

What is COVID-19 and why are you being screened for it?

COVID-19 is a highly infectious virus. Symptoms can range from mild fever and cough to severe symptoms that require hospitalization and can lead to death. People who have been exposed to COVID-19 can spread the virus even if they are not experiencing symptoms.

Staff at this site have a screening tool that asks questions and determines whether people need COVID-19 testing. Screening is done to help protect everyone and prevent spread of the virus.

If you have been screened and have symptoms of COVID-19, or have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, it is critical that you self-isolate and are tested as soon as possible to reduce risks of serious illness to yourself, other clients, staff and the community.

What does the COVID-19 testing process look like?

People experiencing homelessness are eligible to access PCR testing at a COVID-19 Assessment Centre (CAC). Take home PCR tests and Rapid Antigen Tests may also be accessible onsite (where resources are available).

1. The process for PCR testing at a CAC is as follows:
 - a. Staff will arrange transportation for you to go to a CAC or hospital.
 - b. When you arrive at a CAC, healthcare staff will swab the inside your nose and/or your throat to collect a specimen to test.
 - c. After your test, you will receive your test results. You will be required to self-isolate in place while you are awaiting your test results.
2. The process for take-home PCR tests are as follows:
 - a. Staff will provide you with a specimen collection cup.
 - b. You will independently provide a saliva specimen for testing (you should not eat or drink for 30 minutes prior to the test).
 - c. Staff will send the saliva specimen for testing to a laboratory
 - d. You will be required to self-isolate in place while you are awaiting your test results.
3. The process for Rapid Antigen Tests are as follows:
 - a. Staff will provide you with a swab to collect the specimen.
 - b. Tilt your head back, independently insert the swab into your nostril (up to 2.5cm, it should not hurt or cause any pain. If it hurts, you've gone too far) and rotate the swab against the inside of your nose 5 to 10 times.

- c. Remove the swab and complete the same steps in the other nostril with the same swab.
- d. Staff will direct you to put the swab in a testing tube.
- e. Staff will test the specimen using a testing device.
- f. Your results will be available within 15 minutes.
- g. If you are experiencing symptoms and receive a negative result, you may require PCR testing at a CAC or by using a take-home PCR test.

What If I Have a Negative Result?

- If you are experiencing symptoms and receive a negative result but are NOT identified as a close contact of a person with COVID-19, you are required to continue to self-isolate until you have noted symptom improvement for a full 24 hour period (or 48 hours if gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting and diarrhea).
- If you have been identified as a close contact of a person with COVID-19, you are required to self-isolate for 10 days from the last date of contact from the positive case.

What If I Have a Positive Result?

- If you receive a positive result, you are required to complete the self-isolation period as outlined by public health guidelines.
- [Eligible clients](#) can be referred to the COVID-19 Isolation and Recovery Site where medical staff are available to support people to self-isolate and receive medical care if required. Harm reduction supports including safer supply are also available onsite.

What will happen if you refuse to be tested for COVID-19?

It is critical that you go for testing if you have been advised to do so by staff. By refusing, you are putting yourself and people around you at risk of serious illness. Take-home testing kits and rapid antigen tests are easy to use and you can complete the test yourself.

People who refuse testing will be required to self-isolate as directed by Public Health.