

Standing Order for Performing Nasal Swab on Adults and Children to Test for COVID-19

Purpose: To prevent the spread of infectious diseases through identification of SARS-CoV-2 leading to appropriate treatment and public health disease control actions and recommendations.

This Standing Order is not intended to be used by organizations who employ or contract with medical staff who are authorized to order tests. Such organizations should utilize the medical professionals with whom they have a relationship to order SARS-CoV-2 testing.

Policy: Under this standing Order adults or children over the age of 12 months may be tested for SARS-CoV-2.

All persons administering this test must be trained in specimen collection and proper personal protective equipment (PPE) specific to this test and conduct all procedures associated with such tests consistent with the standard of care.

Procedure: Those performing tests shall:

1. Verify the identity of the person to be tested and that the necessary documentation has been completed.
2. Inform each individual to be tested of the procedure and receive verbal agreement for testing. If individual to be tested is a minor, obtain verbal or written agreement from a parent or legal guardian.
3. Review and adhere to the proper use of personal protective equipment required for doing a nasal swab test and apply current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance.
4. Adhere to guidance, as determined by the processing laboratory, for the collection, documentation, and preservation of the specimens. This order shall remain in effect until rescinded or until 08/21/2023.



Mark A. Levine, MD, Commissioner
Vermont Department of Health

Procedural Guidance for Licensed Long-Term Care Facilities utilizing a Vermont Department of Health Standing Order for Performing Antigen or PCR testing for COVID-19

When utilizing a Vermont Department of Health's Standing Order for COVID-19 testing, long-term care facilities must adhere to the following guidance per Procedure, Section 4.0 of the November 13, 2020 Order.

- Those performing tests shall:
 1. Verify the identity of the person to be tested and that the necessary documentation has been completed.
 2. Inform each individual to be tested of the procedure and receive verbal agreement for testing. If individual to be tested is a minor, obtain verbal or written agreement from a parent or legal guardian.
 3. Review and adhere to the proper use of personal protective equipment required for doing a nasal swab test and apply current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Guidance.
 4. Adhere to guidance, as determined by the processing laboratory, for the collection, documentation, and preservation of the specimens.
 5. Work with the Vermont Department of Health to determine where PCR specimens will be sent for processing including but not limited to the Vermont Public Health Laboratory (VPHL) or other qualified laboratories.

- Facility will receive approval from VDH Epidemiology prior to submitting any PCR specimen to the Vermont Public Health Laboratory (VPHL). Specimens submitted to the VPHL without prior approval will be rejected and not tested. To gain such approval, facilities shall request that PCR specimens be submitted to the VDH laboratory through their district office epidemiologist or by writing to AHS.VDHEPICVID19Program@vermont.gov.

- Testing that utilizes a Standing Order shall be in accordance with the Vermont Department of Health recommendations for testing as follows:

Regarding surveillance testing:

- VPHL should not be used for routine surveillance testing.
- For organizations using the order for antigen testing, the order must only be used for antigen testing of symptomatic persons.
- This order may also be used for confirmatory PCR testing following an antigen test in accordance with [guidance](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For COVID-19 case response testing (this includes PCR and/or antigen testing plans developed with the VDH EPI COVID19 Program, this team can be emailed at AHS.VDHEPICOVID19Program@vermont.gov.) Specimen collection may only be performed on residents of the facility, facility staff, individuals providing essential services to the facility or residents.

- Prior to collecting an individual's PCR specimen, the facility will obtain written consent from that individual (if not already established) to receive results.
- The facility shall immediately report all antigen results to the Vermont Department of Health in accordance with the requirements outlined in the [May 25, 2021 Health Alert](#) or subsequent applicable directives.
- The facility shall immediately report all results to all individuals tested.