



SECTION:

**FORMS
COVID-19 Rapid Antigen
Testing
POLICY
March 2021**

**DATE APPROVED:
DATE LAST REVISED:
DATE LAST REVIEWED:**

Section: COVID-19 Response	Subsection: Rapid Antigen Staff Testing	Policy Number:
Subject: Rapid Antigen Testing Policy		Effective Date: April 1, 2021
		Revised Date: April 1, 2021
Standard: COVID-19 Guideline	Authority: Administrator	Supersedes: NEW
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PURPOSE:

The health and safety of workers is a priority at all times, especially during a pandemic (e.g. COVID-19 coronavirus). This priority includes protecting staff and the people we support from exposure to infectious diseases at work.

To provide a safe environment for both staff, residents and people in the community, all staff should be tested as directed by Ontario Health and/or Ministry of Long-Term Care and any other applicable legislative authority.

Testing of staff is key during a pandemic, as the sooner cases can be identified, the better positioned health care organizations are to contain them and ultimately save lives of staff, people in the community and residents in our homes as well as their families.

PROCEDURE:

1. Community Living Parry Sound will follow the direction and recommendations of Ontario Health, MCCSS and other applicable legislative authorities in regards to the testing of staff and students (frontline workers, management, food service workers, contracted workers, etc.).
2. Information provided by Ontario Health and/or MCCSS and any other applicable legislative authority regarding staff testing requirements and this policy, will be made available in the workplace.
3. Education regarding the occupational expectation and requirements of this policy will be provided upon implementation, time of hire, annually, and as required (e.g. with changes in directives).
4. Where feasible, on-site testing will be made available; otherwise CLPS will identify alternative approaches (e.g. local assessment centres, etc.) to support required testing.
5. **Staff testing is voluntary.**

6. Specific requirements related to intervals of testing will be as per Ontario Health and/or MCCSS and any other applicable legislative authority direction; and, will be communicated to staff upon notification to the licensee.
7. All new hires, and staff members returning to work after an absence (maternity/parental leave, short term disability or long-term disability, etc.) should be tested within 14 days of their start/return to work date to ensure the safety of both their colleagues and residents.
8. CLPS staff will receive Rapid Antigen Testing according to Ministry Directives. CLPS staff should swab at least 2 times per week.
9. The clinician (physician, nurse practitioner, paramedic, registered nurse or registered practical nurse) performing the test is required to obtain consent from the staff member.
10. Any positive Rapid Antigen Test results will require a follow up (PCR) test to be completed at the lab or at CLPS R.A.T Clinic by paramedic. The staff member will be required to self quarantine until test results are received from PCR test. Public Health will be notified of a positive Rapid Antigen Test. As noted, paramedic may do PCR swab immediately when a preliminary positive is found. He/she will report the result and deliver the PCR swab to the local assessment centre.
11. If an employer is advised that a worker has tested positive due to exposure at the workplace, or that a claim has been filed with the workplace safety and insurance board (WSIB), the employer is required to give notice in writing within four (4) days to:
 - a. The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development
 - b. The workplace Joint Health and Safety Committee or a health and safety worker representative
 - c. The worker's trade union (if applicable)
12. Additionally, the employer must report any instances of occupationally acquired illnesses to WSIB within three (3) days of receiving notification of said illness.
13. The health and safety of workers is a top concern during a pandemic. Testing results help employers protect both staff, residents in congregate care settings and the people we support in the community from exposure to infectious diseases while on the job. Agencies are required to implement policies and procedures, including those related to staff refusal, in order to protect the health and safety of staff, residents and people in the community.
14. CLPS will keep statistical information regarding the number of staff tested, the dates on which testing was conducted and number of staff who declined testing.
15. Pregnancy is not considered a contraindication for testing.
16. When a pandemic outbreak is confirmed by the Medical Officer of Health (MOH), all staff may be required to be tested as directed by the MOH and public health.
17. The choice of test should be a clinical decision to be made by the health care provider. Community Para medicine will be using:
 - a. A combined swab of the throat and both nares or nostrils