

Chamber of Commerce Rapid Testing Process



Common Questions:

How do I apply for rapid test kits from the Alberta Chambers of Commerce?

- Interested local Chambers sign an agreement with Alberta Health and indicate the total number of tests they believe businesses will require. Businesses will submit their rapid testing application directly to their local Chamber of Commerce. Provided the application meets the standard requirements, businesses will be provided tests by the local Chamber of Commerce.

What type of test will we receive?

- Abbott Panbio nasal swabs will be provided to the Chambers. Additional information on these tests can be found under the Resources section of the following site: alberta.ca/rapid-testing-program.aspx.

Where can I find the training video?

- [Step-by-step rapid antigen screening video.](#)

How many tests should we request?

- Chambers will need to determine how many tests they believe business will need. Testing can be done a maximum of twice per week on all employees and contractors. The Chamber is able to request additional tests from the Government of Alberta at any time. As there are some delays related to shipping, we would request that Chambers provide at least 72 to 96 hours if they are in need of more tests.

What is the size of the box?

- 25 tests come in each box and each box is smaller than a normal shoe box. So 500 tests, would be 20 shoe boxes. Businesses need to take an entire box of 25 as the box to tests only contains one bottle of testing solution per 25 tests. We would encourage Chambers to tell businesses to request tests in the value of 25s.

What are the shipping logistics?

- As soon as the local Chamber enters into an agreement with the Government of Alberta, a shipping request is sent to Alberta Health Services (AHS). AHS ships the tests in approximately 72 hours.

If a business needs to make modifications to the guidelines, what do they do?

- If the standard guidelines that are included in the application form (Attachment 3) need to be modified by the business, the business will need to deal directly with the Government of Alberta on their request. Inquiries can be sent to rapidtesting@gov.ab.ca.

What rules and guidelines must organizations follow to be eligible for the rapid testing program?

- All participants need to follow the guidance document on rapid testing.
- Any screening program that uses rapid testing must only be for people without symptoms and with no known exposure to COVID-19 (not a close contact).
 - People with symptoms or who are known contacts should receive a diagnostic COVID-19 test through Alberta Health Services.
- Tests can be administered by a trained layperson, and self-administration is permissible under supervision on-site.

Is there a cost to acquiring rapid tests through this program?

- Through the Alberta rapid testing program, employers and service providers can apply for free rapid testing kits.
- While the kits themselves are free, there may be associated costs with implementing a screening program. Organizations are responsible for all costs related to screening programs they initiate and assume all medical and legal responsibilities associated with the screening programs.
- They are also responsible for ensuring proper protocols are in place for COVID-19 screening, including, but not limited to: quality control testing, quality assurance practices, test result interpretation, result sharing (including privacy requirements), appropriate follow-up on positive test results, and disposal of biohazardous material.

Who can be screened?

- Individuals who have no symptoms and have no known close contact with a confirmed positive case are eligible for screening.
- Individuals with core COVID-19 symptoms or who are close contacts of a confirmed positive should not undergo screening and should be directed to isolate and to arrange for testing through Alberta Health Services.

If an individual has been vaccinated, can they be screened using a rapid test?

- Individuals who have received a COVID-19 vaccine are eligible for asymptomatic screening through rapid testing. The vaccine has no impacts on rapid test results.

How often should screening be done and when?

- It is recommended screening be done once or twice per week.
- An effective screening program requires screening to be done on a regular basis with an established schedule. Screening less often has limited value.
- Screening can happen before entering a facility, at the start of a shift, at any time during a shift, or during set 'screening clinics' arranged at certain days/times. Each option has its own logistical considerations. An organization has to identify which approach works best for them.

How long does it typically take to get test results?

- Rapid tests can produce results in 15-20 minutes.
- This does not include the time required to collect and prepare samples. Test times and schedules should be planned accordingly.

How accurate are rapid tests?

- While rapid tests produce results faster than the lab-based RT-PCR test, they are not as sensitive.
- Lower sensitivity means that the tests require more virus for a positive result than the gold standard PCR test. This means the rapid tests might produce a negative result even though there is virus present. This is called a false negative.

What does a positive result on a rapid test mean?

- A positive result on a rapid screen performed on an asymptomatic person is not diagnostic for COVID-19.
- An individual who screens positive must immediately be removed from the site and isolate.
- Individuals should be supported in accessing a confirmatory laboratory-based PCR test at an AHS assessment centre.

What does a negative result on a rapid test mean?

- A negative result does not guarantee that the individual is not infected with COVID-19 or will not spread it to others. In asymptomatic individuals, false negatives are common.

If someone has recovered from a COVID-19 infection, how will this impact their rapid test results?

- Recent infection with COVID-19 may interfere with test effectiveness.
- Screening results in these individuals should be interpreted with caution. We do not recommend screening someone if they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 4 weeks.

What if we have other questions?

- Questions can be sent to rapidtesting@gov.ab.ca.