



# When Should Employees Get Tested for COVID-19?

## Deschutes County COVID-19 Testing Guidance for Businesses

In times of high demand, COVID-19 testing can become constrained in our community. To make sure that tests are available for priority groups (listed below), Deschutes County Health Services (DCHS) strongly recommends the following:

- **Businesses should NOT implement a “test to return-to-work business policy”** regardless of whether an employee has a positive COVID -19 test or after a potential exposure at work. Instead, DCHS recommends that staff can return to work once they have completed their Isolation or Quarantine as described at [www.deschutes.org/covidinfo](http://www.deschutes.org/covidinfo)
- Prior to implementing any required testing for employees, please **consult with the DCHS Business Outreach Team** to help assess risk and help determine appropriate COVID-19 testing strategies. You can reach the Business Outreach Team by calling **541-699-5109**
- **Encourage your staff to order free home antigen tests.** Home tests are a good alternative to seeking out testing clinics if an employee is symptomatic or has been exposed to COVID-19. Every home in the U.S. is now eligible to order four free at-home COVID-19 tests from the Federal Government ([covidtests.gov](http://covidtests.gov)). Additionally, insured individuals can utilize their health insurance coverage for COVID-19 test purchase to get reimbursement of up to \$12 per individual at-home test. Uninsured individuals can utilize other federal programs to obtain free tests and are advised to call testing clinics prior to visiting to confirm that the clinic will bill the federal government

**The following groups should always seek out testing by any means available** including testing at clinics and laboratories if they experience symptoms or have close contact exposure:

- **Individuals with any of the conditions listed below, who are considered at High Risk for complications from COVID-19;**

Obesity • Diabetes • Chronic Kidney Disease • Heart condition such as heart failure, cardiomyopathies, or high blood pressure • Sickle Cell Disease • Developmental condition like Cerebral Palsy • Use Daily medication for asthma or other long-term lung disease • Dependent on or regularly use of medical technology like a ventilator or feeding tube • Pregnant • Taking medications that weaken the immune system  
For more information: [People with Certain Medical Conditions | CDC](#)

- **All individuals with moderate to severe illness who require medical care; Individuals in higher consequence settings, such as:**

Congregate residential • Agricultural • Food production • Grocery stores • K-12, Early Learning Division • Educational

**The following groups may not need to seek COVID-19 Testing:**

- Individuals who have had close contact with a COVID positive household member, friend, or co-worker and subsequently develop symptoms. In this scenario, it is highly likely that the individual is COVID positive. They can be considered a presumptive case and should isolate. They should only test if they are High Risk and, therefore, may need treatment.
- People with a positive home COVID-19 test do not need another confirmatory test.
- Symptomatic people with a negative clinic or home antigen test done within 3-5 days of illness onset.

**Have questions? We want to help! Call the Deschutes County COVID Hotline to speak to a Business Outreach Team member: [541-699-5109](tel:541-699-5109)**