



**For Immediate Release, Catawba County, NC:** The Chamber of Catawba County, in partnership with Catawba Valley Health System, Frye Regional Medical Center, Catawba County Public Health and Mako Medical Laboratories released a Fast Turn-Around COVID-19 PCR Testing Program that exclusively allows Chamber partner businesses in our region the ability to receive employee test results within 48 hours at a discounted rate of \$100 per test. In addition to testing, this partnership enables employers the option to wrap around other services focusing on employee preventative health and wellness offered by our hospital partners, such as flu vaccinations, health screenings and injury management, only to name a few.

"Your Chamber exists to convene the right partners and resources to solve critical issues impacting business in Catawba County. In the midst of this public health and economic health crisis, we're focused on leading efforts to expedite economic recovery from the pandemic", said Lindsay Keisler, President/CEO of The Chamber of Catawba County." "Local employers have continued to express a pain point of lags in testing turnaround times resulting in loss of productivity and a lack of information for sound decision-making & response regarding COVID-19." Keisler made a few phone calls, a team of subject matter experts was formed and thanks to the hard work of such generous partners, this innovative service for our business community is being launched. Keisler stated "This is just another demonstration of Catawba County's "secret sauce" in action ---collaboration and partnerships."

In addition to easing this pain point for our local business community, it also expands our capacity for COVID-19 testing in Catawba County overall. "We are excited to see another testing option coming to our county. Testing is an important tool in the COVID-19 toolbox and helps people make decisions that will help protect their families, friends, coworkers and our community's most vulnerable residents," said Jennifer McCracken, Catawba County Public Health Director. "However, no matter if or when a person is tested, we must all remain diligent in taking protective actions – maintaining 6 feet of social distancing whenever possible, using cloth face coverings or masks, and practicing frequent handwashing. By protecting ourselves and our loved ones, we are also protecting our workforce, which is an important part of keeping Catawba County's economy strong."

There are many benefits of this service, including fast-turnaround results within 48 hours, direct payment to the lab which has potential long-term savings on insurance premiums and ease of use, however, the greatest benefit is empowering business leaders with knowledge for sound decision-



making in response to the virus. "The COVID-19 pandemic has presented many unprecedented challenges for all of our workforces," said Eddie Beard, President and CEO of Catawba Valley Health System. "We are encouraged and excited to partner with the Chamber to help provide COVID testing that gives businesses the information needed to make the best and most efficient decisions possible for their employees and the community. This program is a great example of what makes our community great – organizations working together to provide the type of services needed during these uncertain times."

Business leaders who are equipped with faster and better knowledge are acting in good faith on behalf of their employees and their families, but are also protecting lives and livelihoods in our greater community when minimizing the spread of COVID-19. Rod Harkleroad, CEO of Frye Regional Medical Center, emphasizes, "Frye Regional Medical Center is proud to partner with the Chamber to continue testing for COVID-19. We understand the importance of continual testing, as well as, receiving the results quickly. This program will aid in ensuring that employees will stay safe while at work and assist in keeping our communities safe and healthy."

Businesses are encouraged to contact Lindsay Keisler, President/CEO of The Chamber of Catawba County at [lkeisler@catawbachamber.org](mailto:lkeisler@catawbachamber.org) if they have interest in learning more about COVID-19 PCR testing for their employees. One can also visit [www.catawbachamber.org](http://www.catawbachamber.org) and click the button at the top-right of the homepage that states, "COVID-19 PCR Testing for Chamber Shareholders & Investors" to read more or to submit an interest form. According to your specific business needs, the Chamber team will refer you to the appropriate partner to serve you. There's no obligation or cost in setting up an account with Mako Medical Labs for COVID-19 Testing, therefore, Keisler suggests that if you anticipate any demand for COVID-19 testing anytime in the future, go ahead and set up an account so you're ready to respond immediately when the need arises.