



COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Testing Protocol

Purpose

The purpose of this protocol is to describe the procedures for Rapid Antigen Testing for unvaccinated employees with the Township of Southgate. Regular Rapid Antigen Testing is used as a measure to assist in infection control to reduce transmission and spread of COVID-19.

Definitions

"Rapid Antigen Test" - means a point-of-care rapid antigen test for the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19 with results in fifteen (15) minutes.

"Asymptomatic" means an employee has no COVID-19 symptoms.

"Employee" for the purpose of this procedure includes all Township of Southgate staff, volunteers, students, Council and Committee members.

"PCR Test" means a validated real-time polymerase chain reaction (PCR) laboratory test for the novel coronavirus causing the disease known as COVID-19.

"Symptomatic" means individuals with at least one symptom of COVID-19, even for mild symptoms. Rapid Antigen testing is not appropriate for symptomatic employees.

"Unvaccinated" means an employee who has not been partially or fully immunized or has received a full course of vaccination however it has been less than 14 days since the final COVID-19 vaccine.

Scope

This procedure applies to all unvaccinated employees including those that have approved accommodation requests under Southgate's Policy #87 COVID-19 Vaccination Policy.

Rapid Antigen Testing Requirements

- Rapid Antigen Testing is required for all employees who have not provided proof of vaccination.
- Screening for asymptomatic employees is required at prescribed intervals in non-outbreak conditions:
 - The Medical Officer of Health for the Grey Bruce Health Unit has recommended twice weekly rapid antigen testing in non-outbreak conditions for employees who regularly attend Township facilities. This frequency may increase in outbreak conditions and/or as recommended by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.
 - For casual staff or employees who work onsite less than two times per week, rapid antigen screening is required prior to the start of each scheduled working shift or prior to entering the Township facility.
 - Employees are required to disclose the results of the Rapid Antigen Testing as required following the process outlined below.
- Rapid Antigen Testing is only appropriate for Asymptomatic Employees. If employees have COVID-19 symptoms, do not use the Rapid Antigen Testing Kit, immediately notify their supervisor that they cannot attend work and arrange for a COVID-19 PCR test at the closest COVID-19 Assessment Centre at the earliest appointment available.

Procedure

1. Employees will participate in a training session to ensure competency in utilizing a Rapid Antigen Testing Kit. Training sessions will be scheduled by Human Resources.



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2. Once training has been completed employees will be provided with a Rapid Antigen Testing Kit if available to perform self-administered testing in their homes/offsite.
3. Screening will be completed at intervals recommended and the employee will complete a confidential online rapid antigen testing verification report following the test completion.
4. Employees who receive a negative test result may attend work as scheduled following the submission of their report on the online rapid antigen testing verification report.
5. Employees who receive a positive test shall:
 - a. Immediately notify their supervisor that they are unable to attend work; and
 - b. Arrange for a COVID-19 PCR test at the closest COVID-19 Assessment Centre at the earliest appointment available; and
 - c. Report the positive test result on the online rapid antigen testing verification report.
 - d. Following the results of the PCR test, if the test is negative the employee can return to work. If the PCR test is positive, the employee shall follow the advice and direction of the Public Health Unit regarding isolation and subsequent approval by Public Health Unit to return to work.
 - e. The employee must notify Human Resources of the PCR test result.
 - f. Any time off associated with a positive Rapid Antigen Test or PCR test shall be in accordance with Sick Time as outlined in Policy #1 Personnel Policy.
6. The Township of Southgate expects all employees to be truthful when answering the online verification and will from time to time complete an audit where they will ask for proof of the test on the day the verification was completed. This request will be done within two (2) hours of the verification.

Rapid Antigen Test Kit Costs

- If the test kits are available to the Township free of charge, they will be ordered and supplied to the individuals that are required to use them.
- If the test kits are no longer available for free to the Township, the Township will try to order the test kits at a lower cost and the cost will be passed onto the individual employee(s) that require them.
- If the test kits are no longer available for the Township to order, employees will be required to purchase their own test kits and/or attend a Rapid Antigen private testing facility such as a pharmacy or LifeLabs and all costs associated will be the responsibility of the employee.
- The test kits provided are only to be used in accordance with this protocol and are not to be shared with others or used outside of the required timelines outlined above.



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