DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Mohammed Choudhury, Superintendent

K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program Guidebook

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K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program Guidebook

Introduction

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will continue to provide free COVID-19 rapid antigen tests to participating schools for the 2022-2023 school year.

MDH will continue to provide COVID-19 rapid antigen point of care (POC) tests as well as over-the-counter (OTC) tests to public and non-public schools. Schools can use these tests at their discretion for **diagnostic testing** of persons with COVID-19 symptoms and those who come into close contact with someone with COVID-19, and/or **screening testing** of asymptomatic persons in order to identify infected people who may be contagious.

To request tests, please fill out this [form](#). All test requests received by Thursday at 3pm will be added to the following week's distribution list. Please allow 2 weeks for delivery.

The MDH Office of Preparedness and Response (OP&R) will distribute POC tests to school system distribution centers. School systems will redistribute their supplies to their individual public schools. OP&R will distribute POC tests to non-public schools.

Please refer to [CDC guidance on antigen testing](#), [COVID-19 Community Levels](#), and [MDH/MSDE Pre K-12 Schools and Child Care Guidance](#) for more information.

For any questions, please contact MDH.K12Testing@maryland.gov.

A. Requirements for Administering POC Tests

<u>**Please take note that you must have the following paperwork on file and procedures in place prior to the administration of any tests**</u>.

a. **To administer rapid point of care COVID-19 antigen tests on site, your school is required to hold an active CLIA certification and Maryland Laboratory License and keep these on file in accordance with state and federal regulations.**
   - If you **DO** already hold both:
     - You still need to fully complete a [Laboratory Licensing Change Form](#), and fax to the number listed on the form. Please be sure to indicate that you wish to conduct COVID-19 rapid antigen testing, and list the BinaxNow Covid-19 Ag Card and any other rapid antigen test that may be administered (ex. iHealth, Orasure Intelliswab).

- - Once you fax in the form, as long as your CLIA Certificate is not expired, you can start testing immediately and the state will mail out an amended laboratory license with the relevant test category you have added.
  - **Any additional questions can be directed to paul.celli@maryland.gov.**
- If you **DO NOT** already hold both a CLIA certificate and Maryland Laboratory License on file:
  - You need to fully complete a [State Compliance Application](#) for a Maryland Laboratory License, as well as a federal [CLIA Certification Application](#) ($180 fee every two years) and **also** indicate the BinaxNow Covid-19 Ag Card for COVID-19 rapid testing and any other rapid antigen test that may be administered (ex. iHealth, Orasure Intelliswab).
- Application instructions:
  - Both individual applications are to be filled out and signed by the chosen Lab Director and emailed to [paul.celli@maryland.gov.](mailto:paul.celli@maryland.gov) (For rapid point of care COVID-19 antigen testing, which is considered CLIA waived testing, the director at minimum must have a BS degree in a physical science, Biology, Nursing, etc.)
  - Upon your application approval, there is roughly a two-day processing period, after which the lab will be invoiced $180 by CMS for a CLIA waiver. There are no longer fees for state licensure or renewal; the state license does not expire.
  - Once the invoice is paid, the lab will receive a state license and a CLIA certificate of waiver.

b. **It is required to have an authorized prescriber or ordering provider to authorize testing staff to administer tests. Medical review contractors will consider diagnostic test order requirements met if there is a signed order or requisition listing the specific test, an unsigned order or requisition listing the specific test, and an authenticated medical record supporting the authorized provider's intent to order the tests (for example, "order labs", "check blood", "repeat urine". There also needs to be an authenticated medical record supporting intent to order specific tests.**
   - For public schools, we recommend that you outreach to your local health department to discuss the possibility of serving in this role. You may also establish a new relationship with a community provider (e.g. urgent care or hospital).
   - For non-public schools, we recommend that you identify a community provider unless you have an authorized prescriber on your staff. You may

also establish a new relationship with a community provider (e.g. urgent care or hospital).

c. **It is required that you have an individual with qualifications per the latest [executive order](#) on-site to collect COVID-19 specimens.**

d. **It is required that you have access to Maryland's Health Information Exchange (CRISP) or SimpleReport.gov and have the appropriate personnel to report the rapid POC results.**
   ○ See [Information on reporting COVID-19 test results](#) and [Training Video](#).
   ○ See [SimpleReport](#).

e. **It is required that you ensure proper consent or authorization is obtained for students and staff including:**
   ● An example FERPA consent form can be found [here](#).
   ● For a sample consent form, please reach out to mdh.k12testing@maryland.gov.

f. **Please complete testing training, as needed.**
   ● Training by Abbott on their BinaxNOW rapid POC test is required as part of the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). Further training info will be provided, including a schedule for online Abbott BinaxNOW sessions.
   ● **BinaxNow™ COVID-19 Ag Card and Navica™ app set up and test information** can be found [here](#).
   ● The **Abbott BinaxNOW™** training modules recording can be found [here](#).

B. Rapid Antigen Test Result Reporting

a. **Organizations performing COVID-19 rapid POC antigen testing are required to report results to MDH**.

b. **Simple Report**
   - SimpleReport is a fast, free, and easy way for COVID-19 testing facilities to report results to public health departments. A designated staff member can sign up, and once confirmed, can begin entering test results on the platform, which are then reported to MDH.
   - To sign up, visit https://www.simplereport.gov/.

c. **CRISP Reporting**
   - Providers can manually enter the results into the portal established by CRISP (The Maryland Health Information Exchange). For additional details, visit https://crisphealth.org/guidance/providers.
   - Providers can utilize a bulk submission process (for use by entities that are conducting at least 20 rapid POC tests per day and have sufficient infrastructure in place). Please contact Tom Fitzgerald at Tom.Fitzgerald@crisphealth.org for more information.

d. **First-time and existing CRISP users are encouraged to review the following resources**:
   - Training video
   - Information on reporting COVID-19 test results

e. **Over the counter (OTC) COVID-19 antigen test reporting**
   - Parents and staff are encouraged to report positive test results through the Maryland COVID Positive At-Home Test Report Portal.
   - Parents and staff must follow their school's COVID-19 reporting protocols

C. Over the Counter (OTC) Test Information

a. The State has a supply of several types of over the counter tests for distribution to schools. Each test kit includes two tests and detailed instructions for parents and/or staff to follow.

b. School systems/schools will be responsible for distributing their kits to their respective schools, students, and staff. These OTC tests do not require a CLIA certificate of waiver when they are performed and interpreted by the individual being tested or by a parent/guardian.

c. OTC tests should have the same considerations as healthcare providers or school performed POC antigen tests in terms of sensitivity, specificity and recommendations for confirmatory testing.

d. For more information, please see the [Guidance for OTC Tests in Schools](#).

D. Contact Tracing

a. **Universal contact tracing is no longer recommended in schools and child care programs.** When a COVID-19 case has been identified in a staff member or a student/child at any COVID-19 Community Level:

    a. The staff member with COVID-19 or parents of the student/child with COVID-19 should be encouraged to notify their own/their child's close contacts.

    b. Schools and child care programs should provide notification of the COVID-19 case to the school or child care community at the cohort level (e.g. classroom, grade, sports team, bus route, etc.).

    c. Staff and students/children who may be close contacts, regardless of their vaccination status, can continue to attend school and child care as long as they remain asymptomatic.

        i. Those who can wear a mask should do so for 10 days (day 0 is the last date of exposure).

        ii. A test at 3-5 days after exposure is recommended, especially for those who cannot wear a mask (ex. children under 2 years of age).

Based on local conditions, schools and child care programs may elect to perform universal or targeted contact tracing and quarantine of close contacts per CDC quarantine guidance to provide an additional layer of protection. **Contact tracing and quarantine are recommended in response to an outbreak.**

b. **For more information on Maryland's Contact Tracing efforts, please visit** covidLINK

E. MDH/MSDE Guidance Summary for COVID-19 Symptoms, Isolation, and Quarantine

Staff or Student/Child with	Guidance for Management
COVID-19 symptoms	- Staff or student/child should not attend or work in a school or child care setting - COVID-19 testing is recommended - If test is negative, may return when symptoms have improved, no fever for 24 hours without medication, and applicable criteria in the [Communicable Diseases Summary](#) have been met
Positive test for COVID-19, regardless of symptoms	- Staff or student/child must stay home for 5 days from the start of symptoms or from the date of the positive test if no symptoms - After day 5, may return if symptoms have improved and no fever for at least 24 hours without medication - Upon return, must wear a mask for 5 additional days (except while eating, drinking, sleeping or outside) - If unable to wear a mask, may return if they have a negative test at day 5 or later; otherwise, they should remain at home for days 6 -10
Close contact with someone with known or suspected COVID-19 but no symptoms	- Staff or student/child can continue to work in or attend school and child care regardless of vaccination status - Those who can mask should do so for 10 days from the last day of exposure - A test at 3-5 days after exposure is recommended, especially for those who cannot mask (ex. children under 2 years of age).

F. Key Program Contacts

a. **CLIA Certification and Maryland Laboratory License, Office of Health Care Quality**
   - Email: paul.celli@maryland.gov and dana.roberts@maryland.gov

b. **CRISP (The Maryland Health Information Exchange)**
   - Email: Tom.Fitzgerald@crisphealth.org

c. **Abbott BinaxNOW™ Training & Information Contact**:
   - Barbara Mervin, barbara.mervin@abbott.com, (cell) 410-409-3082
   - Abbott Technical Services Team at 1-800-257-9525 between 8 a.m and 8 p.m. EST Monday-Friday or email ts.scr@abbott.com.

d. **Maryland State Department of Education Contact:**
   - Contact: Gabriel Rose
   - Email: Gabriel.rose1@maryland.gov

e. **Maryland Department of Health Contact:**
   - Email: MDH.K12Testing@Maryland.gov

- **Symptomatic Testing** - Testing of individuals with COVID-19 symptoms.
- **Asymptomatic Testing** - Testing of individuals who are <u>not</u> presenting COVID-19 symptoms.
- **PCR Test** - Polymerase chain reaction test; a molecular diagnostic test that is used to determine if you have an active COVID-19 infection by detecting the virus' genetic material.Must be sent to a lab for processing after the test is administered.
- **Rapid Antigen Test/Point-of-Care Test/Rapid POC Test** - An antigen diagnostic test that is used to determine if you have an active COVID-19 infection by detecting specific proteins from the virus.Does not require being sent to a lab for processing, and results are obtained quickly.
- **CLIA Certification** - Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendment; certification that allows a facility, primarily laboratories, to legally examine a person through waived tests in order to assess health, diagnose, and determine treatment. Necessary to have on file in order to administer any COVID-19 test in a K-12 setting.
- **Maryland Laboratory License** - In effect, Maryland's version of the CLIA Certification. Necessary to have on file in order to administer any COVID-19 test in a K-12 setting.
- **Diagnostic testing model** - The testing protocol employed by this program, which tests symptomatic students and staff, as well as those with close contact to confirmed COVID-19 cases
- **Surveillance or Screening testing model** - Testing protocols which screen all students and staff for potential COVID-19 infection regardless of symptoms or exposure. This is not the model that MDH is using for the K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program. CDC recommends that screening testing can be considered in certain circumstances.
- **Close contact of a person with confirmed COVID-19** - Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period* starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated. (see additional information [here](#))
  - **Exception:** In the K–12 indoor classroom setting or a structured outdoor setting where mask use can be observed (i.e., holding class outdoors with educator supervision), the close contact definition excludes students who were between 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a [clinical diagnosis](#)) if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) [correctly and consistently](#) wore well-fitting [masks](#) the entire time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.