

COVID-19 Testing in Oregon's K-12 Schools

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Introduction	3
Registration	4
How to register	4
Abbott BinaxNOW testing	4
How to re-order tests	4
Liability	5
Privacy.....	5
Abbott BinaxNOW training.....	6
Personal protective equipment (PPE) use	7
PPE components.....	7
Putting on personal protective equipment	7
Extended use of eye protection and mask	8
Taking off personal protective equipment, hand washing, and disinfecting eye protection	8
Cleaning face shield or goggles.....	9
Storage of face shield or goggles.....	9
Testing.....	10
When to test.....	10
When a student or staff member has symptoms	10
When a student, staff member, or school cohort has been exposed to a case of COVID-19 and is symptom-free	10
Abbott BinaxNOW point-of-care antigen testing	11
Test storage.....	11
Quality control.....	11
Specimen collection and handling.....	13
Specimen testing.....	13
Specimen disposal	14
Abbott BinaxNOW logging requirements.....	15
Logging tests performed.....	15
Consent forms	15
Understanding test results	16
How to interpret negative test results.....	16
How to interpret positive test results.....	16
Camps	17
Appendices.....	18

Introduction

To mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission in Oregon’s K-12 schools, Oregon Health Authority (OHA) will support COVID-19 testing in public and private K-12 schools in Oregon offering in-person instruction for students and staff who display symptoms of COVID-19 or who have been exposed to COVID-19.

This program is intended to test symptomatic or exposed students and school staff only and should not be used to screen asymptomatic individuals or those without a known exposure to COVID-19.

Registration

How to register

Abbott BinaxNOW testing

All in-school testing using the Abbott BinaxNOW will be performed under the umbrella of a Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) certificate of waiver and a standing physician order held by OHA.

In order to test for COVID-19 under this waiver, schools must register by completing the online registration and attestation [form](#). OHA will send a confirmation of registration via email. **All tests will be sent to school district offices; school superintendents or their delegee will be responsible for test distribution within their school district.**

Schools may begin COVID-19 testing using the Abbott BinaxNOW once these tests are received, personal protective equipment (PPE) is available, staff or volunteer training is completed, and other testing plan elements are in place per this guidance. All COVID-19 testing performed under this CLIA waiver must be performed in accordance with the procedures outlined in this guidance. Nothing in this guidance is intended to change the manufacturer's instructions.

Schools must notify OHA via email to schooltesting.covid@odhsoha.oregon.gov regarding any changes made to the information provided on the initial registration form, including changes in school testing staff.

Identification of a school testing administrator

The school testing administrator is a person(s) assigned to perform and log all on-site COVID-19 testing. If a school has a school nurse or trained medical professional on staff, that person could perform the testing administration, however, **the school testing administrator does not need to be a medical professional**. The school testing administrator(s) must complete all required online training modules for the Abbott BinaxNOW point-of-care antigen test and carefully review all training regarding personal protective equipment (PPE) use included in this guidance. Districts or schools should designate at least one back-up school testing administrator in the event of absence of the primary testing administrator. School testing administrators will oversee specimen collection. Parent and community volunteers can also be a school testing administrator(s).

How to re-order tests

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 BinaxNOW tests (to be used on-site) for their district [here](#).

An email confirming receipt of the order will be sent and **tests will arrive within 7-10 business days**.

Liability

Schools should contact their own legal counsel, but schools and school personnel, including volunteers, are likely to be entitled to immunity for claims of loss resulting from performing COVID-19 testing under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act, except for acts of willful misconduct. For additional information about the PREP Act, visit: <https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/1e3529.pdf> and <https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/legal/prepact/Pages/default.aspx>.

Privacy

Student and staff test results, both positive and negative, shall be kept confidential. Student test results may be shared with the student and their legal guardian only.

Abbott BinaxNOW training

The Abbott BinaxNOW test is most accurate when an individual is tested in the early stages of infection, when the amount of virus in the respiratory tract is generally highest. Under OHA's CLIA waiver, the Abbott BinaxNOW test may be used to test:

- Students or staff with symptoms consistent with COVID-19;
- Exposed students or staff to identify additional cases—exposure testing;
- Exposed cohorts 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)—enhanced exposure testing

The Abbott BinaxNOW testing program may not be used for testing students or staff without symptoms or known exposure (i.e., asymptomatic screening) in schools.

The Abbott BinaxNOW point-of-care antigen test produces a COVID-19 test result in 15 minutes. The test does not require a machine or device to operate and can be administered by any person who has completed all required training modules for the Abbott BinaxNOW point-of-care antigen test and carefully reviewed all training regarding personal protective equipment (PPE) use included in this guidance. The test requires a shallow nasal swab which **must** be self-administered under observation. **If a student or staff member is not able to self-collect the specimen under observation, the school testing administrator should refer the student or staff member to their health care provider for COVID-19 testing.** Parents or guardians may also assist students with the self-collection process if they are present when testing is being performed.

The Abbott BinaxNOW demonstration video is available [here](#).

The package instructions must be read and the demonstration video must be watched in their entirety prior to performing tests on individuals. We recommend that the school testing administrator watch the demonstration video several times. It is the responsibility of the school leadership to verify that the school testing administrator has completed the necessary training requirements.

Further information about the proper use of the Abbott BinaxNOW test kits can be found on the package insert and [here](#). This includes detailed information regarding specimen collection, handling, transportation, and storage.

This [video](#) by Dr. Susan Coffin provides an excellent overview of the Abbott BinaxNOW testing process from start to finish, and must be reviewed by all school testing administrators in addition to the Abbott BinaxNOW training modules prior to performing tests.

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Personal protective equipment (PPE) use

Abbott BinaxNOW specimens are collected by nasal swab. For most students and staff, these swabs can be self-administered (i.e., the person being tested can place the swab into their own nose) under observation by the testing administrator. **Students and staff who are unable to self-collect the specimen under observation by the school testing administrator should be referred to their health care provider for COVID-19 testing.** Parents or guardians may also assist students with the self-collection process if they are present when testing is being performed.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) refers to equipment worn to minimize exposure and protect the wearer from infection. Because the Abbott BinaxNOW swabs can be self-administered, the PPE required for testing is minimal.

PPE components

School testing administrators should wear the following components:

1. A disposable medical-grade surgical mask (an N95 respirator is not needed)
2. Reusable eye protection (goggles or face shield)
3. Disposable gloves.

A gown is not required. The single-use medical-grade mask and gloves should be thrown away once testing is completed. The eye protection should be set aside for cleaning and disinfection. Discarded PPE does not have to be treated as biohazardous waste and can be disposed of into a regular garbage can.

We recommend that the following [handout](#) for putting on and taking off PPE be printed and posted in the area where PPE is stored and testing performed.

School districts will be responsible for securing PPE. The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and ODE have published a list of all the state price agreements districts or schools can use to purchase PPE. That list is available for download [here](#).

Putting on personal protective equipment

Before collecting the specimen(s) for testing, personal protective equipment (PPE) should be put on in the following order:

1. Perform hand hygiene by washing hands with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
2. Remove cloth face covering and put on disposable medical-grade mask.
3. Put on face shield or goggles.

4. Put on disposable gloves.

Best practice recommendations for PPE use include:

- Medical-grade mask and eye protection should cover the eyes, nose, and mouth at all times.
- Staff must perform hand hygiene before and after touching, readjusting, or taking off mask or eye protection.

Extended use of eye protection and mask

When multiple people are being tested in one time period, the same medical-grade mask and eye protection can be worn during multiple specimen collection events (e.g., in the case of group testing). This will optimize school PPE supply and minimize contact with contaminated PPE. However, gloves should be changed after each test is completed. A new pair of disposable gloves should be worn for each test performed.

Taking off personal protective equipment, hand washing, and disinfecting eye protection

After all specimens have been collected and all tests have been completed, PPE should be taken off in the following order:

1. Remove gloves and discard into a trash can.
2. Clean hands by washing hands with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
3. Remove face shield or goggles by carefully grabbing the strap and pulling upwards and away from the head without touching the front of the face shield or goggles.
4. Put on a new pair of disposable gloves.
5. Clean and disinfect eye protection, following manufacturer labeling directions. For more details, see below “Cleaning face shield or goggles.”
6. Remove gloves and discard into a trash can.
7. Clean hands by washing hands with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
8. Put away clean eye protection in a labeled bag or container.
9. Remove medical-grade mask by carefully untying or unhooking and pulling away from the face without touching the front of the mask and discard into a trash can.
10. Clean hands by washing hands with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
11. Put on your personal, non-medical (e.g., cloth) face covering.

Cleaning face shield or goggles

When manufacturer instructions for cleaning and disinfection are unavailable, consider the following steps according to the [CDC](#):

1. Cleaning: while wearing gloves, carefully wipe the inside, *followed by the outside* of the face shield or goggles using a clean cloth saturated with neutral detergent solution or cleaner wipe.
2. Disinfection: carefully wipe the *outside* of the face shield or goggles using a wipe or clean cloth saturated with EPA-registered hospital disinfectant solution. Leave wet for the amount of time specified on the disinfectant label.
3. Final wipe down: wipe the outside of face shield or goggles with clean water or alcohol to remove residue.
4. Drying: air dry or use clean absorbent towels until fully dry.
5. Remove gloves and clean hands using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Storage of face shield or goggles

After cleaning, disinfecting and drying, eye protection can be stored in a clean bag or container. Eye protection and storage bag/container should be labeled with staff name to prevent sharing and should not be stored with other belongings or other PPE.

Testing

When to test

Abbott BinaxNOW tests should only be used to test students with consent on file or staff who agree to testing.

Testing may be offered in the following two scenarios:

When a student or staff member has symptoms

When a student or staff member develops symptoms consistent with COVID-19 while at school, testing may be used to inform their care. COVID-19 symptoms include cough, fever or chills, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, new nasal congestion, and runny nose and students or staff may be tested for any of these symptoms. Testing is encouraged regardless of vaccination status.

Students or staff with COVID-19 symptoms should not be asked to return to school for COVID-19 testing if symptoms develop while not at school. OHA has a separate [“return-to-school” testing protocol](#) that allows students or staff with symptoms to return to school for COVID-19 testing. Testing under this protocol is available only to school nurses.

When a student, staff member, or school cohort has been exposed to a case of COVID-19 and is symptom-free

When a student, staff member, or school cohort has been exposed to a case of COVID-19 and is symptom-free, two types of testing may be offered:

1. **General exposure testing:** testing at any time within 10 days of the exposure and ideally 5 days following exposure
2. **Enhanced exposure testing:** testing several times during the 10 days following exposure

General exposure testing

Applies to all exposures

General exposure testing applies to all types of exposures—those which occurred in K-12 settings, during extracurriculars, in the community or in the household. Testing of students and staff who have been exposed to known cases of COVID-19 may occur at any time *within* 10 days of their exposure. This testing is most likely to identify additional cases approximately 5 days following exposure. General exposure testing may also be used at the direction of the local public health authority (e.g., when outbreaks occur).

Enhanced exposure testing

Applies to K-12 exposures in cohorts 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)

Testing of cohorts which include individuals at increased risk of severe disease

Optional testing of cohorts 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) may identify additional cases and prevent onward transmission of COVID-19. In these high-risk cohorts, schools may consider offering testing once to all individuals. The 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 considered to prevent onward transmission within the cohort.

Testing of cohorts which include medically fragile individuals

Optional testing of cohorts which include medically fragile individuals may identify additional cases and prevent onward transmission of COVID-19. In these exceptional-risk cohorts, schools may consider offering testing to all individuals several times during 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 considered to prevent onward transmission within the cohort.

Abbott BinaxNOW point-of-care antigen testing

The school testing administrator **must** follow the instructions provided in the Abbott BinaxNOW package insert regarding test storage, quality control, specimen collection and handling, and specimen disposal as detailed [here](#). The Abbott BinaxNOW testing instructions detailed in this section must be followed exactly to ensure an accurate result.

Test storage

Test kits (test cards and reagent) must be stored at room temperature (between 59 and 86°F).

Quality control

The Abbott BinaxNOW tests have a built-in quality control system which must be verified each time a test is run. In addition, quality control testing using a positive and negative control swab should be performed once as training for each new school testing administrator, and upon receipt of each new shipment of BinaxNOW tests.

Built-in quality control

Each time an Abbott BinaxNOW test is performed, the school testing administrator must verify that the built-in quality controls are functional. There are two built-in quality controls.

1. Each card test has a blue line present at the control line position which should be visible when the test package is opened.
2. If this blue line is not present, the test card should be discarded.
3. During each test, the blue line should change its color to pink/purple.
4. If the blue quality control has not changed to pink/purple at the time the test result is read, the test card should be discarded and the result recorded as inconclusive.



Blue line should be present before test is performed.



Blue line will turn pink/purple during test.

Positive and negative control swabs

Each BinaxNOW test kit includes 40 tests plus a positive control swab. A blank sterile swab can be used as a negative control swab. Each of these control swabs (i.e., both a positive and negative swab) should be run once with each new shipment of test kits and once for each new test administrator in order to confirm that the test is working as anticipated and to demonstrate school testing administrator competency. The blue control line must be present prior to performing the quality control swabs. If the blue line is not present, discard the test and contact schooltesting.covid@odhsoha.oregon.gov for OHA BinaxNOW testing support. The positive control swab should result as positive. The negative control swab should result as negative. If the positive or negative control swabs do not result as anticipated, contact schooltesting.covid@odhsoha.oregon.gov for OHA BinaxNOW testing support. You may also contact the Abbott BinaxNOW Technical Support Advice Line at 1-800-257-9525 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. EST or by emailing ts.scr@abbott.com.

Specimen collection and handling

Specimens must be collected by the person being tested, under observation by the school testing administrator. The person being tested should be instructed to insert the swab gently into the nostril until resistance is encountered and not more than one inch deep. The person being tested should then be instructed to rotate the swab 5 times around the outer edge of the nostril. Using the same swab, this process should be repeated in the other nostril. While many students and staff will be able to self-collect specimens using this method, not all students or staff will feel comfortable doing so. While students may be encouraged through this process, they should never be forced or coerced. It should be recognized that age, certain medical conditions (e.g., anxiety, ADHD) or disabilities may prevent swabs from being collected safely. If there is any doubt as to whether a specimen may be safely self-collected by an individual, the individual should be referred to their healthcare provider for COVID-19 testing.

Specimens should be tested as soon as possible after collection. The specimen should not be returned to its paper wrapper, but may be stored in a clean, unused plastic tube labeled with the student or staff member's name and date of birth for up to one hour. If the specimen cannot be tested within one hour of collection, it cannot be tested and should be discarded.

Tests should be administered in a private setting, such as a designated health or isolation room. Abbott BinaxNOW test kits should not be stored in the same room as tests are performed to avoid the possibility of contamination of test materials. Surfaces of testing rooms should be regularly cleaned and disinfected, including between persons being tested.

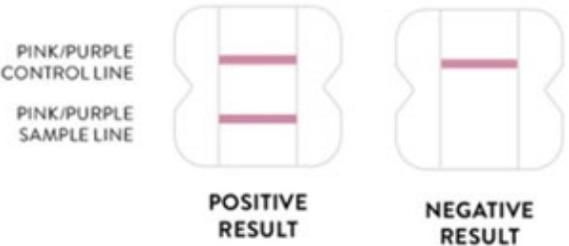
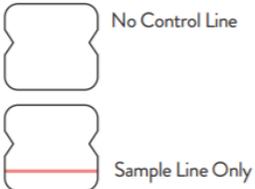
Specimen testing

To perform the test, the following steps should be observed:

1. Open kit and lay it flat—do not use if the pouch is damaged or open
2. Verify presence of blue line at control line position
3. Hold the extraction reagent bottle $\frac{1}{2}$ inch above the top hole—do not allow the bottle to touch the test card
4. Slowly add 6 drops of reagent to the topmost hole of the swab well
5. Insert specimen swab into the bottom hole and firmly push upwards so that the swab tip is visible in the top hole
6. Rotate the swab clockwise 3 times in the reagent liquid
7. Peel off adhesive liner and close and seal the test card

The test should be read promptly at 15 minutes. A dedicated stopwatch or timer should be available for testing. In order to ensure proper test performance, it is important to read the result promptly at 15 minutes and not before. Results should not be read after 30 minutes.

Result Interpretation

Test card window	How to interpret	
One pink/purple colored line in the top half of the window, in the Control Line position	Test is negative	 <p>PINK/PURPLE CONTROL LINE</p> <p>PINK/PURPLE SAMPLE LINE</p> <p>POSITIVE RESULT NEGATIVE RESULT</p>
Two pink/purple colored lines in both the Control & Sample Line positions ¹	Test is positive	
If no lines are seen, or if just the sample line is seen, the test is invalid. Invalid tests should be repeated on a new test card.	Test is inconclusive	<p>Invalid Result</p>  <p>No Control Line</p> <p>Sample Line Only</p>

Specimen disposal

All components of the test kit may be discarded into a trash can. 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>

¹ Note that any visible second pink/purple line in the sample line position should be considered a positive test regardless of how faint the second pink/purple line appears.

Abbott BinaxNOW logging requirements

Logging tests performed

Results of each test must be logged in the Abbott BinaxNOW Testing Log which can be found [here](#). Testing logs must be kept in a secure location and may be audited by OHA.

Consent forms

All students must have written consent (see Appendices E and B) on file prior to COVID-19 testing with Abbott BinaxNOW. 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). Staff may give verbal consent at the time of testing. Staff are not required to have a consent form on file in order to be tested for COVID-19.

Understanding test results

How to interpret negative test results

All COVID-19 tests are imperfect and false negative results may occur. A negative COVID-19 test result should never be interpreted as definitive evidence that a student or staff member is not infected with COVID-19, especially when symptoms compatible with COVID-19 are present. A follow-up test is not required following a negative BinaxNOW test but may be recommended by a healthcare provider in some cases.

How to interpret positive test results

A positive COVID-19 test result means that a student or staff member is infected with COVID-19. They should be excluded from school based on symptoms. All students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 and require medical attention should contact their healthcare provider for additional recommendations.

Camps

Overnight camps in Oregon which serve K-12 aged youth are eligible to participate in the Abbott BinaxNOW testing program.

All youth must have written consent (see Appendices I and J) on file prior to COVID-19 testing. OHA requires written consent from a parent and/or guardian for all youth under the age of 15 receiving the BinaxNOW test. Camps may choose to allow 15 – 17-year-olds to consent to receiving a test under ORS 109.640(2)(a). Staff may give verbal consent at the time of testing. Staff are not required to have a consent form on file in order to be tested for COVID-19.

Appendices

[Appendix A. COVID-19 Testing K-12 Registration Form](#)

[Appendix B. COVID-19 minor testing consent form](#)

[Appendix C. Understanding your positive COVID-19 result](#)

[Appendix D. Understanding your negative COVID-19 result](#)

[Appendix E. COVID-19 general testing consent form](#)

[Appendix G. BinaxNOW Re-Ordering Form](#)

[Appendix I. COVID-19 general testing consent form for camps](#)

[Appendix J. COVID-19 minor testing consent form for camps](#)

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer free of charge. Contact the COVID Feedback Team at 503-945-5488 or email feedback@odhsoha.oregon.gov. We accept all relay calls.

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