

September 13, 2021

Memorandum to: Directors of Education
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

From: Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister

Subject: **Rapid Antigen Testing Instructions & Verification Updates**

This memo provides further instructions regarding rapid antigen testing requirements associated with the Letter of Instruction issued by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health regarding immunization disclosure policy, and information for school boards to support local verification processes for testing.

The Ministry of Education requires individuals subject to testing requirements under the COVID-19 immunization disclosure policy to **provide verification of negative test results two times per week**. Once onboarded onto the Thrive app, verification is to be provided to the school board. In the interim, individuals subject to the testing under the vaccination policy will need to meet any reporting requirements set out by school boards.

To support this process, the Ministry asks that school boards inform those required to undertake testing of the following instructions:

- Testing is to take place at an individual's residence prior to attending work.
- Testing should be implemented consistently on a weekly basis with at least 3 days between tests and conducted Sunday to Friday.
- Testing should not take place more than 48 hours before attending work.

Example Scenarios:

Test 1: Monday; Test 2: Thursday; Repeat,
Test 1: Friday; Test 2: Tuesday; Repeat, or
Test 1: Sunday; Test 2: Wednesday; Repeat.

This handout explains how an individual can self-administer a COVID-19 rapid test kit:

<https://www.ontariohealth.ca/sites/ontariohealth/files/2021-08/PASP-COVID19-Self-Testing%20Instrucitons.docx>

Please note, rapid antigen screening is only for individuals who are asymptomatic. Anyone who has symptoms should seek testing at their local assessment centre consistent with provincial testing guidance.

A positive result on a rapid antigen test is considered a preliminary (presumptive) positive and requires confirmation with a PCR test.

Any individual that receives a preliminary positive result on a COVID-19 rapid antigen test is required to:

1. **Seek a confirmatory** PCR test immediately (ideally within 48 hours) at a [designated testing centre](#).
2. **Isolate** immediately until the result of their confirmatory test is known.
3. **Safely return to work only after they receive a negative result on a confirmatory test at a designated testing centre.**

Any positive confirmatory test is routinely reported to the local public health unit, consistent with public health legislation, to support case and contact management and surveillance.

An employer has no obligation to inform a public health unit of an employee's rapid antigen test result (regardless of whether it was positive or negative).

If an individual has had a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection they should not participate in antigen testing for 90 days following the date of their positive COVID-19 test result. These individuals should immediately resume COVID-19 rapid antigen testing after the 90th day from the date of their positive COVID-19 PCR result.

Individuals that are covered by the school board's immunization disclosure policy, but are not directly employed by a school board must provide their attestations or negative test results directly to the school board. Individuals are not required to duplicate testing if their employer also has a rapid antigen testing policy.

Alternatively, third-party employers/agencies could also provide the attestation of the employee or negative test results to the school board.

Verification of Testing:

As stated in the September 3rd, 2021 memo, school boards must verify that individuals who are not fully vaccinated have completed a test as required and received a negative result.

This verification will occur through the Thrive Health app offered through the [Creative Destruction Lab Rapid Screening Consortium \(CDL RSC\)](#). CDL Rapid Screening

Consortium is a not-for-profit initiative that provides guidance and support to organizations that are implementing a rapid screening program in Canada. More information can be found on CDL RSC's [website](#).

This app is available free of charge and allows for individuals to submit photo evidence of their rapid antigen test results directly from home. School boards will also be able to export records of verification for record keeping purposes.

School boards should designate individuals responsible at the board and/or school level to verify information. School boards should also designate participating staff to attend a kick-off meeting and sign up for the data collection app on behalf of the school board. School boards are encouraged to register as soon as possible to allow enough time for onboarding and set-up.

To get started, register Your School Board [By visiting this site](#). You will receive a digital copy of CDL RSC's Participant Letter of Agreement for signature.

Once signed digitally, the CDL RSC team will provide you with a link to attend a Kick-Off Webinar, and guide you through next steps.

CDL RSC also supports organizations through weekly operational meetings, scaling guidance through an industry partner 'buddy' system, a quick start guide and resources, virtual helpdesk & communication tools, as well as technical support for screening data intake.

Indemnification of Boards for use of the Thrive Health App:

Ontario will agree to indemnify school boards to the extent that liability is incurred under the indemnity provisions^[1] in the letters of agreement entered into by the board with CDL RSC and Thrive Health Inc. The ministry will send further documentation Friday, September 17, 2021. In the meantime, if you have any questions related to the indemnification, please contact: SPPD@ontario.ca

Reporting:

School boards are expected to use the Thrive app for verification and reporting purposes. The Provincial Antigen Screening Program requires that all organizations receiving free antigen screening tests submit weekly reporting to the Ministry of Health (MOH). Using the Thrive app allows organizations to fully meet this requirement and would not require any additional, regular reporting to MOH.

If organizations choose to use another tool for verification, they will be required to report weekly an aggregated data set to the provincial government. The following information will be required from participating organizations:

^[1] Section 5(f) of the Agreement with CDL RSC and section 7.3 of the Agreement with Thrive Health Inc.

1. The type of rapid test used.
2. Number of rapid antigen tests used.
3. Number of invalid rapid antigen test results.
4. Number of individuals who tested positive with a rapid antigen test.
5. Number of individuals who tested negative with a rapid antigen test.

All data are reported and stored at the aggregate, de-identified level; no patient identifiable data is collected.

Education Video:

School boards are required to use a video resource prescribed by the Ministry of Education as the educational session program for unvaccinated individuals. The ministry will share the video resource with school boards shortly.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister

^[1] Section 5(f) of the Agreement with CDL RSC and section 7.3 of the Agreement with Thrive Health Inc

c: Executive Director, Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario (ACÉPO)
Executive Director, Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)
Executive Director, Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA)
Executive Director, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)
Executive Director, Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)
Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)
General Secretary, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)
General Secretary, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
General Secretary, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)
Chair, Ontario Council of Educational Workers (OCEW)
Chair, Education Workers' Alliance of Ontario (EWAO)
Co-ordinator, Canadian Union of Public Employees – Ontario (CUPE-ON)
Executive Director, Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes (ADFO)
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