



Summary of K-12 Testing Scenarios¹

Scenario	Types of FDA-Approved Test	When is a confirmatory test needed?
<p>Screening Testing:</p> <p>Regular testing of asymptomatic persons.</p> <p>Persons who had COVID-19 within the last 90 days do not need to participate in screening testing. If they do, PCR tests should NOT be used.</p>	<p>-Antigen² preferred</p> <p>-PCR³</p> <p>-Point-of-care NAAT⁴</p>	<p>Confirmatory testing is not recommended.</p>
<p>Diagnostic Testing:</p> <p>Testing of symptomatic persons, regardless of vaccination status</p> <p>To return to school/work, individuals also must have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication -Improving symptoms 	<p>-Antigen² (preferred in persons who have had COVID-19 within the last 90 days)</p> <p>-PCR³</p> <p>-Point-of-care NAAT⁴</p> <p>For home antigen tests, consider using one of the methods outlined by CDPH⁵ to verify unsupervised or unobserved results.</p>	<p>Persons with symptoms suspicious for COVID-19 (e.g., congestion, sore throat, cough) with a negative antigen test should repeat testing 24 to 48 hours later. Antigen tests may not detect infection in the early stages.</p> <p>Positive antigen tests do NOT need confirmation.</p>
<p>Clearance Testing:</p> <p>Testing of persons with COVID-19 to determine if they can return to school/work prior to completing a 10-day isolation period</p> <p>To return to school/work, individuals also must have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication -Improving symptoms 	<p>-Antigen preferred</p> <p>For home antigen tests, consider using one of the methods outlined by CDPH⁵ to verify unsupervised or unobserved results.</p>	<p>Persons with a diagnosis of COVID-19 who wish to return to school/work before completing a 10-day isolation should test ONCE using an antigen test on Day 5 or later. If the test is positive, complete 10 days of isolation without further testing.</p>
<p>Exposure:</p> <p>Testing of asymptomatic close contacts</p> <p>Persons who are exposed can continue to attend school/work and should be tested 3 to 5 days after exposure.</p>	<p>-Antigen² (preferred in persons who have had COVID-19 within the last 90 days)</p> <p>-PCR³</p> <p>-Point-of-care NAAT⁴</p> <p>For home antigen tests, consider using one of the methods outlined by CDPH⁵ to verify unsupervised or unobserved results.</p>	<p>Confirmatory testing is not recommended. If someone develops symptoms after exposure, they should follow the recommendations under “Diagnostic Testing” above.</p>

¹ Please also see [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools, 2022-23 School Year](#), [COVID-19 Testing at Schools](#) and [CDPH Updated Testing Guidance](#)

² See the [list of FDA-authorized antigen tests](#) for details about each test’s authorized use

³ Or other laboratory-based Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (NAAT). Pooled PCR testing is an acceptable strategy for screening testing or quarantine testing but NOT diagnostic testing.

⁴ A NAAT is a Nucleic Acid Amplification Test. Point-of care tests are most accurate when done at a clinic or testing site by a someone trained in their use. In general, laboratory-based NAATs (e.g. PCR) are more accurate than point-of-care NAATs.

⁵ See [CDPH’s over-the-counter test guidance](#)