Frequently Asked Questions About Rhode Island COVID-19 Testing

Updated June 25, 2020

The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) is sharing these Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to help answer common inquiries about how to get tested for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

If you have additional questions, please visit our website at **health.ri.gov/covid/testing** or call the COVID-19 hotline at **401-222-8022** Monday–Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. or **2-1-1** on Saturday, Sunday, and after hours.

1. **Who should get tested for COVID-19?**
   - **If you have COVID-19 symptoms**, RIDOH recommends you should get tested. If you are experiencing any symptoms the CDC has identified for COVID-19, you need to get tested.
     - **What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**
       - People with COVID-19 can have mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms can appear two to 14 days after being exposed to the virus.
       - **Symptoms can include**: Cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever or chills, muscle or body aches, sore throat, headache, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, runny nose or stuffy nose, fatigue, and recent loss of taste or smell. Children have similar symptoms to adults and generally have mild illness.
   - **Asymptomatic testing (testing for people without COVID-19 symptoms) is available in Rhode Island. It will be used to monitor and potential hotspots for the virus.** We are focusing asymptomatic testing for Rhode Islanders in densely-populated areas hardest hit by the pandemic. We are also offering this testing to Rhode Islanders who work in close-contact environments.

2. **I heard Governor Raimondo announce asymptomatic COVID-19 testing for Rhode Islanders who work in close-contact workplaces**. **Can you tell me more about that?**
   - Asymptomatic testing is available to high-contact workers, including and not limited to:
     - Barbers
     - Child care workers
     - Clergy
     - Cosmetologists
     - First responders
     - Gym and exercise trainers
     - Healthcare professionals
     - Personal care services (nail technicians, massage therapists, tattoo artists, estheticians, cosmeticians, manicurists, body piercers, and tanning facility staff)
     - Public transit drivers

- o Restaurant workers
- o People who have recently gone to a large gathering or demonstration

- **Asymptomatic testing** for additional groups will be announced in the coming weeks. This will include additional work settings, communities, and perhaps more. Rhode Island's strategy will likely evolve as we continue to respond to the pandemic and move forward.
- **Testing is one part of our work to fight COVID-19.** It is still very important for everyone to wear face masks or cloth face covers, wash their hands often, keep distance between themselves and others, and clean surfaces frequently.

3. **How do I get tested for COVID-19?**
    - **People with symptoms:** If you think you have COVID-19 and feel like you have symptoms, you should first call a primary care provider to talk about your symptoms and get scheduled for a test. Many primary care providers are set up to test their patients on site. You should not go directly to a healthcare facility without calling a healthcare provider first. If you are experiencing a medical emergency, then call 9-1-1.
    - **People without symptoms who are eligible for statewide asymptomatic testing can schedule a test online or over the phone**:
        - o Visit Rhode Island's COVID-19 Self-Scheduling Portal on **portal.ri.gov**.
        - o Find the link to the Community Self-Scheduling Portal on **https://health.ri.gov/covid/**
        - o Call RIDOH's COVID-19 Hotline and schedule a test. Call **401-222-8022** to speak with a RIDOH representative Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. or call **2-1-1** on Saturday, Sunday, and after hours.
        - o On the Self-Scheduling Portal, **portal.ri.gov**, you will need to enter your first and last name, email address, date of birth, and phone number.
        - o Once you schedule a test, you will receive an email with a link to complete registration. This email will contain information about your username and resetting your password. If you don't receive an email, check your spam or junk folder. You will receive a confirmation email with your appointment information. As of now, appointments cannot be deleted or edited.
        - o When scheduling your test, you will have the option to go to a testing site at the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI), Rhode Island College (RIC), or one of four Stop & Shop locations:
            - ▪ Cranston: 275 Warwick Ave.
            - ▪ Pawtucket: 368-398 Cottage St.
            - ▪ Providence: 850 Manton Ave.
            - ▪ Providence: 333 W. River St.
        - o **Once you scheduled your test**, go to CurrentCare's enrollment webpage at enroll.CurrentCareRI.org [enroll.currentcareri.org] and create an account. CurrentCare is

a secure electronic network that gives you and your healthcare provider access to your COVID-19 test results.

o **There will be no charge associated with asymptomatic testing.** People will be tested regardless of their immigration status, and regardless of whether they have health insurance.

o **Getting your test results for asymptomatic testing**:
  - Test results will come back within three to five days from your test date.
  - If you enrolled in CurrentCare before taking your COVID-19 test, you can get your test results at CurrentCareRI.org.
  - You can also get your test results by visiting Eastside Clinical Laboratory's patient portal at **eastsidelab.com/sonicmyaccess**, or by texting "**ESCL**" to **66349**.
  - If you are unable to access your test results using CurrentCare or Eastside Clinical Laboratory, call the Rhode Island Department of Health at **401-222-8022**, Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. for help.

4. **I don't have a primary care provider. Does that mean I can't get tested?**
   - If you don't have a primary care provider, you can still get tested for COVID-19. There are places like urgent care centers, community health centers, and community-based clinics across the state that are taking new patients. These healthcare facilities are sometimes called "respiratory clinics." They offer on-site health evaluations as well as on-site COVID-19 testing. Many offer drive-up and walk-up testing options. Here is a list of these facilities. More information about places to get tested is available on the RIDOH website at **health.ri.gov/covid/testing**.
   - Be sure to call first to schedule an appointment. Do not go directly to one of these clinics if you think you have COVID-19. If you are experiencing a medical emergency, then call 9-1-1.

5. **I've heard that some cities in Rhode Island have walk-up COVID-19 testing sites. Is this true?**
   - Yes. There are many walk-up testing sites available in Rhode Island, including in the cities of Central Falls, East Providence, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket. For the most up-to-date list of walk-up test sites, please visit RIDOH's Testing webpage.

6. **Can I get tested for COVID-19 if I don't have health insurance?**

   Yes. There are several options to get a free COVID-19 test, regardless of your health insurance or immigration status:

   - Call your primary care provider and ask them to refer you for a COVID-19 test at a drive-up testing site at CCRI in Warwick or at Rhode Island College in Providence.
   - Make an appointment to get tested at a community-based health center or clinic that offers COVID-19 testing. Many of these sites offer drive-up and walk-up testing options. When you

make an appointment, confirm that the site provides free testing and related services for people without health insurance, regardless of immigration status.

- Go online to be pre-screened for CVS rapid testing and get an appointment.
- Make an appointment to get tested at Clínica Esperanza/Hope Clinic in Providence.

- Residents of Central Falls and Pawtucket can call the Beat COVID-19 Hotline at 855-843-7620 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays to schedule an appointment for a rapid test. The COVID-19 walk-up rapid testing site is located at 934 Dexter St. in Central Falls. Services are available in multiple languages.

- Call the Rhode Island Free Clinic (RIFC) COVID-19 hotline at 401-92-COVID (6843) to make an appointment. RIFC offers walk-up and drive-up testing for COVID-19 at St. Joseph Hospital parking lot next to the Free Clinic at 647 Broad St. in Providence. Testing is available to new and existing RIFC patients Monday-Thursday from 1 p.m.-5 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Services are available in multiple languages.

- Open Door Health has a walk-up and drive-up COVID-19 testing site at 393 Broad St. in Providence (Southside Cultural Center of Rhode Island). The clinic will offer free testing to people ages 12 and older Monday – Thursday, noon to 4 p.m. Spanish translation is available. Call 401-648-4700 for more information.

7. **How can I get a COVID-19 test quickly?**
   - If you need to get a COVID-19 test quickly, CVS Health is offering free drive-up rapid testing for eligible individuals at Twin River Casino in Lincoln. Go online to be pre-screened for an appointment. The rapid testing site will not test people who do not have an appointment or who do not meet the testing criteria.
   - Residents of Central Falls and Pawtucket can get a COVID-19 rapid test without scheduling an appointment. People can go to the testing site located at 934 Dexter St. in Central Falls. For more information, call the Beat COVID-19 Hotline at 855-843-7620 between 9 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays. Services are available in multiple languages.

8. **How long will I have to wait to get the results of my COVID-19 test?**
   - CVS Health and the Central Falls/Pawtucket testing site will offer rapid results, usually within 15 minutes. Tests done at other sites will come back in about three to five days. While you are waiting for your test results, it is very important to stay at home and isolate yourself to avoid spreading your symptoms to others.

9. **What happens if I have symptoms and test positive?**
   - Your name and contact information will be shared with public health staff at the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) to help with case investigation.

- Someone from the Department of Health will call you and ask you for a list of people you have had close contact with during your infectious period. If you were tested at the CVS Rapid Testing Site at Twin River Casino, a nurse practitioner from CVS will also contact you to review how you can prevent spreading COVID-19 to other people and how you can take care of yourself.
- Stay at home, wash your hands frequently, wear a face mask (or a cloth face covering if a mask is not available), stay away from other people in your home, and clean "high-touch" surfaces" (doorknobs, railings, phones, counters, faucet handles) every day.
- People with COVID-19 can stop home isolation (leave isolation) under these conditions:
    - You have not had a fever for at least three days (72 hours) without the use of fever-reducing medications, **and** your respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved; **and**
    - At least 10 days have passed *since your symptoms first appeared*.
- If any of your symptoms get worse, call your healthcare provider.

- Your healthcare provider may consider ordering you a test if you are immunocompromised. There should be two negative tests 24 hours apart.

- If you tested positive and never had symptoms, isolate for 10 days from the date of your positive test.
- Review more detailed guidance on quarantine and isolation for different populations.

10. What happens if I get an asymptomatic test, test positive for COVID-19, and never have symptoms?

- If you tested positive for COVID-19 and never had symptoms, you must isolate for 10 days from the date of your positive test.

11. What happens if I test negative?

- Your name and contact information will be shared with public health staff at RIDOH to help with case investigation.

- If you start having any symptoms of COVID-19 after the test, call your healthcare provider and ask if you should be tested again.

- Wash your hands often and practice social distancing (six feet between you and other people).

- Wear a cloth face covering when you leave your house.

- If you are sick, stay home from work.

- Clean "high-touch" surfaces" (doorknobs, railings, phones, counters, faucet handles) every day.

If you test negative for COVID-19, you most likely were not infected at the time of your test. It is also possible that you were tested very early in your infection and you could test positive later. Or you could be exposed later and get sick. This means that even with a negative test, it is important for healthcare workers and others who work with vulnerable populations to stay home from work while experiencing any symptoms.

12. **Why isn't the State testing everyone in Rhode Island?**
- Testing is an important part of our pandemic response, but it is not the *only* part. Other behaviors – wearing a mask, hand washing, physical distancing, and cleaning – are equally important tools.
- In March and April, we needed to increase the number of testing sites and tests we were able to perform. We did so at a higher per capita rate than any state in the nation. Now, our case count has started to decrease. We are adapting our testing strategy to meet the needs of our State moving forward.
- Testing people who have COVID-19 symptoms is still critical.
- For people without symptoms, we are focused on testing people in densely populated areas hit hardest by the virus. We are also offering testing to people working in close-contact environments. This will help us monitor the virus and identify places that need support from the health department.