

MEMORANDUM TO: All Chiefs of Police and
Commissioner Thomas Carrique
Chairs, Police Services Boards

FROM: Richard Stubbings
Assistant Deputy Minister
Public Safety Division

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Testing for Police Services

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I am writing to advise you of additional information about COVID-19 testing provided by the Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ontario Health and the Ministry of Health (MOH) in support of the government's continued focus on reducing the spread of COVID-19. This is in addition to the COVID-19 Testing Guidance from MOH, which was shared in All Chiefs Memo 20-0050 and can also be found [here](#).

In addition to the updates on testing guidance, effective immediately, testing is available for the following populations:

Symptomatic testing:

1. **All people with at least one symptom** of COVID-19, even mild symptoms.
Please see the "Guidance for All Populations" sections of the Testing Guidance Update for details about these symptoms.

Asymptomatic, risk-based testing:

2. **People who are concerned that they have been exposed to COVID-19.** This includes, but is not limited to, people who are contacts of or may have been exposed to a confirmed or suspected case.
3. **People who are at risk of exposure to COVID-19 through their employment,** including essential workers (e.g., health care workers, first responders, grocery store employees, food processing plants).

As the province continues to take an iterative approach to testing, expanded testing will provide valuable information about the spread of the virus in different communities across the province and help to protect vulnerable populations and all Ontarians.

No Ontarian who is symptomatic or who is concerned they have been exposed to COVID-19 will be declined a test at an Assessment Centre (either through appointment or walk-in, per the processes of each individual Assessment Centre).

Similarly, if any individual who is being tested does not have any symptoms or any known exposure to a person with COVID -19, they will not be required to self-isolate for 14 days. However, if an individual has any concerns about being in contact with a person with COVID -19, they should self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days regardless of their test result. If an individual begins to develop symptoms, they should self-isolate and contact their local public health unit for further advice.

This memorandum provides information on a multi-service testing initiative that police services may coordinate locally. This is focused on asymptomatic individuals, including first responders, essential workers, and their immediate families. An approach to testing should be locally led with support from Ontario Health who can assist with the distribution of test kits to your organization. Given the magnitude of this initiative and the need to coordinate this at the local level, police chiefs should liaise with their local and/or regional Emergency Operations Centre and their respective counterparts in both fire and paramedic services to allow a multi service coordinated approach be developed. This is something that should be coordinated locally given the unique circumstances of each community. There may be opportunities for smaller municipalities/communities to coordinate jointly so that testing can take place sooner if coordinated between a few neighbouring municipalities.

If you are planning to undertake a coordinated multi-service testing initiative, municipalities should be able to confirm the following prior to reaching out to Ontario Health:

1. Who is the lead contact for the region?
2. What is/are the testing location(s) being proposed?
3. What are the proposed dates that testing would be made available?

Please note that there is a limit to how many tests can be conducted daily at the provincial level, so coordination with Ontario Health will require that alternate dates be identified so that the demand on the system can be minimized. Ontario Health will work with you to determine testing dates based on the availability of test kits and site locations.

4. How many tests do you anticipate will be administered in total?

5. Who will administer the test (i.e., EMS; local Assessment Centre team; local hospital team)?

Once a plan has been developed, one person from the municipality should contact Jordan Ramsden from Ontario Health via email at Jordan.Ramsden@ontariohealth.ca to provide details of the testing plan. Please note that for planning purposes, municipalities will be asked to provide information about the number of tests anticipated to occur to Ontario Health. If testing will occur on more than one occasion, weekly updates of the additional anticipated testing numbers should be provided to Ontario Health over the duration of the testing plan.

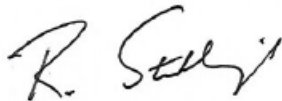
Alternatively, for services that are unable to create plans with other sectors in their communities, requisitions for testing of individuals can be obtained by Ontario Health through the same contact listed above. There is opportunity for testing to be conducted for individuals at local assessment centres, where appropriate.

It should be noted that when a test is completed it represents that one point in time and may not accurately indicate that an individual does not have the virus (i.e., testing during incubation period) especially if the individual has been exposed to someone who is COVID-19 infected. Policing personnel and their families are encouraged to undergo as many tests as deemed necessary if they are concerned about any one of the following: a) they are showing symptoms or b) have been exposed or are at risk of being exposed to COVID-19.

Ontario's approach to testing will continue to evolve, based on evidence from Ontario and other jurisdictions and the public health indicators that are being monitored closely. We will continue to share this information with our policing partners.

Thank you again for your continued efforts on the front lines responding to this pandemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Stubbings'.

Richard Stubbings
Assistant Deputy Minister
Public Safety Division