

Workforce Safety
& Employee Health

Edmonton

**Administrative Policy A1701:
*COVID-19 Vaccination***

COVID-19 Rapid Testing Program

Updated March 8, 2022

Safe. Helpful. Accountable.
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What's new:

As of April 1, 2022, the Rapid Testing Program will be suspended and employees who are not fully vaccinated will not be required to provide proof of negative rapid tests as part of their pre-shift screening as of this date.

****The Rapid Testing Program can be reinstated at any time with 1 week's notice.****

Employees on the Program will continue to rapid test and submit their negative results through March 31, 2022.

The COVID-19 Vaccination [Policy](#) and [Procedure](#) remain in effect and the next review is scheduled for September 30, 2022.

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY A1701: COVID-19 VACCINATION

As an employer with a strong commitment to health and safety, the City of Edmonton will take every reasonable step to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees and others from the hazard of COVID-19. The City determined that it is necessary for the protection of its workplace to maximize COVID-19 vaccination rates of its employees as a further control measure in mitigating the hazard of COVID-19. [Administrative Policy A1701: COVID-19 Vaccination](#), and its related [Procedure](#), outline the requirement for employees to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, unless an exemption has been approved on the basis of a protected legal ground.

COVID-19 RAPID TESTING PROGRAM SCOPE

As of April 1, 2022 the Rapid Testing Program will be suspended. The Program may be reinstated at any time with 1 week's notice.

This program applies to all employees who have not provided proof that they are fully vaccinated. The program testing requirement applies to employees working on City worksites as well as those working at home, as they could be required to attend the workplace for operational reasons.

Employees must receive a negative rapid test result within 72 hours prior to the start of their shift in order to report for work on that date.

- **Proof of Negative Test:** Proof of a negative test result includes a written, printed or electronic copy of a result that indicates the employee has tested negative for COVID-19 on a Health Canada approved rapid antigen test. Valid test results must include the employee's full name, the provider that completed the test, the type of test, date and time of sample collection, and a clear indication of a negative result.
- **Submitting Negative Test Result:** Employees who are participating in the rapid testing program will be required to fill out the designated [COVID-19 Rapid Testing Program Pre-Shift Screening Form](#) before each shift.
- **Positive Rapid Test Result:** The employee is not to enter the worksite and must immediately notify their supervisor.
 - If you are asymptomatic and you have a rapid test available, it is recommended that you test again after 24 hours from your first positive test. If your second test is positive, you need to continue to stay home and isolate. If your second test is negative and you remain asymptomatic, you may return to work.
- **Ineligible Tests:** Test results cannot be from at-home kits that are not supervised by a third-party provider or from the Alberta Health Services public COVID-19 testing system.

Rapid testing is a workplace control measure. Leaders and branch management will know whether an employee is on the testing program and will have access to information to ensure that the employee is complying.

Table 1 - Example Testing Schedules

Employees must have taken a COVID-19 rapid test within 72 hours of the start of every shift

Work Schedule	Example Rapid Testing Schedule	Tests per week
Monday to Friday	Sunday and Wednesday	2
Sunday to Thursday	Saturday and Tuesday	2
Saturday	Friday	1
Hybrid Work Arrangement - Monday to Tuesday at home; Wednesday to Friday in the office	Sunday and Wednesday	2

RAPID TESTING PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for a rapid test, an employee must meet the following conditions:

1. Have no symptoms of COVID-19;
2. Not be a household contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 10 days;
3. Not been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the six weeks prior to the date of rapid testing; and
4. Meet any other requirements of the pharmacy/authorized provider.

If an employee has symptoms of COVID-19 or is a household contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 10 days (and the employee is not fully vaccinated), the employee must isolate, contact their direct supervisor and follow direction from Alberta Health Services (AHS).

Employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 6 weeks will not be eligible for rapid antigen testing and will be granted a *temporary exemption* from the testing requirement. **Employees must provide proof of a positive rapid test or PCR test from Alberta Health Services to Disability Management (disabilitymanagement@edmonton.ca or 780-496-8835) to be granted the exemption.** Disability Management will provide direction on pre-shift screening requirements during the 6 week temporary exemption. The exemption expires at the conclusion of six (6) weeks from the positive PCR or rapid test result and the employee will resume the rapid testing program if they have not yet submitted proof of full vaccination.

RAPID TESTING PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

Employees must take a COVID-19 rapid antigen test within 72 hours of the start of every shift and provide proof of a negative result. This requirement applies whether the employee is working on site or at home as they could be required to attend the workplace for operational reasons.

Employees are responsible for scheduling their own tests at their own cost. Providers may require appointments to be scheduled. Employees are required to book their test outside of working hours, and employees will not be paid for their time while getting tested. Employees are required to show proof of a negative test through the designated process. Employees must keep the record of their test for 14 days and may be asked for it by their leader, Workforce Safety and Employee Health or Labour Relations.

Only [Health Canada approved](#) Rapid Tests will be accepted. At-home, third-party supplier video-supervised testing is acceptable as of December 1 only if the third-party provider produces a written result that meets the City's Rapid Testing Program's requirements. Employees can identify a pharmacy, or other private provider, of their choice that offers Health Canada approved Rapid Antigen Tests. For your reference, Alberta Health has published a [list](#) of COVID-19 rapid testing third party health service vendors. The City has also created a [list](#) of rapid testing providers in the Edmonton and surrounding region. Employees may optionally reference this list of rapid testing providers in the City. This list is subject to change.

At-home rapid test kits (including those provided free of cost by the Province) may only be used as a follow up test if the employee is asymptomatic and tests positive. Alberta Health Services (AHS) provided PCR tests are not accepted.

Cost of Testing

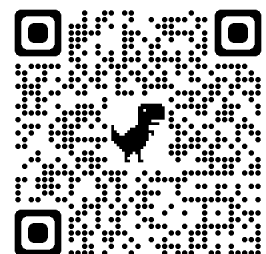
Employees are directly responsible for the full cost of rapid testing and any related fees such as charges for missed or late appointments or repeat testing due to inconclusive test results. It is estimated to cost \$40/test. Rapid testing under the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy is not an eligible expense under the City's health benefits plans.

Employees with an approved exemption on the basis of a protected legal ground through Disability Management or Labour Relations may be reimbursed for the cost of their test (to a maximum of \$50 per test). Direction will be provided to those employees at the time of the exemption approval.

Rapid Testing & Pre-Shift Screening Checklist

Employees required to perform rapid testing must document their test completion status on a unique [Rapid Testing & Pre-Shift Screening Checklist](#) (the "Checklist").

Before commencing work, the employee must complete the Checklist and report if they have completed a rapid antigen test within 72 hours prior to the start of their work shift and received a negative result. This form must be completed each day by all employees on the rapid testing program, regardless of work location.



Proof of Rapid Test Results

Each Branch will receive a list of employees that are required to perform rapid testing, and are responsible to ensure all identified employees are completing the Checklist.

Each Branch will be responsible for developing a process to confirm proof of rapid testing. As an option, rapid test records may be uploaded directly into the Checklist, which will be sent directly to the supervisor for review. Another option includes a visual check by the supervisor (or other designate) at the beginning of the employee's shift.

Important: Employees must keep a copy of their most recent test with them at all times during working hours. If an employee is asked to show proof of rapid testing and they cannot produce the record, the employee will be sent home without pay. This would be considered non-compliance under this Program. Supervisors or designated work area contacts are required to notify Labour Relations when an employee has twice failed to provide proof of a rapid test result, without reasonable explanation.

TEST RESULTS

Rapid test results will be displayed as 'negative', 'positive', or 'inconclusive'.

Negative Rapid Test Result

If the employee's rapid test is negative, the employee may proceed to work as long as the Pre-Shift Screening confirms the employee may do so. A copy of the test result must be with the employee at all times during work, and can be in the form of a written, printed or electronic copy. Valid test results must include the employee's full name, the provider that completed the test, the type of test, date and time of sample collection, and a clear indication of a negative result.

At-home rapid test kit results or self-produced documentation of a negative test result is not valid. At-home, third-party virtually supervised tests with results provided by the provider are allowed.

Positive Rapid Test Result

If the employee's rapid test is positive, the employee cannot attend work and must contact their supervisor regarding the positive result.

If the employee screens positive on a rapid test and has symptoms of COVID-19, they are considered to be positive for COVID-19 and must:

- Isolate for 10 days from the start of symptoms. You must keep isolating until your symptoms have improved and you have been fever-free for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- You are the best person to decide if your symptoms are improving. An improvement in symptoms means that you are feeling better than you did in the previous days and you have no new COVID-19 symptoms. Some symptoms may continue after you're no longer able to spread the virus to others.

- The employee must provide proof of the positive COVID-19 rapid test to Disability Management (documentation of a PCR positive result or a photo of the employee's positive rapid test) and then will be granted a *temporary exemption* from the testing requirement. Disability Management will provide direction on pre-shift screening requirements during the 6 week temporary exemption. At the conclusion of 6 weeks from the positive test result, the employee will resume the rapid testing program if they have not yet submitted proof of full vaccination.
- Following notification of a positive rapid test by an employee, the supervisor must fill out the [COVID-19 Employee Intake Form](#). Employees will code their time according to the [Compensation and Leave FAQ](#).
- If the employee is asymptomatic and has a home rapid test available, it is recommended they test again after 24 hours from their first positive test. If their second test is positive, they need to continue to stay home and isolate. If their second test is negative and they remain asymptomatic, they may return to work.

Inconclusive Tests

If a rapid test result is inconclusive, the employee is required to repeat the test. If after the second test, it is still inconclusive, the employee must follow the recommendation from the provider which may include booking a confirmation test through Alberta Health Services. The employee may not report to work with an inconclusive test result, and must contact their supervisor.

Table 2 - Summary of Actions for Rapid Test Results

Test Result	Employee Action	Supervisor Action
Negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Checklist and proceed to work as long as the Pre-Shift Screening confirms you may do so. • Keep a copy of the negative test result with you at all times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visually confirm employee test result is negative and has been completed within the past 72 hours before their shift.
Positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do <u>not</u> proceed to work. • Contact your supervisor immediately regarding the positive test result. • Begin isolation, and follow AHS guidance. • Provide the Rapid Test results to Disability Management. • If you are asymptomatic and you have a rapid test available, it is recommended that you test again after 24 hours from your first positive test. If your second test is positive, you need to continue to stay home and isolate. If your second test is negative and you remain asymptomatic, you may return to work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the COVID-19 Employee Intake Form. • Code the employee as QWP for that shift. • Follow up with the employee prior to the end of their isolation period to confirm their return to work date. • On the date that the employee returns to work, update the Employee Intake Form with the date the employee recovered and returned to work (a link will be provided to the leader who submitted the positive result).
Inconclusive / Invalid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat the rapid test. • If the second test is inconclusive, do <u>not</u> proceed to work. • Contact your supervisor regarding the inconclusive test result. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require the employee to send proof of the two inconclusive test results. • Code the employee as IWP for that shift.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow guidance from the test provider regarding further testing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm that the employee is following the guidance from the test provider regarding further testing.
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Note: Employees must inform their supervisor immediately if they cannot produce a negative test result and therefore **cannot** report for work.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees are responsible for:

- Understanding and adhering to this program.
- Finding and booking an appointment with a pharmacy or authorized provider to obtain rapid antigen testing.
- Payment of all costs for the rapid testing and attending the test on their own time.
- Ensuring that rapid antigen testing is completed and results are received within 72 hours before the start of their shift (whether they are working on site or at home).
- Keeping a copy of their most recent test with them at all times during working hours, keeping records of each test result for at least 14 days, and providing records on request by their leader, Workforce Safety and Employee Health or Labour Relations.
- Completing the electronic form to report the results of rapid antigen testing and/or communicating the results to their supervisor (or designate).
- Informing their supervisor and submitting appropriate documentation if there is a change in vaccination status.
- Following next steps, as required, after receiving their rapid antigen testing results. This includes attending for a PCR test through AHS, self-isolating, etc.

Leaders are responsible for:

- Ensuring employees on this program submit test results; reviewing those results.
- Following up with employees who fail to provide proof of a negative test result to ensure the employee does not work that shift, is coded as leave without pay and knows they must provide proof of a negative test result before their next shift.
- Contacting or notifying Labour Relations when an employee fails to provide proof of a negative test result on two occasions.

Workforce Safety and Employee Health is responsible for:

- Collecting vaccine intake forms and vaccine records.
- Updating lists of employees eligible to be on the rapid antigen testing program and providing information to the business areas.
- Developing and maintaining the program, electronic forms, and reporting tools.
- Performing quality assurance checks to ensure safe work practices are followed.
- Reviewing temporary exemption requests and providing direction to employees.

CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

Under the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy, employees who do not provide proof they are fully vaccinated and do not comply with rapid testing are deemed unfit for work and will be placed on leave without pay.

If an employee fails to provide proof of **any** rapid test result they will not be permitted to attend work for that shift, or will be sent home, and they will not be paid. If an employee fails to provide proof of a rapid test result on a second occasion without reasonable explanation, they will be placed on leave without pay. Employees may only return from leave without pay in these circumstances if they commit to becoming fully vaccinated, provide proof they have received at least one vaccine injection and comply with rapid testing until they are fully vaccinated.

If an employee initially declines to participate in the rapid testing program and is placed on leave without pay, they may resume attending work (assuming their employment has not yet been terminated), if they agree and commit to participation in the rapid testing program (i.e. provide a negative test result) or if they provide proof they are fully vaccinated.

Employees are required to report accurate and truthful information. Employees knowingly providing false or misleading information may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

EXITING THE RAPID TESTING PROGRAM

The City strongly encourages all employees who are not fully vaccinated to meet with a physician to have a full and honest, two way dialogue about the benefits and risks of a COVID-19 vaccine. A letter to aid this conversation can be found [here](#).

If you are required to comply with the Rapid Testing Program and become fully vaccinated, you must submit your vaccination record through the [COVID-19 Vaccine Intake Form](#). Once your submission has been verified, you will no longer be required to comply with the Rapid Testing Program.

REVIEW OF THE RAPID TESTING PROGRAM

This Program is subject to continuous review as circumstances warrant. The City reserves the right to revise or end the rapid testing program at any time.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

A comprehensive [FAQ](#) has been prepared to answer common questions.