



## COVID-19

To maximize protection from the [Delta variant](#) and prevent possibly spreading it to others, get vaccinated as soon as you can and wear a mask indoors in public if you are in [an area of substantial or high transmission](#).

# Questions & Answers on School Testing

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Parents and school staff may have questions about school COVID-19 testing programs. Customize the sample Frequently Asked Questions below to fit your needs, answer common questions, and share with parents and staff. Highlighted content indicates information that can be tailored based on a school's needs. FAQs are also available in Microsoft Word.

## FAQs for Parents

### Do you have questions about the free COVID-19 Testing Program at **[school name]**?

*Below are answers to questions you may have.*

#### General Information

##### What is the COVID-19 Testing Program?

**[School name]**'s COVID-19 Testing Program offers free, regular testing to students and staff for COVID-19. Regular testing means that testing is offered to everyone on a regular basis, even if they don't have symptoms of COVID-19.

##### Why is our school testing for COVID-19?

Regular testing is a safe, effective way to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and help keep our schools open for in-person learning. Many people with COVID-19, especially children and teens, don't have symptoms but can still spread the virus, so regular testing helps find infections before they can spread to others. This is especially important for children under 12 years old who are not yet able to get vaccinated against COVID-19, families and staff with younger children at home, and others who are not vaccinated or are otherwise at risk for getting seriously sick from COVID-19. Regular testing will help us keep students in the classroom and allow students to take part in the other activities they love.

##### Does my child have to get tested to attend school in person?

- **[If program is optional]** No, COVID-19 tests are optional, although strongly encouraged. If you choose not to enroll your child in the program, they can still attend school in-person. **[School to add additional information, as available.]** Students will not be tested without both the student and guardian giving their consent.
- **[If program is mandatory]** Yes, COVID-19 tests are required to attend school in person.

**[If applicable: For schools where testing policies for in-school learning and extracurricular activities differ]**

##### Does my child have to get tested to take part in school sports and extracurricular activities?

- **[If program is optional]** No, COVID-19 tests are optional, although strongly encouraged. If you choose not to enroll your child in the program, they can still take part in school sports and extracurricular activities. **[School to add**

**additional information, as available.]** Students will not be tested without both the student and guardian giving their consent.

- **[If program is mandatory]** Yes, COVID-19 tests are required to take part in school sports and extracurricular activities.

### **[If applicable: For high schools]**

**My child is fully vaccinated. Do they need to be tested to attend school in person?**

- **[If program is optional]** No, current CDC guidance states that if your child is fully vaccinated, they do not need to be tested unless they develop **COVID-19 symptoms** or have been in **close contact** with a person with COVID-19. Testing will be conducted in accordance with CDC **testing guidance**.
- **[If program is mandatory]** Yes, COVID-19 tests are required to attend school in person.

### **How will the school protect my child's privacy?**

Testing results will be shared only for public health purposes, which may include notifying close contacts that they may have been exposed to COVID-19 and taking other steps to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 in your school community. **Information sharing and notifying of contacts will be done in a way that protects your child's privacy.** Sharing of information about your child will only be done in accordance with applicable law and policies protecting student privacy and the security of your child's data.

## How the program works

### **How will the testing be done?**

The COVID-19 tests will be free, quick, and easy. We will use a viral test, known as **[an antigen (rapid) test, which returns a result in as little as 15 minutes or a nucleic acid amplification (NAAT) test that is conducted by a lab and takes about 24 hours to get results back]**. This test will tell if your child has a current COVID-19 infection, regardless of whether they have symptoms.

### **How is the test given?**

The test will involve **[a nasal swab or an oral swab or spitting into a tube]**. It is a quick and easy test.

- **[For nasal tests]** This nasal test gently swabs the inner part of the lower nostril. The test is not painful. We do not use the longer swabs that reach higher into the nose.
- **[For saliva tests]** This involves taking a saliva sample.

### **When and where will the test be given?**

Our school's testing site will be located **[in the auditorium / in the cafeteria / in the gymnasium]** **[Insert additional details (time, day of the week, etc.) as appropriate]**.

### **Who will conduct the test?**

Members of our school staff will oversee the COVID-19 testing. **[School to share additional information, as available]**.

### **How much does the test cost?**

The COVID-19 tests will be free to students and staff. You will never receive a bill, and your insurance will not be charged.

### **How frequently will my child be tested?**

Our regular testing will take place every **[frequency]**.

### **Will my child miss class to get tested?**

No, testing shouldn't interfere with your child's school schedule. The test is quick and easy, and students will be able to fit the test into their day without disrupting learning **[or free time/playtime]**.

## Results

### **When will we know the results of the test?**

The results of the test should be available within **[test turnaround time]**.

**[If applicable, for schools not using rapid testing]**

**Why do results take so long?**

Our testing program uses [type of test], which does not provide immediate results.

**Is the test reliable?**

Tests can show a false negative or false positive, but most test results are useful and give families the information they need. Sometimes—depending on the type of test and other factors—more testing to confirm a result may be recommended. [School to add additional information on type of test, as appropriate].

**What if my child tests positive?**

We will ask you to keep your child home. You will be asked to provide information about your child's close contacts so that everyone who has been exposed can be notified. We will be in touch to discuss medical care and other support for your child and family. [School to add additional information on quarantine policy, as appropriate].

**What if someone in my child's school tests positive?**

If your child was exposed to someone who has COVID-19, we will be in touch to discuss what actions to take. A COVID-19 test will tell us what further preventive actions are needed.

To register your child for the COVID-19 Testing Program, [visit link, call XXX-XXX-XXXX, emailperson@school.edu].

## FAQs for School Staff

Do you have questions about the free COVID-19 Testing Program at [school name]?

*Below are answers to questions you may have.*

### General Information

**What is the COVID-19 Testing Program?**

[School name]'s COVID-19 Testing Program offers free, regular testing to students and staff for COVID-19. Regular testing means that testing is offered to everyone on a regular basis, even if they don't have symptoms of COVID-19.

**Why is our school testing for COVID-19?**

Regular testing is a safe, effective way to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and help keep our schools open for in-person learning. Many people with COVID-19, especially children and teens, don't have symptoms but can still spread the virus, so regular testing helps find infections before they can spread to others. This is especially important for children under 12 years old who are not yet able to get vaccinated against COVID-19, families and staff with younger children at home, and others who are not vaccinated or are otherwise at risk for getting seriously sick from COVID-19. Regular testing will help us keep students in the classroom and able to take part in the other activities they love.

**Do I have to get tested to attend work in person?**

- [If program is optional] No, COVID-19 tests are optional, although strongly encouraged. If you choose not to enroll in the program, you can still attend work in person.
- [If program is mandatory] Yes, COVID-19 tests are required to attend work in person.

**I'm fully vaccinated. Do I need to be tested?**

- **[If program is optional]** No, current CDC guidance states that if you are fully vaccinated, you do not need to be tested unless you develop **COVID-19 symptoms** or have been in **close contact** with someone with COVID-19. Testing will be conducted in accordance with CDC **testing guidance**.
- **[If program is mandatory]** Yes, COVID-19 tests are required for all teachers and staff.

### How will the school protect my privacy?

Testing results will be shared only for public health purposes, which may include notifying close contacts that they may have been exposed to COVID-19 and taking other steps to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 in your school community. **Information sharing and notifying of contacts will be done in a way that protects your privacy.** Sharing of information will only be done in accordance with applicable law and policies protecting privacy and the security of your data.

## How the program works

### How will the testing be done?

The COVID-19 tests will be free, quick, and easy. We will use a viral test, known as **[an antigen (rapid) test, which returns a result in as little as 15 minutes, or a nucleic acid amplification (NAAT) test that is conducted by a lab and takes about 24 hours to get results back]**. This test will tell if you have a current COVID-19 infection, regardless of whether you have symptoms.

### How is the test given?

The test will involve **[a nasal swab or an oral swab or spitting into a tube]**. It is a quick and easy test.

- **[For nasal tests]** This nasal test gently swabs the inner part of the lower nostril. The test is not painful. We do not use the longer swabs that reach higher into the nose.
- **[For saliva tests]** This involves taking a saliva sample.

### When and where will the test be given?

Our school's testing site will be located **[in the auditorium / in the cafeteria / in the gymnasium]** **[Insert additional details (time, day of the week, etc.) as appropriate]**.

### Who will conduct the test?

Members of our school staff will oversee the COVID-19 testing. **[School to share additional information, as available]**.

### How much does the test cost?

The COVID-19 tests will be free to students and staff. You will never receive a bill, and your insurance will not be charged.

### How frequently will I be tested?

Our regular testing will take place every **[frequency]**.

### Will I miss work to get tested?

No, testing shouldn't interfere with your schedule. The test is quick and easy, and you will be able to fit the test into your day without disrupting work.

## Results

### When will we know the results of the test?

The results of the test should be available within **[test turnaround time]**.

**[If applicable, for schools not using rapid testing]**

### Why do results take so long?

Our testing program uses **[type of test]**, which does not provide immediate results.

### Is the test reliable?

Tests can show a false negative or false positive result, but most test results are useful and give you the information you need. Sometimes—depending on the type of test and other factors—more testing to confirm a result may be recommended. **[School to add additional information on type of test, as appropriate]**.

### What if I test positive?

We will ask you to stay home. You will be asked to provide information about your close contacts so that everyone who has been exposed can be notified. We will be in touch to discuss medical care and other support for you and your family. [\[School to add additional information on quarantine policy, as appropriate\]](#).

### What if someone else at school tests positive?

If you were exposed to someone who has COVID-19, we will be in touch to discuss what actions to take. A COVID-19 test will tell us what further preventive actions are needed.

To register your child for the COVID-19 Testing Program, [\[visit link, call XXX-XXX-XXXX, emailperson@school.edu\]](#).

## Related Resources

- › [Sample Letters for Schools](#)
- › [Sample Social Media & Graphics](#)
- › [K-12 Schools Guidance](#)
- › [Testing Strategies for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#)
- › [Testing Strategies for SARS-CoV-2](#)
- › [Considerations for Case Investigation and Contact Tracing in K-12 Schools and Institutions of Higher Education \(IHEs\)](#)
- › [Types of Masks](#)

## More Information

[Open and Safe Schools](#) 

[Understanding the Value and Feasibility of Routine COVID-19 Testing in Schools](#) 

[New Evidence for Safely Reopening K-12 Schools: Testing Can Reduce Infections and Increase Confidence](#) 

[Rockefeller's K-12 Playbook](#) 

[Case Study Video](#) 

[When to Test – COVID-19 Testing Impact Calculator](#) 

[When to Test – K-12 Playbook](#) 