



# Oregon K-12 Student Screening Testing Program FAQ *(Updated September 20, 2022)*

## Overview

### Q: What types of COVID-19 testing are there?

There are two types of testing for COVID-19. Diagnostic testing refers to testing of a person with symptoms of COVID-19 or a recent exposure to a case of COVID-19. Screening testing refers to testing of a person without symptoms or known exposure to COVID-19.

### Q: What is the K-12 Student Screening Testing Program?

This program offers all of Oregon's K-12 schools, public and private, free, weekly testing for COVID-19 during the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 academic school years.

Weekly testing for COVID-19 will help identify COVID-19 infections early, reduce spread in schools, and keep students in school. The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and Oregon Department of Education (ODE) recommend that all schools offer COVID-19 screening testing.

Participation in this program is voluntary, and schools and families can opt-out at any time.

### Q: Who is eligible to participate in this program?

This program is open to all Oregon K-12 schools, public or private. The program is not open to early learning or pre-K programs.

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 90 days should be excluded from the screening program.

### Q: Does this program cost any money to the school, staff, or families?

No. This program is fully funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

### Q: How is this program different from the Diagnostic K-12 Testing Program? Can I participate in both programs?

OHA and ODE strongly encourage all schools to participate in the diagnostic [COVID-19 Testing in Oregon's K-12 Schools](#) program which uses Abbott BinaxNOW and iHealth rapid antigen tests for symptomatic and exposed individuals.

Diagnostic testing is the testing of students or staff who develop symptoms at school or are exposed to COVID-19 in a school setting. For some students, this COVID-19 testing in K-12 schools may represent their only access to a COVID-19 test and the importance of this access cannot be overstated.

**Q: What is the school’s role in this program?**

Educational partners will need to determine who they want to offer testing to (e.g., all students or specific cohorts) and in some cases will need to gather consent from parents/guardians.

**Q: How long does it take for testing to start?**

Due to the size and scope of this project, it typically takes a few weeks to enroll into the program.

**Q: Can I use the BinaxNOW test for this program?**

No. The BinaxNOW testing is solely to be used for K-12 students or staff who develop symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day or who have had exposure to COVID-19 while at school.

**Q: Can individual schools within a school district participate even if the school district has not opted in?**

Yes, schools that have a part of a school district can opt-in. However, we do ask that they communicate with their school district prior to enrollment.

## Testing operations

**Q: What type of COVID-19 test is this?**

The K-12 student screening program utilizes molecular (i.e., PCR) tests to detect SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

**Q: How does this program work?**

Participating schools will be assigned to a regional laboratory partner, based on location. Schools will have the option to offer weekly screening to either all students of specific cohorts (e.g., a second-grade classroom, a chess club, a football team); schools will have flexibility and choice in program design.

**Q: How are specimens collected for testing?**

Students will either self-swab using a shallow nasal swab or provide a saliva sample by drooling into a cup. An adult (e.g., parent, teacher, school administrator) will need to monitor the self-collection process and ensure that specimens are labeled and packaged correctly for shipping or courier pick-up. Regional laboratories will provide specific training to schools.

**Q: Can the specimen be collected at home?**

Schools may choose to work with their assigned regional laboratory to allow test collection kits to be sent home with the student for parents/guardians to assist with collection. In some cases, regional laboratories are able to ship kits directly to families. The kits would then need to be returned to the school or other specified locations to be shipped to the laboratory.

**Q: If a lab allows for specimen to be collected at home, is the testing kit safe to handle after testing?**

Yes, the screening kit is safe to transport after collection.

**Q: Does a nasal swab hurt?**

Depending upon the laboratory partner, a shallow nasal swab may be used. The nasal swab might tickle or feel a little uncomfortable, but it should not hurt.

**Q: Who are the regional laboratory partners?**

Regional laboratory partners are assigned by county.

County	Regional Laboratory Partner
Baker, Clatsop, Clackamas, Columbia, Gilliam, Hood River, Malheur, Morrow, Multnomah, Sherman, Tillamook, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco, Washington	Oregon Health & Science University
Benton, Linn, Lincoln, Polk, Marion, Yamhill	Santiam Hospital or Rise Laboratory
Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Lane, Jefferson, Wheeler, Grant, Crook, Deschutes, Klamath, Lake, Harney	University of Oregon

**Q: How long does it take to collect specimens at school?**

This will depend on the number of students being tested. When organized in advance, the disruption to classroom time should be minimal. Specimens may also be collected at home.

**Q: How does my school or school district sign up for this program?**

Schools and/or school districts can enroll by completing this [form](#).

**Q: What are the next steps after I register?**

Once a school is registered, school information will be shared with the assigned regional laboratory who will reach out with the next steps.

**Q: Can testing kits be mailed directly to student's house?**

In some cases, regional laboratories are able to ship kits directly to families. Please contact your partner laboratory to see if this is an option.

## Testing results

**Q: When and how will I be notified of the results?**

Parents/guardians will receive test results directly from their regional laboratory partner. Parents/guardians should receive results within 24 hours from the time the test arrives at the laboratory.

**Q: Will test results be shared with my school?**

Test results will not be shared directly with schools.

**Q: What if a student tests positive for COVID-19?**

If a student tests positive, that student should follow the advice and guidance of the local public health authority, including staying at home for at least 5 days of isolation and masking for an additional 5 days.

**Q: Will consent be required?**

Yes, consent must be collected from parents/guardians before testing can take place. Minors between the ages of 15-17 may provide consent to testing without a parent and/or guardian under ORS 109.640(2)(a). Consent only needs to be collected once for each academic school year.

**Q: Is testing mandatory?**

No. Schools must opt in to participate in the program.

**Q: Can schools mandate testing for students who are unvaccinated?**

This may be considered at the local level, in consultation with a school's legal counsel.

**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@dhs.oha.state.or.us](mailto:COVID19.LanguageAccess@dhs.oha.state.or.us).