



MEMORANDUM

DATE: Jan. 12, 2021

TO: Local Health Department and Community Partners for Testing Kits

FROM: Bruce Vanderhoff, MD, MBA, Director of the Ohio Department of Health

SUBJECT: At-Home Test Shipping Update

Last week, the Ohio Department of Health shared information about how the state is allocating rapid tests to provide predictability in supply and to ensure tests would be available to students at Ohio's K-12 schools as they came back into session following winter break. The allocation formula was based on the assumption that the state would receive a similar number of tests in January as received in December, that schools would need two times the number of tests they requested in December, and that the availability of tests from suppliers would be steady throughout the month of January.

ODH ordered 1.2 million proctored testing kits for January. So far, 400,000 proctored testing kits have been received and are being distributed. Shipment of the remaining 800,000 proctored testing kits has been delayed by the manufacturer as demand for these tests has increased nationwide during the Omicron-driven surge in COVID-19 cases. ODH anticipates receiving shipments later this month. As supply becomes available, the rapid testing kits will first be distributed to meet the needs of K-12 schools and colleges/universities.

COVID-19 tests are a critical tool to help ensure in-person learning can continue in Ohio schools. Ongoing access to these tests helps ensure students and teachers can remain in the classroom. Because schools are experiencing significant new demand for tests as COVID-19 cases continue to climb, the state is temporarily adjusting its allocation strategy to ensure schools receive an adequate supply. As a result, the state is pausing shipments to other community partners, including libraries and local health departments, until inventory and the supply chain have stabilized.

The following is the temporary allocation strategy during this shortage:

1. **The state will prioritize our supply of tests for schools** (K-12 and higher education) to ensure those ongoing needs are met.
2. **As tests become available after the urgent needs of K-12 schools and higher education institutions are met**, the state will send tests to libraries and local health departments. Existing requests and new requests will be processed in the order in which they were received. The state will continue to purchase and distribute these tests to make testing as accessible as possible to Ohioans.



3. **Regular updates** will be shared with partners with pending requests. Please rely on those updates.
4. **The number of tests available to non-K-12 and higher education partners will need to be reallocated this month. Updates will be provided when the supply chain and inventory stabilizes.**

Please reinforce to Ohioans inquiring about how to access a test that COVID-19 tests are available from many sources statewide. While testing supply chains are challenged, over-the-counter rapid testing kits can still be purchased at many locations, such as pharmacies and grocery stores. Testing is also available at many urgent care locations, community health centers, retail locations, and pop-up sites. The ODH website features a searchable map of testing locations at <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/dashboards/other-resources/testing-ch-centers>.

We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience. We truly value your partnership in these testing efforts and know that you have constituencies who depend on our ability to provide tests. We are doing all we can to get additional tests and will provide progress updates and notification as soon as possible. Thank you, as always, for your patience and partnership.