

MANDATORY COVID-19 STAFF TESTING

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. Is there a cost at the time of testing or will I be charged a co-pay from my health care provider?** No
- 2. Why do I have to bring my health insurance card?** The federal government is guaranteeing coverage of testing for the uninsured and requiring health insurance companies to cover the cost of testing.
- 3. Who is doing the testing?** External medical provider staff who are trained clinical professionals will conduct your testing, deliver the specimens to a Lab, and follow personal data protection requirements and applicable laws.
- 4. What kind of COVID test is it?** Nose Swab Test. Currently, this is the most common test for COVID-19, and is recommended by the CDC. In the nasal (or nasopharyngeal) swab test, an external medical staff member will stick a long Q-tip-like swab into one or both nostrils to collect a sample. The process is described as being slightly uncomfortable but not painful.
- 5. How long will it take to get my results?** No more than 7 days.
- 6. Do I still come to work after I get my COVID test?** Yes. If you are able to answer no to the front screening entrance questions and do not have a fever you should report to work. All face covering, PPE, social distancing, and cleaning procedures should be followed. If you do begin to experience symptoms, do not report to work and follow existing call out procedures. If you begin feeling ill while at work, notify your supervisor immediately.
- 7. Who will tell me if I am positive or negative?** Staff from external medical provider will contact you with your results.
- 8. What happens if I am positive?** The external medical provider staff will work with the Office of Employee Health (OEH) Nurse Consultants who will contact you and provide the process, including coordination with the local Public Health Office or your health care provider regarding isolation orders and the return to work process.
- 9. Will I receive ATO if I am positive?** Yes. Note there are specific guidelines from the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) that govern the ATO process and limitations. If you have previously exceeded the ATO COVID-19 related limitations, CDCR and CCHCS HQ Human Resources will consult with CalHR.
- 10. I have already tested positive for COVID-19, do I need to test again?** NO, if you have tested positive for COVID-19, there is no need to test again.
- 11. I took a COVID-19 ANTI BODY (serology) test, do I have to test?** YES, an antibody test, also called a serological test, is supposed to be able to detect whether a person has already had the coronavirus before, and has since recovered. The test does this by testing individuals' blood for coronavirus antibodies to see if they have already recovered from the virus and therefore may have gained a certain degree of immunity to it. It is not known yet if having antibodies to the virus that causes COVID-19 can protect someone from getting infected again or, if they do, how long this protection might last. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/serology-overview.html>
- 12. I recently had a COVID-19 test and it was negative, do I have to test again?** Yes, COVID-19 testing are a point in time test. Receiving a negative result does not mean you will not become positive in the future.
- 13. Is this testing mandatory for all state prison employees? If so why not?** Mandatory testing is in development for other locations. The process will be the same for all institutions.
- 14. If this is mandated, I should not be required to share my medical history with anyone one other than my primary medical doctor.** Employees will not be asked any medical history information when testing. Public Health Offices have the authority to provide results to OEH (similar to TB results).
Sharing Protected Health Information during the COVID-19 Public Health Crisis:
May share patient information with anyone as necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health and safety of a person or the public – consistent with applicable law (such as state statutes, regulations, or case law)
The department follows all laws, rules, regulations related to privacy. The OEH Nurse Consultants have had training regarding employee privacy. We take very seriously the role of OEH and ensure all processes and protocols are followed.
- 15. If I do not test what will happen?** There is a potential for progressive discipline.