

GEORGE LATIMER, Westchester County Executive

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WESTCHESTER COUNTY OBSERVES WORLD AIDS DAY ON DECEMBER 1

Westchester County Health Department Offers Testing and Preventive Services

(White Plains, NY) – On World AIDS Day, the Westchester County Department of Health is encouraging residents to unite in the fight against HIV, show support for people living with a positive HIV status, and honor those who have died from an AIDS-related illness.

Health Commissioner Sherlita Amler, MD, said: “Free testing for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases and preventive services are available through the County Health Department, and our partners. Everyone should know their HIV status.”

Free rapid and regular HIV testing and PrEP are offered by the **Health Department at 134 Court Street in White Plains**. Residents can call 995-5800 for dates and times or view the clinic schedule at www.westchestergov.com/health.

Through a partnership with the Urban League of Westchester, the Health Department also offers free, rapid HIV testing on-site at the **Syringe Exchange Program, 4 Wilson Place, Mount Vernon**. PrEP is a preventive treatment that when taken daily, can prevent HIV in people who are most at risk. PEP or post-exposure prophylaxis is medicine taken to prevent HIV after a possible exposure.

Westchester County Executive George Latimer is encouraging residents to wear a red ribbon to commemorate World AIDS Day, and the continuous fight against HIV.

Latimer said: “On World AIDS Day, it’s important that we acknowledge all those affected by AIDS, along with the advocates and healthcare workers whose compassionate care serves them. We are reminded that AIDS has not gone away, and that there is still a vital need to increase awareness, fight prejudice, and improve education around this disease.”

An estimated 1.2 million Americans are living with HIV, and 13 percent of them don’t know it and need testing, according to HIV.GOV. The Westchester County Department of Health reminds residents to get tested for the disease. HIV continues to have a disproportionate impact on racial and ethnic minorities and gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men.

Sponsored by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute, the 24nd Annual World AIDS Day Event, will be held virtually on December 1. Participation is free and open to the public. Register to participate at https://whova.com/portal/registration/nysdo3_202211/.

This year’s theme is advancing health equity, with the tagline “**Collaborating for Change: Partnering for Health Equity.**” The goal is to highlight the many diverse and extraordinary partnerships developed to address inequities such as access to quality health care/services, safe housing, nutritious food, quality education, and safe environments, for people living with, or placed at risk for, HIV, STIs, and Hepatitis C.

HIV remains a nationwide and worldwide epidemic. HIV.GOV estimates that 38 million people worldwide are living with HIV. Although there are effective treatments for HIV, there is still no cure for HIV and no vaccine to prevent it.

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About Westchester County

Westchester County, located in the heart of the historic Hudson Valley, covers 500 square miles and has a population of just over a million. Originally home to Native Americans, who were members of the Lenape tribe, it is today a rich mix of many cultures and landscapes. The County is a blend of bustling cities, quaint villages and picturesque towns as well as open spaces and a network of beautiful parks. Westchester is made up of 6 cities, 19 towns and 20 villages. Westchester County is known for top-notch public schools, and a high quality of life. The County is also an intellectual capital, boasting a highly educated workforce, competitive colleges and universities, Fortune 500 companies, world changing non-profits, and cutting-edge research centers. Westchester is led by County Executive George Latimer, who took office in January 2018 as the ninth County Executive. Using inclusion and openness as a foreground, Latimer is fighting to make Westchester a destination for all people to live, work and enjoy. Learn more about Westchester County by visiting www.westchestergov.com

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