

## **Supplemental Testing Strategy FAQ**

### **FAQ by testing program**

#### **1.) Mass testing**

##### **What changes will take place at mass testing sites and will free testing still be offered at these sites?**

Mass testing sites will continue to offer free COVID-19 PCR tests to Kansans in Johnson, Wyandotte, Douglas, Sedgwick, Shawnee and Riley counties.

KDHE is transitioning the operation of mass testing sites to the Kansas state lab (KHEL). The transition will allow KDHE to administer and process tests at a significantly lower cost.

To find a free testing site, go to [KnowBeforeYouGoKS.com](https://www.kdheks.gov/KBYG).

##### **Will KDHE close any mass testing sites as part of the transition?**

While nine mass testing sites will remain open, eight low volume mass testing sites have been closed during the transition. The mass testing sites remaining open are responsible for 85% of the mass testing volume across the state.

In order to serve Kansas testing needs efficiently, KDHE will work with local health departments and other community partners to ensure that free testing is available to support communities where a mass testing site has been closed.

##### **What will be different at mass testing sites operated by KHEL?**

KDHE mass testing sites will not offer appointments at this time. In addition, operating hours have changed at most sites. For current testing site locations and operating hours, more information is available at [KnowBeforeYouGoKS.com](https://www.kdheks.gov/KBYG).

##### **What tests will be offered at mass testing sites?**

KDHE mass testing sites are currently offering PCR tests. KDHE is exploring the option of adding antigen testing in the near future.

##### **When will these changes be implemented?**

KDHE has already opened several mass testing sites and will operate all planned mass testing sites by the end of November 2021.

#### **2.) Long term care facilities (LTCFs)**

### **What changes will take place in LTCFs and will free testing still be offered at LTCFs?**

Effective 11/30/2021, KDHE will no longer pay for testing done at LTCFs through commercial labs. However, LTCFs will be able to provide regular free screening testing for residents, staff, and visitors through the HHS Regional Testing Midwest Coordination Center operated by Battelle.

KDHE will continue to work with LTCFs and other facilities to provide testing through the state lab in response to outbreaks that occur in the facility.

### **What do these changes mean for LTCFs?**

All state and federally regulated LTCFs will need to identify another source of testing or funding to cover the costs of testing their staff and residents, or they will need to begin billing insurance for testing they provide. At this time, the federal government remains committed to providing rapid, point of care test kits to federally regulated facilities.

### **Do LTCFs need to terminate their relationship with lab vendors?**

No, LTCFs do not need to end their existing partnership with their commercial testing lab. LTCFs may want to consider:

1. Working with the Battelle Midwest Coordination Center to access free surveillance testing
2. Working with their existing testing lab to modify the existing contract to include insurance billing, and billing insurance for samples collected at the LTCF
3. Using antigen tests available through CMS or purchasing antigen tests if the LTCF is not able to procure them from CMS.

LTCFs may choose one or all of the above options to provide both screening and diagnostic testing for residents and staff.

In addition, KDHE has prepared an [Employer Testing Playbook](#) and a list of resources that may be helpful. You may also be aware of or have access to additional options.

### **How do LTCFs sign up for screening testing through Battelle?**

More information about the Battelle Midwest Coordination Center is available on the [KDHE website](#) or by reaching out to Maleah Slaughter at [slaughterm@testedandprotected.org](mailto:slaughterm@testedandprotected.org).

### **What testing support will be available in case of an outbreak at an LTCF?**

KDHE will continue to work with LTCFs to provide testing through the state lab in response to outbreaks that occur in the facility.

### **When will these changes be implemented?**

These changes are effective as of 11/30/2021.

### **3.) K-12**

#### **What changes will take place in K-12 schools and will free testing still be offered at K-12 schools?**

Testing at K-12 schools will not be impacted by these changes. KDHE will continue to offer free testing to students and staff in schools districts that are interested in standing up a testing program. We are carefully monitoring federal funding for K-12 funding.

### **4.) Community Testing Partners (CTPs)**

#### **What changes will take place with the CTP program and will free testing still be offered at CTPs?**

Effective 11/29/2021, the KDHE CTP Program sites will transition to rapid antigen testing, as supplies are available. Free rapid antigen tests will continue to be offered to CTPs for their clients. To find a free testing site near you, go to [KnowBeforeYouGoKS.com](https://www.kdhe.ks.gov/KBYG).

#### **What does this mean for Community Testing Partners?**

KDHE will discontinue paying the \$30 collection fee for PCR testing and will no longer cover the costs of PCR tests processed by lab partners as of 11/29/2021. However, KDHE will continue to offer the \$30 collection fee for BinaxNOW rapid antigen tests and continue to supply rapid antigen tests free of cost to CTPs.

#### **Do Community Testing Partners need to end the relationship with their lab partners?**

No, KDHE encourages CTPs to continue working with lab vendors to provide testing in the community. However, if CTPs continue working with contract labs, CTPs will need to bill insurance for the collection fee or find alternative funding sources to cover the cost of specimen collections. CTPs should verify that their lab vendor is contracted with insurers and able to bill for specimen processing.

#### **What are the options for CTPs that want to continue providing PCR testing?**

CTPs can offer PCR testing outside of the CTP program and can continue partnering with labs to offer PCR testing. CTPs will need to bill insurance for the specimen collection fee and work with the testing lab to modify contracts to include insurance billing to cover the cost of test processing.

#### **What are the options for individuals who still want a PCR test?**

Individuals can access PCR tests at a variety of locations. Individuals can seek PCR testing at mass testing sites, healthcare provider clinics, pharmacies, LHDs, and FQHCs.

#### **Is the antigen test as accurate as a PCR test?**

Antigen tests are very accurate for symptomatic individuals or individuals who are a close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Antigen tests are also an effective option to rapidly identify if an individual is currently infectious and can spread COVID-19 to others .

### **Is confirmatory PCR required for antigen tests?**

Confirmatory testing is not always required after a positive antigen test. The CDC recommends confirmatory testing after an antigen test in the following situations only:

1. If a person has a positive antigen test result but has no symptoms or has no known exposure to someone who is suspected to have COVID-19
2. If a person has a negative antigen test result but has symptoms of COVID-19 or has had a known exposure to someone who is suspected to have COVID-19

For more information, please refer to the guidance from the CDC ([CDC guidance](#))

### **What do CTPs need to do to switch from PCR tests provided by commercial labs to antigen tests?**

The CTP team at KDHE can support those organizations choosing to transition from PCR testing to using antigen tests.

CTPs will need to obtain a CLIA certification or add antigen tests to their existing certification. They will also need to set up a LabXchange account. All test results (positive and negative) will need to be submitted through LabXchange at the time the test is resulted. Only the tests with results submitted to LabXchange will be eligible for reimbursement through the CTP Program.

Please contact [LHD@ks.gov](mailto:LHD@ks.gov) with any questions.

### **When will these changes be implemented?**

These changes are effective as of 11/29/2021. This allow time for the lab vendors to receive and process the PCR tests before funding is discontinued.

### **What if CTPs have leftover PCR kits?**

CTPs with unused PCR kits should work with lab partners to determine how to return their unused test kits.

## **5.) Volunteer Testing Partners (VTPs)**

### **What changes will take place with the VTP program and will free testing still be offered by VTPs?**

Effective 11/12/2021, the Volunteer Testing Program will no longer be offering free PCR Saliva Tests to VTPs. However, KDHE will continue offering free rapid antigen tests through VTPs, which include BinaxNOW PRO (onsite) and BinaxNOW over the counter (at-home) test kits, as available.

### **What does this mean for VTPs?**

VTPs should refrain from administering the PCR Saliva Tests after 11/12/2021. Administering a PCR Saliva Test after 11/12/2021 may result in the patient being billed for the test.

### **Is the antigen test as accurate as a PCR test?**

Antigen tests are very accurate for symptomatic individuals or individuals who are a close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Antigen tests are also an effective option to rapidly identify if an individual is currently infectious and can spread COVID-19 to others .

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For more information, please refer to the guidance from the CDC ([CDC guidance](#))

### **When will these changes be implemented?**

These changes are effective as of 11:59 pm 11/12/2021.

### **What if VTPs have leftover PCR kits after 11/12/2021?**

KDHE will reach out to VTPs with specific instructions for returning unused test kits to Clinical Reference Lab (CRL). Opened test kits may be discarded in household garbage.

## **6.) Local Health Departments (LHDs)**

### **What changes will take place with testing at LHDs and will free testing still be offered at LHDs?**

Effective 11/29/2021, KDHE will no longer fund the cost of tests that are processed by commercial or university labs for LHDs. However, KDHE will continue to process PCR tests free of cost through KHEL. To receive free testing, LHDs will need to request QuikSal test kits and/or other supplies from KHEL and ship tests to KHEL for processing. KHEL can also process NP and OP collections if these methods are utilized. A courier must be arranged to pick up samples directly from the pick-up location determined between KDHE and the LHD.

### **What does this mean for LHDs?**

If LHDs are currently working with MAWD, WSU, CRL, Quest, or Sinochips to process COVID-19 PCR tests, KDHE will no longer pay for tests collected by LHDs and sent to a commercial or university lab after 11:59 pm 11/28/2021. LHDs can continue to send tests for processing through lab vendors but will

need to arrange for third party payer billing to cover the cost. KHEL is able to process your tests at no cost when LHDs use QuikSal and ship samples to KHEL for processing. KHEL can also process NP and OP collections if these methods are utilized.

### **Can LHDs still work with lab vendors to offer testing?**

Yes, LHDs that wish to continue working with lab vendors will need to work with their existing testing lab to modify their contract to include insurance billing by the lab.

### **How can an LHD order tests from KHEL and ship tests to KHEL?**

LHDs can use this [link](#) to order testing supplies from KHEL. All supplies are free to LHDs. Tests can be transported to KHEL through the existing courier stop for the county.

### **When will these changes be implemented?**

These changes are effective as of 11/29/2021.

### **Employers**

#### **What changes will take place with funding for employer testing?**

KDHE will continue employer testing for those previously enrolled in the employer testing program, supporting testing for up to 10% of employees every two weeks through March 2022. KDHE is working with state and federal bodies to secure funding to support this program through March 2022, at which point it will be phased out. Any changes to this timeline will be communicated as clearly and early as possible.

KDHE will no longer fund the cost of screening or diagnostic tests that are processed by commercial or university labs for employers not previously enrolled in KDHE's testing program.

#### **What does this mean for employers?**

Employers not previously enrolled in KDHE's employer testing program will be responsible for covering the costs of their testing programs. Employers who were testing more than 10% of their workforce more than every two weeks will also be responsible for covering the cost of testing in excess of the program allowances.

In addition, as of April 1, 2022, all employers, including those previously enrolled in KDHE's employer testing program, will be responsible for covering the costs of their testing programs.

As of April 2022, employers wishing to process tests through commercial or university labs will need to cover the cost of testing or make sure the lab is set up to bill third party payers. Alternatively, employers can purchase point-of-care testing equipment from manufacturers to stand up an on-site testing program.

Note this program does not meet the testing requirements of the new OSHA mandate regarding COVID testing for employers with >100 employees coming into effect in January.

**What resources are available to employers interested in standing up a testing program?**

KDHE has created an [Employer Testing Playbook](#) to support all businesses that wish to offer employee testing to prevent COVID-19 outbreaks in their workplace and help keep their businesses open.