

**Winthrop Public Schools**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**  
March 1, 2022

**1. What is the At-Home Rapid Testing program being offered?**

- **About the Test:** [iHealth](#) is a 15-minute at-home FDA-approved rapid antigen test
- **Opt-In:** To participate, you must opt-in by filling out the [OPT-IN FORM](#). By opting in, you will agree to review the training materials for test administration, report positive test results to your student's school, and administer the tests according to the district's guidelines.
- **Weekly:** you will receive an iHealth at-home rapid test kit. Each kit contains two individual tests. Your student will administer one test each week, every Tuesday OR earlier if they develop symptoms at home.
- **Reporting Positive Test Results:** If your student tests positive on an At-Home Rapid Antigen Test, you will inform their school of the positive result using the [Positive Test Result Notification form](#). The school will keep the results confidential and will not make individual results public. In addition, it is strongly recommended that you inform your healthcare professional of the positive result. For additional information: [Return to School Protocols](#). Negative results do NOT need to be reported.

**2. What is the Symptomatic Test program?**

This program is designed to provide an in-school test, administered by the school nurse for those students and staff who develop symptoms during the school day. If a student is not feeling well during the school day, the School Nurse will first assess the child and determine if testing is necessary.

**3. Why are we changing to this new COVID Testing program?**

Data from the state's Test and Stay program demonstrate that individuals identified as close contacts in school are very unlikely to contract or spread COVID-19. Of the 503,312 Test and Stay tests conducted statewide, 98.6% of them were negative. As a result, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Department of Health (DPH), are advising that districts shift their focus to this new program and identify symptomatic students rather than monitor in-school close contacts. In addition, Dr. Ashish Jha, Dean of the Brown University School of Public Health, explained recently that at-home rapid antigen tests are more appropriate for diagnostic purposes since PCR tests indicate positive results for someone who was infectious many weeks or months earlier. Rapid antigen tests tell us whether you are infectious now.

For more information about this statewide testing program, please click [here](#).

**4. Is the Test & Stay program still available as an alternative to quarantine for unvaccinated or partially vaccinated asymptomatic individuals?**

No, in order to participate in the new DESE testing program, we stopped contact tracing and the Test and Stay program.

**5. Are families required to participate in these Testing programs?**

No, families are not required to participate in the At-Home Rapid Test program or the In School Symptomatic Test program. These programs are voluntary.

**6. How do families OPT-IN to these Testing programs?**

- Families must fill out the At-Home Rapid Test program [opt-in form](#). By opting in, families will agree to review the training materials for test administration, report positive test results to their student's school using the [Positive Test Result Notification form](#), and administer the tests according to the district's guidelines.

- If you have not signed up for the DESE/ CIC testing, families can opt-in at this link: [In School Symptomatic Testing Program](#). If you signed up for the DESE testing program (Test and Stay and Symptomatic), your student is signed up for symptomatic testing.

**7. If I already consented to participate in the DESE testing programs, do I need to sign up again to Participate in Symptomatic Testing?**

No, if you have already consented to participate in the DESE testing programs with CIC (e.g., for Test & Stay), you do not need to opt-in again. Please note that In School Symptomatic Testing is separate from opting in for the At-Home Rapid Testing Program.

**8. How do families OPT-OUT of these Testing programs?**

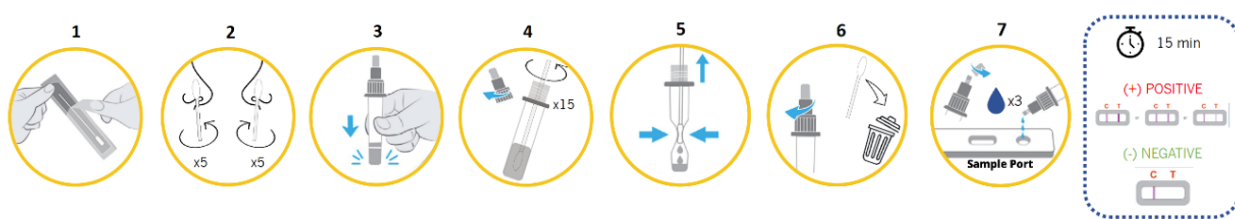
To opt-out of either the at home antigen testing or the symptomatic testing program email [TBeuoy@winthrop.k12.ma.us](mailto:TBeuoy@winthrop.k12.ma.us).

**9. How are at-home test kits distributed to families?**

Families who opt-in will receive at-home test kits every other week that are distributed to students at their schools and brought home in their students' backpacks.

**10. What instructions are available for using an at-home test kit?**

- [Click here](#) for a "how-to" written guide in multiple languages
- [Click here](#) for a video of an individual self-testing
- Please refer to the graphic below to aid in using an at-home test kit.



**11. Should my child take part in the home tests if they have been positive for COVID in the last 90 days?**

Please use the At-Home antigen test kits if your child becomes symptomatic EVEN if it is less than 90 days per DESE and DPH. If your child tests positive, isolate and follow the [COVID Protocols](#).

**12. How do I report positive test results?**

If you test positive with a home or lab test, isolate per guidance above, complete the [Student Positive Test Result Form](#), and report your child's absence to their school. Get a lab test if possible. We understand that it may not be possible, but only having a home test may cause challenges if you need a documented positive lab for travel, medical, or sports participation.

**13. Do I need to report negative test results?**

No, you only need to report positive results.

**14. If my student is symptomatic but is negative on the COVID test, can they still stay in school?**

School Nurses will assess students who are symptomatic. If students are not well, they may be sent home even if the test is negative. Students who test negative, but symptoms continue, worsen or additional symptoms appear, should be tested again.

**15. What if my child has symptoms?**

We are seeing many individuals with COVID who only have a sore throat and/or hoarse voice and/or headache and/or congestion. We encourage testing for these mild symptoms even if testing is not required by DESE. If your child's symptoms continue, worsen or they develop an additional COVID symptom, consult your healthcare provider.

### *Symptoms of COVID-19:*

- Fever over 100°F and/or chills
- Difficulty breathing and/or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Muscle or body aches
- Cough (not due to other known causes, such as a chronic cough)
- Sore throat (*in combination with other symptoms*)
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea (*in combination with other symptoms*)
- Fatigue (*in combination with other symptoms*)
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (*in combination with other symptoms*)
- Headache (*in combination with other symptoms*)

### **16. If my child tests negative for COVID at home, can they come to school?**

Please remember that COVID is only 1 illness that people can get. Students still need to follow the illness guidelines that have always existed. Examples include 24 hours from fever over 100 without the use of fever-reducing medication, 24 hours from vomiting or diarrhea and 12 hours on antibiotics for strep and conjunctivitis.

### **17. What if my child is a close contact?**

*Testing for asymptomatic close contacts- vaccinated or unvaccinated*

All close contacts should test 5 days after the last exposure with an At-Home Rapid Test or Lab test (antigen or PCR). If symptoms develop at any time after exposure, stay home and test

### **18. How do I get my questions answered about these new COVID testing programs?**

If you have questions about how to sign up for these testing programs that were not answered by the FAQ, please email Tara Beuoy at [TBeuoy@winthrop.k12.ma.us](mailto:TBeuoy@winthrop.k12.ma.us).

### **19. When is masking necessary at school?**

- in the health office
- following the 5-day isolation period after Covid illness, for 5 additional days when around others, except when eating, drinking or outside
- Unvaccinated out of school close contacts days 6-10
- Vaccinated close contacts, while indoors, for 10 days after exposure

### **20. When is masking recommended at school?**

- Unvaccinated students
- Immunocompromised individuals
- Symptomatic individuals

### **21. Does my child need a negative test to return to school on day 6 if they were positive?**

No, a negative antigen test is highly recommended before returning to school but not required.