

Update to Executive Officer Notice: Publicly Funded COVID-19 Testing Services in Ontario Pharmacies

November 27, 2021

This is an update to the Executive Officer (EO) Notice: Publicly Funded COVID-19 Testing Services in Ontario Pharmacies and accompanying Questions and Answers (Qs & As) dated November 18, 2021. The update described below will be reflected in new consolidated versions of the EO Notice and Qs & As available on the ministry's website at a later date. Until the new consolidated versions are published, this update shall be deemed to replace the patient eligibility information in the EO Notice and Q&As dated November 18, 2021.

For clarity, this update constitutes a Ministry policy that pharmacy operators must comply with when submitting claims for payment to the Ministry for publicly funded COVID-19 testing services. Compliance with all Ministry policies is required under section 3.2 of the Health Network System (HNS) Subscription Agreement for Pharmacy Operators.

Update: Effective November 27, 2021:

Patient Eligibility

Pharmacy services related to publicly funded COVID-19 testing may be offered to, or arranged for, individuals described as eligible or recommended for testing in the [COVID-19 Provincial Testing Guidance](#), which includes but is not limited to¹:

1. Asymptomatic individuals who are part of these targeted groups:
 - Workers (including support workers), visitors (including caregivers) and government inspectors of long-term care homes;
 - Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW), including for the purpose of international travel to return to a country of origin;
 - Individuals who identify as Indigenous;
 - Individuals who are travelling into remote/isolated First Nation and Indigenous communities for work purposes;
 - **UPDATE:** Individuals who have returned from, or travelled in, the following locations between November 1st and December 6th, 2021 are eligible for provincially-funded PCR testing: South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Eswatini,

¹ This list may change from time to time. Please review the Ministry's [COVID-19 Provincial Testing Guidance](#) for the most up to date eligibility criteria.

Mozambique, Namibia, and Zimbabwe. Asymptomatic family members and other household contacts are also eligible for testing.

2. Surgery and other reasons:

- Individuals that need a test before a scheduled (non-urgent or emergent) surgery in a region with high community transmission.
- Individuals that have been recommended by their health care provider to get tested before treatment (for example, hematopoietic cell therapy, radiation, or systemic cancer treatment, etc.).
- Individuals that are required to be tested before being admitted to a hospital, long-term care home or other congregate living setting/institution (including group homes and equivalent higher-risk settings, such as homeless shelters, community supported living, disability-specific communities/congregate settings, short-term rehab, hospices, other shelters).
- Individuals that are seeking a confirmatory test after receiving a positive antigen point-of-care test (such as a [rapid test](#)) or positive self-test result.
- Individuals, and one accompanying caregiver, with written prior approval from the General Manager, OHIP, for out-of-country medical services.
- Individuals that belong to any other targeted testing group as outlined in [guidance from the Chief Medical Officer of Health](#).
- Individuals that are a resident of a homeless shelter.

3. Symptomatic individuals and exposure:

- Individuals currently experiencing [COVID-19 symptoms](#) that are not related to other known causes or conditions.
- Individuals that have been exposed to a COVID-19-positive person (if the individual knows when they were exposed, they should get tested seven days after their last exposure and stay in self-isolation. If they do not know when they were exposed, they should get tested right away).
- Individuals that have received a COVID Alert app exposure notification.
- Individuals that are a resident or worker in a setting that has a COVID-19 outbreak, as identified by the local public health unit.

Strict infection prevention and control (IPAC) measures must continue to be observed at testing sites both by the individual(s) seeking testing, as well as by the staff conducting the testing or facilitating specimen collection (e.g. PCR test kit pick-up and drop-off).

Additional Information:

For pharmacies: For billing inquiries, please call ODB Pharmacy Help Desk at: 1-800-668-6641

For all other Health Care Providers and the Public: Please call ServiceOntario, Infoline at 1-866-532-3161 TTY 1-800-387-5559. In Toronto, TTY 416-327-4282