



# COVID-19 Testing in Oregon's Schools

## FAQs *(Updated 07-28-2023)*

### Program Questions

#### **Q: What is the purpose of the COVID-19 diagnostic and exposure testing program in Oregon's schools?**

The purpose of the statewide diagnostic and exposure testing program is to provide rapid COVID-19 testing to students and staff who develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and to test students and staff who are exposed to COVID-19 to identify additional cases and reduce onward transmission of COVID-19.

#### **Q: What happened to the test to stay program?**

The test to stay program was a form of modified quarantine. Effective March 12, 2022, Oregon paused contact tracing and quarantine for the general population, including K-12 settings. Because quarantine is no longer required in K-12 settings, test to stay is no longer needed. However, Oregon does offer enhanced exposure testing to cohorts which include individuals at increased risk of severe illness.

#### **Q: How should School Testing Administrators implement the Enhanced Exposure Testing protocol?**

Enhanced exposure testing is flexible and can be designed to meet each school's individual needs.

For cohorts (e.g. extracurricular groups, sports teams, or a third grade class,) which include individuals at increased risk of severe disease (e.g., individuals with underlying medical conditions or immunocompromised status, individuals age 65 and older, and those who live with individuals at increased risk), schools should consider offering testing once to all individuals. For cohorts which include medically fragile individuals, schools should consider offering testing to all individuals several times for the 10 days following exposure.

The first test should occur as soon as the exposure has been identified—because of delays in testing and case reporting, this may be several days following the actual exposure.

Additional mitigation layers, including universal masking, should be thoroughly considered to prevent onward transmission within the cohort.

**Q: Can schools use the BinaxNOW test kits to conduct regular/monthly schoolwide testing for COVID-19 (i.e., surveillance)?**

No. The BinaxNOW tests may only be used in accordance with the [School Testing Guidance](#) from OHA/ODE. These tests may not be used for surveillance testing of students or staff without symptoms or exposure.

**Q: Can my school have more than one School Testing Administrator?**

Yes! It is recommended that schools designate a back-up school testing administrator in the event of absence of the primary testing administrator.

**Q: How long does it take to receive the BinaxNOW test kits?**

7-10 business days after the registration form is submitted.

**Q: If a case of COVID-19 is identified in school, should schools test the entire exposed cohort that same day?**

Testing all exposed individuals in a population with high levels of immunity is neither feasible nor likely to benefit health and safety. OHA recommends that schools offer enhanced exposure testing to cohorts which include individuals at increased risk of disease (e.g., individuals with underlying medical conditions or immunocompromised status, individuals age 65 and older, and those who live with individuals at increased risk) or medically fragile individuals.

**Q: How should our school share the BinaxNOW antigen test result? Should we give the results to the student as soon as the test is completed, or wait until the parent/guardian arrives to pick up the ill student?**

The test result (positive, negative, or indeterminant) should be shared with the parent or guardian when they arrive to pick up the student. Do not share the test results with the student until the parent or guardian arrives, to ensure the student has the appropriate emotional support as needed. Refer to section 7 "Mental, Social, and Emotional Health," in the [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) guidance. If a school allows 15-17 to consent to testing, test results can be shared directly with that student.

### **Consent Questions**

**Q: Is consent required prior to testing? If so, can a student provide verbal consent?**

OHA requires written consent from a parent and/or guardian for all students under the age of 15 receiving the BinaxNOW test. Schools may choose to allow 15 – 17-year-olds to consent to receiving a test under ORS 109.640(2)(a).

**Q: Can a parent opt-out of the student(s) receiving the BinaxNOW COVID test?**

Yes. A parent may choose not to provide consent for COVID-19 testing.

**Q: If a student does not have a consent form signed, but starts to show symptoms and you call the parent/guardian to inform them of their student's symptoms and they provide verbal permission/consent to perform the test, are you able to give the test?**

No. Written consent must be on file prior to administering the BinaxNOW test. We strongly recommend distributing the consent forms to parent(s)/guardian(s) before launching school testing.

**Q: Where can I obtain copies of the consent form in other languages?**

The general and minor consent forms are available in the following languages below, in addition to our [website](#) located under the Resources tab:

Spanish

<https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/l3560e.pdf>

Russian

<https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/lr3560e.pdf>

Vietnamese

<https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/lv3560e.pdf>

Marshallese

<https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/l333560e.pdf>

Traditional Chinese

<https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/l43560e.pdf>

Simplified Chinese

<https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/l3560e.pdf>

Somali

<https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/li3560e.pdf>

Korean

<https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/lk3560e.pdf>

Arabic

<https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/la3560e.pdf>

Chuukese

<https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/l273560B.pdf>

Hmong

<https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/lh3560e.pdf>

## Testing Questions

**Q: I received an “indeterminate” result after conducting the test. Should I conduct the test again?**

If the BinaxNOW test gives an INDETERMINATE result, repeat the test with a new card. If INDETERMINATE again, do not repeat a 3rd time. Do not use any additional cards from the box, and contact OHA.

**Q: If the testing administrator leaves the room briefly while waiting for the 15-minute antigen test to finish, should all PPE be removed before exiting the room?**

Yes. In order to decrease the risks of (1) testing administrator exposure and (2) cross-contamination of the environment, all PPE should be considered contaminated and removed prior to leaving the testing area. This includes disposable gloves, single-use medical grade mask, and eye protection. Please refer to the [testing guidance document](#) for more guidance on putting on and removing PPE.

**Q: The BinaxNOW website details the use of the Navica smartphone App. Are schools required to use the app for testing?**

OHA does not recommend use of the NAVICA smartphone App.

**Q: Module 2 video states 8 drops of reagent, module 4 states 6 drops, and the OHA document says 6 drops. Are we supposed to do 6 drops?**

6 drops of reagent should be used when conducting testing. 8 drops of reagent should be used when conducting quality control.

**Q: What happens if our school runs out of BinaxNOW tests and needs to order more?**

When a school’s supply is low, public schools should contact their district office to receive additional tests. Superintendents, or their delegee, and private schools can submit a new order for their district [here](#).

**Q: What should I do with expired tests?**

Please contact OHA at [schooltesting.covid@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:schooltesting.covid@dhsosha.state.or.us) regarding expired tests.

**Q: What is the protocol for disposing the BinaxNOW test after a student or staff has been tested?**

All components of the used test kit may be discarded into a regular trash can along with discarded PPE. Additional information about the proper disposal of medical waste exposed to COVID-19 may be found here:

<https://www.oregon.gov/deq/FilterDocs/COVID19MedicalWasteFS.pdf>

The used reagent of the BinaxNOW tests are not considered a hazardous substance. The used swab of the BinaxNOW test kit is not considered an infectious sample or

culture. See this DEQ factsheet for information on disposal of medical waste exposed to COVID-19: <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/FilterDocs/COVID19MedicalWasteFS.pdf>. The decision to dispose of used BinaxNOW tests was made after consulting state rules and in collaboration with state experts at OHA and DEQ.

All unused BinaxNOW kits and reagents should be returned to OHA at the conclusion of the K-12 school testing program.

**Q: Do you have suggestions for choosing the best location for the student or staff to do the self-swab collection?**

Choose an area that has ample space that allows the testing administrator to observe the self-swab from a safe distance, and also allows for privacy. The area should be well-ventilated. Facilities without HVAC systems could designate an area with an open window. If your facility has a convenient outdoor area (with overhead protection from rain if needed), this can also be considered.

**Q: How effective are the BinaxNOW tests at detecting COVID-19 in persons without symptoms?**

The BinaxNOW rapid antigen work well to detect infection in individuals with high viral loads of COVID-19 — and who are most likely to be actively transmitting the virus to others. However, false negative results are common.

**Document accessibility:** For individuals with disabilities or individuals who speak a language other than English, OHA can provide information in alternate formats such as translations, large print, or braille. Contact the COVID-19 Communications Unit at 1-971-673-2411, 711 TTY or [COVID19.LanguageAccess@dhsoha.state.or.us](mailto:COVID19.LanguageAccess@dhsoha.state.or.us).