



November 24, 2021

Dear parent(s)/guardian(s):

Re: Student Rapid Antigen Screening

Given the local surge in cases and with the holiday season fast approaching, Public Health Sudbury & Districts, in collaboration with local school boards, is taking additional action to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and further protect in-person learning.

We are pleased to offer take-home rapid antigen screening kits for students at your child's school. As children with COVID-19 infection are often not symptomatic, this screening is an additional tool to help minimize risk of outbreaks and potential closures. Increased testing can make it easier to track and prevent the spread of the virus in schools by helping to identify asymptomatic cases early.

All elementary students (Grades K-8) will be sent home with 1 kit, which includes a total of 5 rapid antigen tests. Please note that even though your child will bring these tests home, your child's participation in this rapid antigen screening is **voluntary**. Students are not required to participate in order to attend school.

If you choose to participate, please read the information below carefully prior to using the take-home collection kit.

When to Use a Take-home Rapid Antigen Screening Kit

The use of rapid antigen testing is only recommended for students who:

- are not fully vaccinated¹
- have no symptoms of COVID-19
- have not been identified as a high-risk close contact to a confirmed case of COVID-19
- have not been a confirmed case of COVID-19² within the last 90 days.

¹ An individual is fully immunized if at least 14 days prior to taking a rapid test they have received:

- The full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or any combination of vaccines; OR
- One or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada; OR
- Three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada

² An individual is considered previously positive if they tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days and have since been cleared from their infection.

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Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, even mild ones, or who are identified as high-risk close contacts should continue to seek a PCR test. A rapid antigen test cannot be used if individuals are isolating due to an exposure to a confirmed case of COVID-19. Rapid testing is not recommended for those who are fully vaccinated¹, as the likelihood of COVID-19 is low in this group, and this could result in an increase of false positive results.

Using the take-home rapid antigen screening kit

Please follow the [instructions](#) provided in the take-home kit. A general instructional [video](#) on how to perform the rapid test at home can also be viewed by parents and students alike.

Students participating are to test:

- starting immediately, the day after the kit is received
- at home prior to attending school or taking the bus
- consistently twice a week (at least three days between tests), over a period of 2.5 weeks. For example, students may choose to test on Monday and Thursday, Tuesday and Friday, or Wednesday and Saturday.
- with the help of a parent or caregiver if needed. Parents or guardians may choose to administer this screening on children who may need help (i.e., younger children).

What to do after the test

You will know the results of your child's test within 15 minutes.

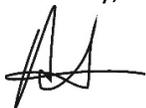
- If the test is negative, your child may attend school as usual.
- If the result is positive, your child will need a confirmatory PCR test as soon as possible. Your child must self-isolate and stay home from school until they receive their test results.

Rapid antigen testing is one additional tool that we can use to limit the spread of COVID-19, but it's important to remember that a negative test does not replace other public health measures. It's important that your child continue with wearing a well-fitted mask, staying within their cohort, completing daily symptom screening before going to school or getting on the bus, and getting [vaccinated](#) when they become eligible.

The Ministry of Education will also be implementing a *Winter Break Rapid Antigen Testing* program, where additional rapid tests will be sent home for students to use over the winter break. More information will be sent home at that time.

We appreciate your ongoing commitment to the health and safety of our school communities. If you have any questions, please visit our [Schools and COVID FAQ](#) page, or contact Public Health Sudbury & Districts at 705.522.9200 (toll free 1.866.522.9200).

Sincerely,



Penny Sutcliffe, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer