



Health Canada and the Public  
Health Agency of Canada

Santé Canada et l'Agence  
de la santé publique du Canada

Canada

# COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Tests for Workplace Screening

May 2021



# Background

## Goal

Dramatically increase rapid screening in workplaces across Canada, as an additional mechanism to reduce transmission and outbreaks

- The Government of Canada has purchased over 40 million COVID-19 rapid antigen tests for workplace screening.
- These tests are being distributed by both the provincial/territorial governments and the federal government.
- Acceleration and expansion of the deployment of rapid tests for asymptomatic screening is recommended by experts:
  - [Testing and Screening Expert Panel's first report](#)
  - [Industry Advisory Roundtable on COVID-19 Testing, Screening, Tracing and Data Management](#), and
  - PHAC's [Interim Guidance on the Use of Rapid Antigen Detection Tests](#)

# How will organizations be assessed for workplace direct delivery (WDD) of rapid antigen tests by the Government of Canada?

**Focus will be on national organizations with operations in >1 province  
best supplied federally vs. from multiple provinces.**



## Critical industries

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Those deemed essential services and functions by Public Safety Canada ([Source](#))



## Close-contact workers

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Employees whose roles fundamentally involve interactions fellow employees and customers



## Organizational readiness

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Prepared to start screening immediately and scale to their employee bases quickly

# COVID-19 rapid antigen tests and the benefits of screening

## What are rapid antigen tests?

- Easy to administer
- Now with nasal swabs
- Results in 15 minutes
- Most effective at identifying those with high viral load and high transmission potential
- A negative result cannot be interpreted as a negative diagnosis
- A positive result is confirmed with PCR test
- Those with symptoms always referred for PCR test



## Regular screening (e.g., 2x/week) helps organizations to:

- Better protect their employees
- Better protect their customers / clients
- Contribute to community safety by reducing community spread
- Add an extra layer of protection in addition to other public health measures

# How qualifying organizations access free rapid tests through WDD

- ✓ Express **interest** to receive tests via [online portal](#)
- ✓ Provide **information** such as number of close-contact employees, provinces/territories where they work, number of tests for the first order
- ✓ **Ready to set up** rapid screening program and **administer** screening
- ✓ **Collect and report** on usage data (needed for subsequent orders)
- ✓ Must **follow all relevant provincial/territorial and local** public health regulations and guidance

# Who can administer rapid antigen tests?

Province	Trained layperson can administer?	Self-administration?	Ability to start workplace screening without approval?
<u>Ontario</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<u>Alberta, Manitoba, British Columbia, New Brunswick</u>	Yes	Yes	No
<u>Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan</u>	Yes*	Yes	No

\* However, a healthcare professional must oversee the workplace screening program

As of April 29, 2021 – please consult provincial guidance directly

# Important Resources

 Government of Canada Gouvernement du Canada

MENU ▾

Canada.ca > [Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada](#)

## Rapid tests for COVID-19 screening in the workplace

From: [Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada](#)

The Government of Canada is launching new efforts to increase the availability of rapid test kits for Canadian workers.

Specifically, we are working with industry associations, non-profit and other organizations to discuss their needs and to ensure timely access to these tests for screening purposes. This approach supports screening for high-contact workers in critical sectors. Find out how to access [free rapid tests for your employees](#).

Collective resource available on the [Government of Canada website](#) and Provincial COVID-19 websites can be found [here](#).



COMMUNITECH®

## StaySafe™ at Work

A Guide for Rapid Workplace Screening  
Brought to you by Communitech

Step-by-step rapid screening program implementation booklets available from [Communitech](#) and [Creative Destruction Lab](#)



### Testing

Recommendations to support the health system aligning with Ontario's [COVID-19 testing guidelines](#).

#### Provincial Antigen Screening Program

These resources provide planning and implementation guidance for organizations conducting on-site screening for COVID-19 as part of the Provincial Antigen Screening Program.

If you are new to the program, we suggest you review the "Overview of the Provincial Antigen Screening Program" video or deck below and, depending on what brand of test you are using, either the Panbio™ or BD Veritor™ Onboarding Guides.

If you have questions, contact [covid19testing@ontariohealth.ca](mailto:covid19testing@ontariohealth.ca).

#### Training and Resources

##### Overview of Provincial Antigen Screening Program

How to set-up an antigen screening program – relevant to Panbio™ and BD Veritor™.

- [Watch training video](#) (March 5, 2021)
- [Download presentation deck](#) (March 5, 2021)
- [Ministry of Health Guidance document: Considerations for Antigen Point-of-Care Testing](#)

Training and resources available on the [Government of Ontario website](#), including videos and other training materials.

## Next Steps

- ISED to share this slide deck with WDD qualifying companies.
- Qualifying companies can access the Government of Canada WDD ordering portal to order rapid tests [here](#).



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# Thank You

