VOLUNTARY SCHOOL-BASED TESTING FOR COVID-19

February 17, 2021

On February 1, 2021, Ontario's Minister of Education announced plans and supports to successfully re-open schools across Ontario for in-person learning. Increased access to asymptomatic and symptomatic testing are key components of the re-opening plan.

York Region District School Board (YRDSB) and York Catholic District School Board (YCDSB) are working closely with the Ministry of Education and York Region Public Health to implement an asymptomatic screening initiative to support areas with high transmission, high case numbers and schools where access to current testing programs may be challenging. Once this initiative is fully implemented, approximately 5% of schools within York Region will have access to testing each week.

To increase access to testing for students, school staff, essential visitors and their families, York Region Public Health is partnering with Ontario Health (Central), YRDSB and YCDSB to offer drop-in community-based COVID-19 testing at two sites in York Region, in addition to the traditional COVID-19 Assessment Centres.

Drop-in testing will be available on **Fridays** and **Wednesdays from February 19, 2021 until March 19, 2021** and will be re-evaluated based on the need in the school community. Additional testing dates for COVID-19 will be shared in future communications.

Collection methods for testing will include saliva and nasal swabs options. Testing is voluntary and consent will be required from parents or guardians for students under 18 years of age.

When and where will testing be offered?

Students, school staff, essential visitors and their families can receive a COVID-19 test (collection methods for testing include saliva and nasal swabs options) at the following currently unoccupied sites:
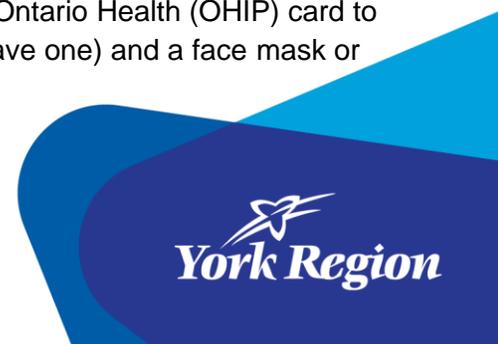
George Bailey Public School *COVID-19 Drop-In Test Site* 9600 Keele Street, Maple, ON **Fridays 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.** *as noted below* **Feb. 19, Feb. 26, Mar. 5, Mar. 12 and Mar. 19**		**George Street Public School** *COVID-19 Drop-in Test Site* 115 George Street, Aurora, ON **Wednesdays 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.** *as noted below* **Feb. 24, Mar. 3, Mar. 10 and Mar. 17**	
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	**For individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 or close contacts of a confirmed COVID-19 case**	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	**For individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 or close contacts of a confirmed COVID-19 case**
4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.	**For individuals with no known exposure or COVID-19 symptoms**	4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.	**For individuals with no known exposure or COVID-19 symptoms**

The school sites are walk-in sites and do not require booking an appointment in advance.

What to bring with you: Families are strongly encouraged to bring valid Ontario Health (OHIP) card to increase easy accessing of results (you can still get tested if you do not have one) and a face mask or covering, to be worn at all times.

PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675
TTY 1-866-512-6228
york.ca/COVID19

York Region

How to access your results? You are able to access your COVID-19 test result online: covid-19.ontario.ca Note: It may take several days for your results to be processed.

Why is this testing being offered?

Previously in York Region, school-based transmission was not identified as a driver of increased case counts locally, rather typically reflective of the number of community cases. This testing will:
- Support case finding in schools where transmission may be occurring or has occurred in the school environment to better isolate and control risk
- Provide more convenient access to testing for individuals who are part of dismissed cohorts
- Increase access to testing for students and staff who are not symptomatic but are part of a school with dismissed cohorts or an increase of cases within the school setting
- Allow for mildly symptomatic students and staff timely and easy access to testing to support case finding and isolation of these cases, preventing further transmission of the virus

What happens after I get tested?

After being tested, you must self-isolate while waiting for results **if** you have:

- Been identified as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19; OR
- Travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days; OR
- Have one or more symptoms of COVID-19; OR
- Been tested due to a potential exposure to someone with COVID-19 or part of a cohort of students that have been dismissed at a school

Once you have received a **negative** test result, and you have no symptoms, you can return to your regular activities **unless** you have been identified as a close contact, been part of a dismissed school cohort or travelled internationally in which case you must still isolate for 14 days or as directed by Public Health. If one or more of the above criteria apply, please refer to the York Region and Child Care Screening Tool for more information about next steps.

In alignment with current public health guidance, if an individual **tests positive** for COVID-19, the individual must self-isolate at home for 10 days from the day symptoms started or if asymptomatic 10 days from the from test date; students may return to school after this period upon the guidance of York Region Public Health. York Region Public Health will be notified of the positive test result and will begin routine case management and contact tracing processes, similarly if an individual tests positive after being tested at an Assessment Centre.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to stop the spread of COVID-19. Please continue to follow public health advice including adhering to social gathering limits, wearing face masks or coverings and maintaining a 2-metre physical distance from others. Together we can keep our families and communities healthy and safe.

For more information on COVID-19 and staying safe at school visit york.ca/SafeAtSchool

Questions

If you have any questions about the school-based testing initiative, please call Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653.

For general information about COVID-19 including symptoms, location of Assessment Centres in York Region and other resources, please visit our website at york.ca/covid19 or call Access York at 1-877-464-9675.