COVID-19 treatments, like [monoclonal antibody treatments and oral antivirals](#). These treatments have been a lifeline for many vulnerable New Yorkers, and without them, severe outcomes due to COVID-19 infection will increase.

Any New York City-based community organization that would like to participate as an at-home test distribution partner is encouraged to [sign up online](#). New Yorkers can find an *at-home test distribution location most convenient to them* by [visiting the city’s coronavirus testing page](#). New Yorkers with a disability who need assistance or have

questions regarding at home test kits or otherwise should call 311. Those who are deaf or hard of hearing and use American Sign Language can call via video phone at 646-396-5830.

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