

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL-BASED SALIVA TESTING FOR COVID-19 AT SELECT SCHOOLS

On November 26, 2020, Ontario's Minister of Education announced the launch of voluntary school-based COVID-19 testing in regions of the province which currently have a high number of active COVID-19 cases. York Region was identified for this initiative, alongside Peel Region, the City of Toronto and the City of Ottawa.

York Region Public Health is working with Ontario Health, Public Health Ontario Laboratory, York Region District School Board (YRDSB) and York Catholic District School Board (YCDSB) to implement this initiative.

Voluntary school-based saliva testing for COVID-19 will be offered to students, school staff and immediate family members during the month of December at select schools in communities across York Region. Testing is voluntary and consent will be required from parents or guardians for students under 18 years of age.

Why this testing is being offered:

Recent case numbers of COVID-19 have been rising in York Region, however, school-transmission has not been driving these increases and the increased school case-activity is reflective of the number of community cases. Offering on-site testing at a school, or a school in a local catchment area, allows York Region Public Health to:

- Help families and individuals who would like to get a test by removing some of the barriers to testing such as location, appointment difficulties or lack of transportation
- Support our case finding in schools and provide a more thorough understanding of where transmission may be occurring

In York Region, 23 elementary schools and 7 secondary schools have been selected based on the following criteria:

- Elementary/secondary schools with confirmed cases of COVID-19 where cohorts have been dismissed to self-isolate for 14 days; OR
- Elementary schools in the same secondary school catchment area with no confirmed cases of COVID-19 and no classes that have been dismissed; OR
- Communities located at greater distances from COVID-19 Assessment Centres in York Region

If your school has been selected for this initiative, you will receive a second letter providing further instructions and the specific location, date and time for this voluntary saliva testing.

If your school has not been selected, COVID-19 testing continues to be offered through [Assessment Centres](#). For information on symptoms, testing and more visit york.ca/covid19 and york.ca/SafeAtSchool or call Access York at 1-877-464-9675.

PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675
TTY 1-866-512-6228
york.ca/SafeAtSchool

