

COVID-19 Testing In Schools

August 12, 2021



Chester County Health Department

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Introduction

CDC's and PA DOH's guidance for COVID-19 prevention in K-12 schools emphasizes the importance of in-school learning and promote the implementation of layered prevention strategies to include in-school COVID-19 testing.

The Chester County Health Department supported in-school testing during the 2020-2021 academic year and will continue to support it through the 2021-2022 academic year with minor modifications.



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Testing Options

In-school COVID-19 testing is offered through three avenues:

- ❖ **Local – Project ACE-IT program**
- ❖ State – PA DOH's pooled testing program
- ❖ Federal – Linkage to certified laboratory for testing.

All provide antigen and diagnostic (PCR) testing.

This guidance relates only to the local Project ACE-IT program



Project ACE-IT Introduction

Project ACE-IT (Assisting Childhood Education through Increased Testing) a collaborative regional effort offering routine in-school that provides school administrators with more timely information to make decisions and reduces the risk of spreading of COVID-19 within schools.

Collaboration Partners:

- ❖ The PolicyLab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
- ❖ Chester County Intermediate Unit and School Districts
- ❖ Chester County Health Department



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Project ACE-IT Participation Requirements

To participate in Project: ACE IT, a school district must:

- Have a signed MOA with the Health Department
- Submit testing implementation plan
- Complete required testing trainings
- Report all COVID-19 cases to the Health Department
- At minimum, implement assurance/screening and symptomatic testing
 - School districts may expand testing to other high-risk groups (classrooms, sports, extracurricular activities) after implementing assurance/screening and symptomatic testing



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Testing Implementation Plan

Testing implementation plans should include approaches for the following types of testing:

Type	Purpose
Assurance/Screening Testing (<i>required</i>)	Regular and routine testing to assess presence of COVID-19
Symptomatic Testing (<i>required</i>)	Testing individuals who display COVID-19 symptoms
Quarantine Testing	Testing individuals who are quarantined for consideration of a shorter quarantine period



Testing Implementation Plan

Testing implementation plans should include approaches for scaling testing based upon the County's level of COVID-19 transmission.

- ❖ Schools are encouraged to use CDC's testing guidance for K-12 schools by level of community transmission:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>.



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Testing Implementation Plan

If Quarantine Testing is being implemented the following requirements apply:

- Unvaccinated people may be testing to reduce the quarantine period
- Either an FDA approved antigen test or PCR test is used (Project ACE-IT antigen and rapid PCR tests are FDA approved)
- Testing must occur 5-7 days after exposure
- If testing is conducted at school, it must be done using a model that does not allow a quarantined individual to be around others in the school setting



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COVID-19 Testing & Vaccination Status

- Fully vaccinated people with no COVID-19-like symptoms and no known exposure are recommended to be exempt from routine assurance/screening testing.
- Fully vaccinated individuals who have had close contact with someone who has COVID-19 should get tested 3-5 days after exposure, even if asymptomatic.

An individual is considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after the receipt of the second dose (in a 2-dose series) or after one dose (in a single dose vaccine).



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Antigen and PCR Testing Guidelines

School districts have access to antigen and rapid PCR test supplies through Project ACE-IT after participation requirements are met.

- ❖ BinaxNOW Antigen tests should be used for all types of testing.
- ❖ Cue rapid PCR tests should be used to confirm an antigen test.

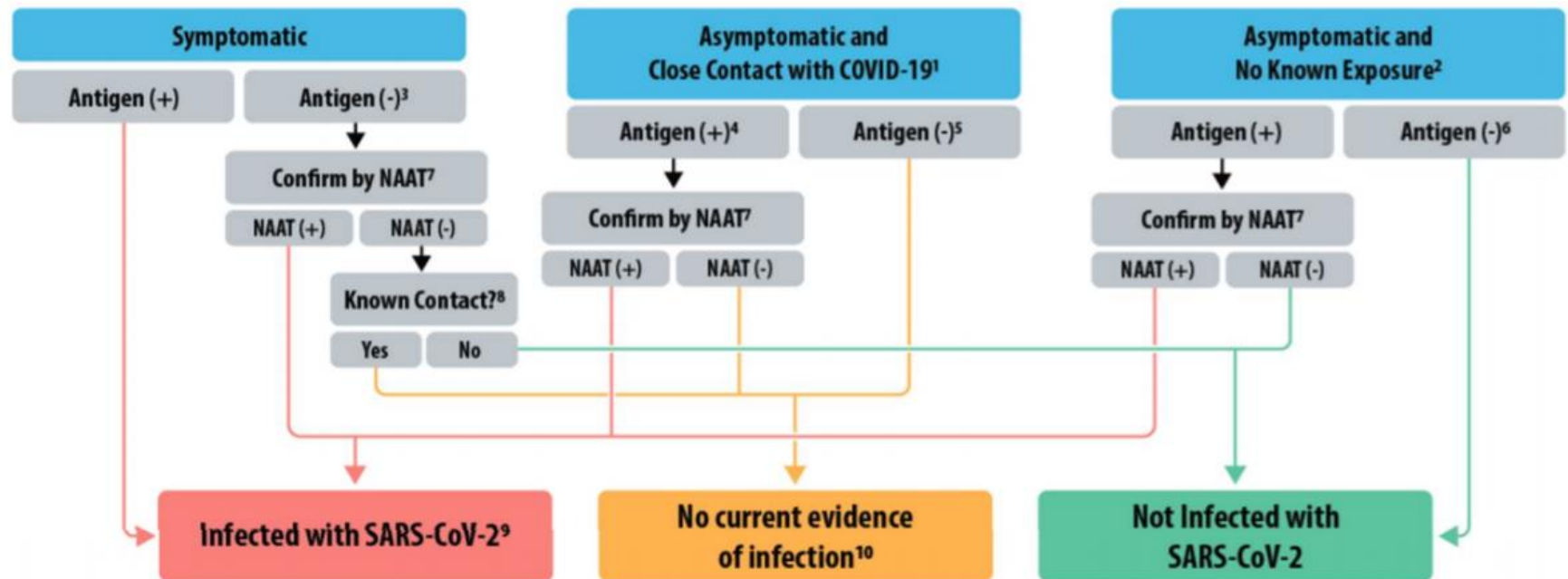
Follow detailed antigen and guidelines on next slide



Antigen and PCR Testing Guidelines

CDC Interim Guide for Antigen Testing

*NAAT: stands for “nucleic acid amplification test”, e.g. a PCR test, which are more sensitive than rapid antigen tests and would be utilized to confirm a diagnosis.



COVID-19 Test Result Reporting

ALL test results (negative and positive) obtained by the schools are required to be reported to PA Department of Health via the STRAC application

- ❖ Project ACE-IT provides reporting training
<https://policylab.chop.edu/project/assisting-childhood-education-through-increased-testing-project-ace-it>
- ❖ Any questions or training opportunities regarding technology and testing should be facilitated with CHOP; EISENM@chop.edu



COVID-19 Test Result Reporting

ALL POSITIVE test results obtained by schools must be reported to the Health Department via our disease report form <https://www.chesco.org/1179/Disease-Report-Forms> (this report collects more information than what is submitted through the STRAC application)

- ❖ The Test section must be completed since the school is the “performing laboratory” administering the test
- ❖ For questions: 610-344-6225, option 1, option 1, or disschools@chesco.org



Obtaining Test Kits

Test kits are coordinated by the Health Department (CCHD) and CCIU.

- ❖ Test kit pick-up information will be emailed by CCHD prior to the start of school
- ❖ Schools will receive the same initial quantity as last year
- ❖ Schools new to Project ACE-IT must email their number of staff to Lauren McNasby at CCHD
- ❖ Requests for additional kits must be emailed to Lauren McNasby at CCHD
- ❖ Please allow up to a week to receive a time to pick up additional test kits

Lauren McNasby lmcnasby@chesco.org



Test Kit Expiration Dates

BinaxNOW antigen test kits received a 12 month expiration date extension

<https://policylab.chop.edu/sites/default/files/BinaxNOW-Test-Kit-Expiry-Extension-12-Months.pdf>

Cue test kits received a 5-9 month expiration date extension

https://www.cuehealth.com/documentation/Customer_Notice_of_Shelf-Life_Extension.pdf



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Resources

- CHOP's Project: ACE-IT FAQs
 - <https://policylab.chop.edu/sites/default/files/Project-ACE-IT-FAQs-for-Community-Effective-1-26-21.pdf>
- CCHD Website with Antigen Guidance
 - <https://www.chesco.org/4397/Coronavirus--Resources-for-Schools>
- CCHD Website with PCR Guidance (Cue Guidance)
 - <https://www.chesco.org/4460/Coronavirus-COVID-19-Testing-Information>
- CHOP Training Registration
 - <https://forms.gle/WQF3MCpDkEMhubVR7>.

