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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Savannah River Nuclear Solutions Partners with Augusta University Health to Provide COVID-19 Testing for SRS Employees

Aiken, S.C., June 12, 2020 – Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) and Augusta University Health (AUH) have collaborated to provide prompt testing for Savannah River Site (SRS) employees to detect the possible presence of the Coronavirus. The agreement has been in place since May 7 and has proven to be a very effective means for quick results, with dozens of employees already benefiting from this swift response.

“The easily accessible testing allows us to quickly identify or rule out transmission within the workforce. We’ve been very pleased with Augusta University Health,” said Brenda Mills, SRNS Director, Site Medical. “It’s reassuring to know that fast and reliable tests for COVID-19 are now available for our workers.”

According to Sabrina Elam, SRNS Strategic Services Acquisition Manager, the SRS Medical Department had previously observed that many Site employees exhibiting symptoms related to COVID-19 were having to wait for extended periods before receiving test results from their healthcare provider. “Once our Site Medical Department identified the need to accelerate the receipt of test results, they initiated a contract through the SRNS procurement group with Augusta University Health. AUH responded quickly and effectively to meet our needs. We greatly appreciate their assistance.”



*Savannah River Nuclear Solutions recently entered into a contract with nearby Augusta University Health (AUH) to provide fast and reliable testing for the COVID-19 virus to benefit employees at the Savannah River Site. Lasha Kersey (left), Nurse and AUH Wellness Coordinator for Population Health, and Stephanie Ward, Nurse, AUH Adult Care Coordinator for Population Health, administer a test. – Photo courtesy Augusta University Health*

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As SRNS works to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, Augusta University Health Chief Medical Officer Dr. Phillip Coule considers this partnership as one of the many ways AU Health is helping to keep their workers safe.

“We feel we have a responsibility to help our community during these challenging times,” said Coule. “We’re proud to leverage our clinical expertise to SRS so they feel confident in doing their part in protecting their staff and the public from infection.”

The agreement calls for employees exhibiting symptoms typical of the disease to contact the SRS Medical Department. A nurse will administer a screening process to determine whether the worker’s symptoms merit travel to one of two drive-up test centers in the greater Augusta area.

Upon arrival at a test center, employees will verify their identity and scheduled appointment. Next, an AUH technician will administer a standard test with results being provided within 72 hours to SRS medical personnel through a secure means. SRS medical personnel will then notify the employee of the results. All medical information will be protected as required.

“The turnaround time for test results is in line with the contractual agreements Augusta University Health has established with other local companies,” said Mills. “The entire process has been running smoothly, though I’m glad to say we’ve needed to schedule only a small number of employees for testing with AUH at this point.”

Employees who test positive for the virus will be requested to seek treatment at the medical facility of their choice.

Elam noted once the need for COVID-19 testing support arose, SRNS Procurement began expedited efforts to secure these vital services for the site. “Working with Augusta University Health representatives, SRNS was able to ensure a successful outcome. We’re in this pandemic for an indefinite period of time and having a subcontract in place for site employees to utilize is significant. It has been an outstanding team effort for all involved,” she added.

The prompt availability of laboratory testing for COVID-19 is just one of several methods within the “defense in depth” controls in place to protect workers at SRS.

*Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, a Fluor-led company with Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, is responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site, including the Savannah River National Laboratory, located near Aiken, South Carolina.*

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