



California COVID-19
Testing Task Force

Hello Local Education Agency,

Fall is here and it is time to start preparing for seasonal breaks and gatherings. CDPH is continuing efforts to keep schools safe and successful by providing access to no-cost, over-the-counter (OTC)/at-home COVID-19 rapid antigen tests for testing students and school staff returning from Thanksgiving/fall break. California encourages all students and staff to test for COVID-19 before they return to school following Thanksgiving/fall break. Students and staff that test positive should stay home. Please note: While at-home testing is not required, testing remains a critical safety measure to reduce the possibility of an early 2023 surge.

Public schools, including charter schools, and private/independent schools can request OTC/at-home COVID-19 rapid antigen tests to test students and school staff upon return from Thanksgiving/fall break at this link:

<https://labsupport.powerappsportals.us/orderotc/>

To ensure that tests are delivered in time, please place your order no later than Friday, October 21, 2022.

Tests provided through this program will supplement (and not replace) the many existing testing resources in place for school communities statewide.

Learn more

at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/School-Testing.aspx>

OTC/at-home tests are authorized for self-testing at home (or in other locations). This means an individual, or parent/guardian if age appropriate, collects the sample, performs the test, and reads the result themselves without the assistance of school staff. However, **if OTC/at-home tests are performed by school staff, or the results are interpreted by school staff**, they are subject to federal laboratory regulations (“CLIA”) and require special training and application for use of CDPH’s School CLIA waiver. Please note the CDPH School CLIA waiver only covers Abbott BinaxNOW tests.

The application for obtaining the CDPH School CLIA waiver can be found here:

<https://labsupport.powerappsportals.us/K12SchoolsAntigenTestingIntake/>

OBTAINING AND DISTRIBUTING RAPID ANTIGEN TESTS FOR RETURN FROM THANKSGIVING/FALL BREAK

- **Where can my school obtain over-the-counter (OTC)/at-home rapid antigen tests to be used for Return from Thanksgiving/fall break testing?**

OTC/at-home Tests can be requested from CDPH by using this link:

<https://labsupport.powerappsportals.us/orderotc/>

For your return from Thanksgiving/fall break testing needs, please request two tests per student and school staff, as tests will arrive in a test kit often containing two tests per kit. This ensures that each student and staff member will take home one test kit before the start of the Thanksgiving/fall break. **For example: if you need to test 500 students and school staff upon return from Thanksgiving/fall break, you will need to request 1000 tests.** If supplies are limited, your total quantity may not be fulfilled as requested. If we need to adjust the quantity, you will be contacted.

Once your order is approved by CDPH, your order will be processed as quickly as possible. Please note that due to anticipated increase in demand, there may be shipping delays.

For other additional resources for your school community members to receive OTC/at-home tests outside of school distribution, please visit:

<https://covid19.ca.gov/get-tested/>

- **Can I also request tests needed for Return from Winter Break testing?**

OTC/at-home tests needed for Return from Winter Break testing will be distributed to schools through local County Offices of Education (COE) prior to Winter Break due to presumed possible holiday and winter weather related delays to shipping. CDPH is currently working with the COEs to provide allocations of OTC tests to schools to prepare for return from winter break testing. Your local COE will be reaching out to you to arrange for your allocation in early November

- **How do the tests arrive?**

Tests are distributed in “test kits.” Each “test kit” contains two (2) tests. Organizations will receive cases of test *boxes*. Depending on the brand of test delivered, a test box will contain either 1 or 2 tests. The brand of OTC tests being sent to your COE for distribution to your school/district may vary depending on the availability of OTC/at-home tests.

Please order the total number of tests needed for each individual to receive two tests. The brand of OTC tests being sent to your school/district can vary depending on the availability of OTC/at-home tests.

Depending on brand availability you may receive Orasure, Flowflex, iHealth or a combination of these OTC/at-home tests. Keep in mind that Orasure tests will ship in cases of 48 tests and pallets of 1440 tests. Please make sure that your test order takes into consideration your ability to store the tests in a temperature stable environment until distribution.

- **Can I check my order status?**

Due to order volume, we cannot provide tracking information or order status. We cannot respond to email inquiries about order status. Date of delivery cannot be guaranteed.

COMMUNICATION WITH SCHOOL EMPLOYEES AND FAMILIES

- **When should students and school staff test upon returning from Thanksgiving/fall break?**

If students and school staff have at-home tests in hand prior to returning to school from Thanksgiving/fall break:

At minimum, students and school staff should test the day before or the morning of returning to school. Ideally, they should test 1 day prior/day of returning to school AND 2-3 days after returning to school. For example: if your school returns from break on a Monday, testing should be done on Sunday and Tuesday of that week.

If students receive tests during the first week returning to school from Thanksgiving/fall break:

Students and school staff should test immediately and then again in 1-3 days, per the manufacturer's instructions for use.

Students and school staff should test if they have symptoms of COVID-19 (see below).

For students and school staff who are well:

- If a student or school staff member tests negative for COVID-19, that individual can return to school if they feel well and have no [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- If a student or school staff member tests positive for COVID-19, that individual should stay home from school and both the school and doctor should be contacted right away.
- If an individual is not sure about the test results, then they should re-test at a school-based or community testing site.

What if a student or staff member has [COVID-19 symptoms](#)?

The student or staff member can use their at-home test.

If the individual tests positive: They should [isolate per CDPH guidance](#) and contact their healthcare provider to discuss treatment options, if eligible. The school should be informed about the positive test.

If the individual tests negative: Talk to your school before they return.

- **How are OTC tests reported?**

While reporting results of OTC/at-home tests is not required, it can be a useful tool for schools to track positive test results within their student/staff population or identify any outbreaks. Reporting is also helpful for local and state departments of public health to track OTC/at-home test usage and COVID-19 rates in the community.

To enroll your school/organization in Primary.Health, a free software program to help manage and track OTC/at-home tests results, please complete this form:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/d41b75b9a3c845fdbfebf400be67a665>

Participants now have the ability to record OTC/At-Home test results from the palm of their hands using the new and free Primary Health Pass app! The app further simplifies the process to record an OTC/At-Home test result, for parents and students alike - please see the following materials aimed at supporting your organization with getting started using Primary Health Pass:

1. [Downloading and Using the Primary.Health App Video](#): A helpful video that runs through how to download and use the app
2. [Primary Health Pass Folder](#): A helpful folder containing multiple printable flyers with download instruction as well as a FAQ document for any additional questions

- **What materials should schools distribute with the tests?**

The CDPH has created resources for schools to provide information to parents about when and how to administer OTC/at-home tests. Template flyers and other communication materials can be found in multiple languages here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1SDjfm9Ru_VTqygQpjw7KIUtDjAjqN2CE?usp=sharing.

Additionally, participating schools should distribute a flyer with a link/QR code to log results on Primary.Health.

Safely Opening Schools (SOS) has also created some valuable OTC/at-home testing resources that school administrators can share with parents and school staff. You can access these resources here: <http://tiny.cc/sosdrive>

The CDPH has also updated the [Testing After School Break toolkit](#) with social media and factsheets in English and Spanish.

- **What if I have other questions regarding OTC/at-home tests?**

Review the [Parents Page of the Safe Schools for All Hub](#) to stay up to date. Please also review the [K-12 School Testing FAQs](#) for answers to some of the most frequently asked questions regarding the new K-12 School Guidance.

For more valuable information on school-based testing, including official school guidance, visit the Safe Schools for All Hub:

<https://schools.covid19.ca.gov/>

For additional questions regarding OTC/at-home tests, please contact: schoolotc@cdph.ca.gov