

## COVID-19 Testing Resources & Guidance October 12, 2021

Jefferson County Public Health (JCPH) developed this resource to provide an overview of some of the COVID-19 testing opportunities available to our community. The testing resources provided in this material are included for informational purposes only, and JCPH does not endorse or recommend any particular test. There are many testing resources available and JCPH encourages individuals, businesses and local governments to research which test will best suit their needs.

In addition to getting vaccinated, [getting tested](#) for COVID-19 remains one of our best tools for controlling the spread of COVID-19. Getting tested gives individuals the information they need to care for themselves and prevent transmission to others if they have the virus. It's important for anyone who has been exposed to the virus or is experiencing symptoms to get tested for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status or prior infection. Some individuals may be required by their employer or by federal, [state](#) or [local requirements](#) to get tested routinely (and those policies may specify a particular test type to meet requirements).

Individuals who have COVID-19 symptoms should [self-isolate](#) from others until they receive their test result, and if the result is positive, they should continue to isolate.

If you have questions about COVID-19 testing, please contact [HealthEPR@jeffco.us](mailto:HealthEPR@jeffco.us) or visit [www.jeffco.us/testing](http://www.jeffco.us/testing). For more information on COVID-19, visit [www.jeffco.us/coronavirus](http://www.jeffco.us/coronavirus).

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## What is a COVID-19 Test?

There are three categories of COVID-19 tests: molecular-based testing (PCR), antigen testing and serological testing. The information below from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) explains more about each type of test. Read more at <https://covid19.colorado.gov/testing>, or [click here to view an infographic](#) that provides additional information about each test type. For a list of tests that have received emergency use authorization (EUA) from the FDA, [click here](#).

### **Molecular-based testing (PCR):**

- A molecular amplification test looks for genetic material from the COVID-19 virus. Most molecular tests for COVID-19 are called PCR tests. However, there are a few other molecular tests that are not called PCR.
- PCR tests tell you if you have current or recent COVID-19 infection.
- PCR tests are not useful for determining past COVID-19 infection among people who are fully recovered.
- PCR tests are currently the most reliable way to test for COVID-19.
- Results for PCR tests are typically returned within 24-48 hours after a lab receives the samples. Results may take longer depending on the lab used.

### **Antigen testing:**

- An antigen test can quickly detect pieces of proteins from the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Antigen tests tell you if you have current or recent COVID-19 infection.
- The test is similar to a rapid flu test and is usually performed at the point of care by collecting a sample from the nasal cavity using a swab. Most antigen tests return results in approximately 15 minutes.
- Antigen tests are less sensitive than PCR tests. A PCR test may be needed to confirm a negative antigen test.

### **Serological testing:**

- A serological test is a blood test that looks for antibodies in your blood. It can detect the body's immune response to the infection caused by the virus, rather than detecting the virus itself.
- While these tests can detect previous exposure to COVID-19, they can't tell if a patient is currently infected and able to spread the virus to others.
- JCPH does not recommend using these tests to find out if you currently have COVID-19.
- Agencies listed under [Public Health Order 21-005](#) are not able to utilize serological testing to meet the requirements of the Order.
- More information about serological testing can be found in [CDC's Interim Guidelines for COVID-19 Antibody Testing](#).

## Testing Options for Childcares

Test	Eligible	Cost	Test Type	Requirements
<a href="#">U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) COVID-19 Testing Program</a>	Childcare centers (Private/independent, Home-based: licensed through states, federally funded)	None	RT-PCR (Pooled testing)	Signed consents prior to testing
<a href="#">COVIDCheck Colorado</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools, including higher education</li> <li>For-profits</li> <li>Non-profits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option 1: \$500 one-time implementation fee - Testing is off-site at the existing community test sites. (Waived for non-profits.)</li> <li>Option 2: \$500 one-time implementation fee + \$50/test - On-site testing for employees. (Implementation waived for non-profits, variable testing fee.)</li> </ul>	PCR test with either nasal or saliva sampling	
<a href="#">Jogan Health</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any business, organization, group, etc. interested in COVID-19 testing</li> <li>No upper limits to how many employees Jogan can test</li> <li>No minimum limits, however employers testing under 10 employees may not find this program cost-effective</li> </ul>	Dependent on needs and the amount of testing participants	Select from a menu dependent on needs: 1-day result PCR, Rapid Antigen, or Antibody Testing	

## Testing Options for K-12 Schools

Test	Eligible	Cost	Test Type	Requirements
<a href="#">CDPHE COVID-19 Testing Program</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Colorado K-12 schools</li> <li>Private schools, tribal schools and CSI charter schools</li> </ul>	None	Rapid antigen testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly testing</li> <li>Students under 18 need parental consent</li> <li>Public and non-CSI charter schools need school district approval to enroll</li> <li>Program must be made available to all students and staff within participating school (both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals)</li> </ul>
<a href="#">U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) COVID-19 Testing Program</a>	K-12 public and private schools	None	RT-PCR (Pooled testing)	Signed consents prior to testing
<a href="#">Bulk Abbott BinaxNOW</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>K-12 schools</li> <li>Congregate shelters, homeless service providers, senior facilities</li> <li>First responders, law enforcement, EMS</li> </ul>	Variable  Tests are free through an online form. There may be costs for other required supplies, such as administrative time and PPE supplies.	Rapid antigen testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CLIA Waiver required: <a href="#">CLIA Application</a>. Follow steps as listed on application and Abbott BinaxNOW request form.</li> <li>Place orders via CDPHE's <a href="#">Abbott BinaxNOW Request Form</a>. These orders are being filled as inventory allows.</li> <li>Per the <a href="#">toolkit</a>: "It is each testing entities' responsibility to ensure that the BinaxNOW tests are administered properly and that you are following all regulations and guidelines regarding test administration and results reporting."</li> <li>Read further: <a href="#">Guide to Abbott BinaxNOW</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note: There are many considerations, such as needing to report test results by the business's appointed test administrators, test quality control and training personnel to perform tests,</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

				<p>are required. Read through the toolkit to determine if this is the best option for you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Used as a part of serial/surveillance testing plan</li><li>• Any entity utilizing this testing method is required to enter test results for any test administered within 48 hours</li><li>• For questions, contact <a href="mailto:cdphe_covidtesting@state.co.us">cdphe_covidtesting@state.co.us</a>.</li></ul>
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## Testing Options for Businesses, Congregate Care Settings and Other

Test	Eligible	Cost	Test Type	Requirements
<a href="#">Jogan Health</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any business, organization, group, etc. interested in COVID-19 testing</li> <li>No upper limits to how many employees Jogan can test</li> <li>No minimum limits, however employers testing under 10 employees may not find this program cost-effective</li> </ul>	Dependent on needs and the amount of testing participants	Select from a menu dependent on needs: 1-day result PCR, rapid antigen, or antibody testing	
<a href="#">COVIDCheck Colorado</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools, including higher education</li> <li>For-profits</li> <li>Non-profits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option 1: \$500 one-time implementation fee - Testing is off-site at the existing community test sites. (Waived for non-profits.)</li> <li>Option 2: \$500 one-time implementation fee + \$50/test - On-site testing for employees. (Implementation waived for non-profits, variable testing fee.)</li> </ul>	PCR test with either nasal or saliva sampling	
<a href="#">U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) COVID-19 Testing Program</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>K-12 schools</li> <li>Shelters (homeless, domestic violence, faith-based, youth, family)</li> <li>Youth-serving organizations (YMCA, Boys &amp; Girls Clubs, Boy &amp; Girl Scouts, 4-H, FFA)</li> <li>Correctional facilities</li> </ul>	None	RT-PCR (Pooled testing)	Signed consents prior to testing

	<p>(jails, usually locally operated in counties/cities and federally, privately, or state operated prisons)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Childcare centers (Private/independent, Home-based: licensed through states, federally funded)</li> <li>• Other (nursing homes)</li> </ul>			
<a href="#">Bulk Abbott BinaxNOW</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• K-12 schools</li> <li>• Congregate shelters, homeless service providers, senior facilities</li> <li>• First responders, law enforcement, EMS</li> </ul>	<p>Variable</p> <p>Tests are free through an online form. There may be costs for other required supplies, such as administrative time and PPE supplies.</p>	<p>Rapid antigen testing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLIA Waiver required: <a href="#">CLIA Application</a>. Follow steps as listed on application and Abbott BinaxNOW request form.</li> <li>• Place orders via CDPHE’s <a href="#">Abbott BinaxNOW Request Form</a>. These orders are being filled as inventory allows.</li> <li>• Per the <a href="#">toolkit</a>: “It is each testing entities’ responsibility to ensure that the BinaxNOW tests are administered properly and that you are following all regulations and guidelines regarding test administration and results reporting.” Read further: <a href="#">Guide to Abbott BinaxNOW</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Note: There are many considerations, such as needing to report test results by the business’s appointed test administrators, test quality control, and training personnel to perform tests, are required. Read through the toolkit to determine if this is the best option for you.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Used as a part of serial/surveillance testing plan</li> <li>• Any entity utilizing this testing method is required to enter test results for any test administered within 48 hours.</li> <li>• For questions, contact <a href="mailto:cdphe_covidtesting@state.co.us">cdphe_covidtesting@state.co.us</a>.</li> </ul>
<p>In-house Testing</p>				<p>If you need help with which questions to consider before starting an internal testing program, contact JCPH at <a href="mailto:HealthEPRCommunityTesting@jeffco.us">HealthEPRCommunityTesting@jeffco.us</a>.</p>



## Testing Options for Individuals

Individuals have many options for getting a COVID-19 test.

- **Find a testing site location that offers free COVID-19 testing:**
  - Check JCPH's website for testing locations and appointments near you:
    - [www.jeffco.us/4075/testing](http://www.jeffco.us/4075/testing)
  - Check COVIDCheck's website for testing locations near you:
    - <https://covidcheckcolorado.org/find-our-sites-testing>
  - Check Mako Medical's website for locations and appointments near you:
    - <https://mako.exchange/scheduler/selector/?state=CO>
  - Check the website for CDPHE-sponsored testing sites:
    - <https://covid19.colorado.gov/testing>
- **Obtain a test from your employer, if applicable.**
- **Get at-home tests through CDPHE's Rapid At-Home Testing Program.**
  - Colorado is distributing free rapid COVID-19 self-tests directly to people's homes. The program uses Abbott BinaxNOW™ rapid antigen tests that show results within 15 minutes.
  - Find more information at: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/covid-19-testing-at-home>
- **Purchase an over-the-counter COVID-19 test:**
  - There are FDA-authorized COVID-19 at-home tests and collection kits.
    - Some at-home kits allow you to collect your own sample and test it with a system that gives you results quickly at home.
    - Some at-home collection kits allow you to collect your own sample and then send it to a laboratory for analysis.
    - [See the full list of tests that have received emergency use authorization \(EUA\) from the FDA.](#)
  - Simply search your web browser for "OTC COVID-19 Tests" or "Over-the-Counter COVID-19 Tests" to find locations near you that offer the opportunity to purchase these tests.
- **Schedule an appointment with a pharmacy or urgent/acute care clinic.** Please note there may be a cost associated with this visit and/or test.

## Additional Testing Information

- Jefferson County Public Health: [www.jeffco.us/testing](http://www.jeffco.us/testing)
- CDPHE: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/testing>
- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/testing.html>

