

## Rapid Antigen Test Workplace Screening Frequently Asked Questions

### **Why do this?**

The latest information from Health Canada suggests that up to 1/3 of people carrying the virus are asymptomatic causing little or no noticeable signs, however, over 50% of known cases were transmitted by an asymptomatic carrier. This makes it incredibly important to find asymptomatic carriers to combat the spread and get to more normalized community life.

A COVID-19 rapid screening test can be performed anywhere (e.g., on-site, at the place of employment) and does not require shipping a specimen to a lab for processing. It takes approximately 15 minutes to yield a result.

Frequent screening with rapid antigen tests increases the chances of early identification of cases in asymptomatic individuals ONLY. Recommended frequency is twice per employee, per week. .

### **Who can businesses give screening kits to and who can we screen?**

At this time, you CANNOT give kits to anyone. They are ONLY for use with your employees that are frequently coming to the workplace. You also cannot screen anyone else other than employees coming to the workplace, this is essential as reporting presumptive positives or inconclusive results may call into question your ability/authority to do so. Employees have the right to refuse, but when they comply that is consent, to collect and report the data.

### **What is the accuracy of these screens?**

These are highly accurate in the range of 90% accurate, however there are circumstances where they may show a false positive or false negative.

Therefore NO ONE SHOWING SYMPTOMS should be screened using these tests, as a false negative result might put the organization in a compromising position.

### **How do we dispose of the waste?**

The screen pad and vial (with the swab and buffering agent in) are considered hazardous waste at this time. Some businesses may have the ability to dispose of this but failing that the Chamber has a disposal bin for you to bring your waste when refilling your order.

Place used screen pads and vials in a separate waste bag (i.e.: small garbage bag or large Ziploc bag) marked as biowaste – bag must be securely closed (zipped or tied) prior to delivery to Chamber pick up site for disposal.

### **How is the screening administered - through the nostril or mouth?**

Rapid Antigen Screening is a Nasal swab and not evasive. The requirement is the swab must be inserted into each nostril for 5 to 7 seconds 2 cm (1 inch) inside the nasal, while ensuring the inside of the nostril is wiped by the swab.

### **What is the reporting responsibility our business has with respects to the results of the screens?**

To participate you have signed a document that makes you responsible to report all results of your screens. Total number of screens, all Positive, all Negative and all Inconclusive results must be entered in the reporting form available online at <https://www.kenorachamber.com/>

### **Can I just drop in and pick-up kit refills?**

No. Test pick-ups must be scheduled.

### **What is the next step if an employee has a Positive or Inconclusive result?**

Anyone screening Presumptive Positive or Inconclusive MUST immediately self-isolate and contact Local Public Health for a PCR Test within 24 hours and cannot be permitted in the workplace until there is a confirmed (by Public Health) negative test result.

### **Is it REQUIRED that Public Health be notified of any Positive results immediately?**

According to the Ministry of Health as of now, you are NOT required to report all Presumptive Positives, and Inconclusives to the Local Public Health authority.

However, your employee is required to follow all Local Public Health authority's direction and MUST arrange for a PCR test within 24 hours of their presumptive positive or inconclusive result.

<https://www.nwhu.on.ca/covid19/Pages/self-assessment.aspx>

The Chamber reports to the Ministry of Health and Health Canada for data collection.

### **Who can perform the screen on the employees?**

The Ontario Government authorizes "self" screening using these kits. However, there is a requirement for a Screening Supervisor who has been trained via the video. No one other than the employee should perform the swab procedure on any other employee, the supervisor is there to instruct and ensure the procedure is followed for an accurate result.

### **Can I show my supervisors how to do the screens, have them watch the video to have them supervise the screens?**

At this point the Ministry of Health requires that a trained individual supervises the screening process.

### **What is the frequency we should be screening our employees?**

The recommendation from public health is that all employees should be screened twice per week. It is understood in some settings or with a higher frequency of close contact that some businesses will want to screen more than twice per week.

Please advise us at the Chamber office ([info@kenorachamber.com](mailto:info@kenorachamber.com)) as we would like to help but this will affect our required supply and, we need a bit of notice to alert our supplier. Conversely some may want to test less frequently or may have a variety of schedules that employees are in the workplace.

It is up to you, but please, put the safety of your employees first, and that will ensure you have a safe workplace.

**Do these kits have an expiry date?**

Yes, they do, however it appears that all our supply has an expiry date in 2022. We will advise if we are getting close to the expiry dates. Using the kits after they expire cannot be assumed to have the accuracy they do prior to expiry. Caution should be taken to review the box and ensure they are not expired.

**Do I only give screens for employees showing symptoms?**

NO, in fact, it should be recognized that anyone showing symptoms must be kept OUT of the workplace and must NOT be allowed to return until Local Public Health provides a confirmed Negative result from a diagnostic PCR Test.

**It is allergy season and people are experiencing symptoms like COVID-19, should we avoid screening people that may be experiencing allergy symptoms, or should we screen them regardless?**

Again, anyone showing symptoms that are similar to COVID-19, could in fact be infectious and should not be screened and diverted directly to public health for a PCR assessment. While we recognize some symptoms can resemble allergies, the risk to the workplace is not worth ignoring them.

**I am a consultant on workplace safety, can I order on behalf of my clients and screen their employees?** No, these kits are provided free of charge to small and medium sized businesses for their sole purpose. A designate employee must be assigned the responsibility of taking the supervisor training, ensuring proper screening processes are adhered to and reporting on behalf of the employer the results of the screens. There are avenues available for third party vendors to purchase their own kits and outside of this program to provide screening services, this program is intended to remain complimentary and direct to employers only.

**Can I purchase extra kits so I can screen those I want to, if so, how much do they cost?**

No, these are not for sale, we are not authorized to charge anyone for these kits, conversely the document you signed also requires that you not sell or distribute these as well. The box of 25 kits is approximately \$200 based on retail information we know of. They are expensive, and this is all funded by the Federal and Provincial Governments of Canada.

**Some of our Employees are required to travel for business, can this screen validate them for travel?**

No. While this screen has extremely good reliability, this is not a tool for travel or usurping any Federal, Provincial, or international guidelines.

**I noticed there are two packages marked Control Swabs, what do we use them for?**

Contained in each kit are two Control Swabs, one will produce a Negative result the other will produce a Positive result. These are ONLY to be used for quality control purposes. If you are finding that the results are not showing up on the testing pads, you can follow the process in the manual provided to do a quality control check of the pads by simply following the same testing regime EXCEPT DO NOT SWAB ANYONE WITH THESE CONTROL SWABS, they have ingredients on them already to produce the results.

While the Positive Control Swab will show Positive for COVID-19, there is nothing on the swab that is infectious or that will pass COVID-19 it is a pre-loaded swab and should not be used for anything other than quality control.