

**Frequently Asked Questions & Answers for Wisconsin State Employees
Regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic**

This document contains answers to frequently asked questions for state employees and was prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Administration in collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Responses below are in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements or state administrative code. If you have additional questions, please ask your supervisor.

COVID-19 EMPLOYEE TESTING REQUIREMENTS Updated 11/11/2021			
Updated 10/18/2021	1.	Who is required to submit to the weekly COVID-19 testing requirements?	Beginning October 18, 2021, employees who are not vaccinated, or who have not reported their vaccination status, must submit to the weekly testing requirement. Employees who are fully vaccinated from COVID-19 and have provided their vaccination status through STAR Human Resources System under the My Information Tile - COVID-19 Vaccine/Testing section are not subject to this requirement.
Updated 10/18/2021	2.	Does the State have the authority to subject employees to COVID-19 testing?	The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued updated guidance on April 23, 2020 (further updated September 8, 2020) regarding employer-required COVID-19 testing. The EEOC has explained that due to the COVID-19 pandemic “employers may take steps to determine if employees entering the workplace have COVID-19 because the individual with the virus will pose a direct threat to the health of others.” These steps can include periodic COVID-19 testing, and the EEOC has provided that testing administered by employers consistent with current CDC guidance will meet the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) “business necessity” standard for mandatory medical tests.
	3.	For what reasons can I be excused from testing?	To be excused from a specific week or period of testing, you must meet one of the following criteria and be excused through your HR representative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 90 days (information and documentation must be uploaded into the STAR HR System). • You are on an approved leave of absence (e.g., vacation, travel). • You are on sabbatical. • You have been approved for a valid medical or religious accommodation • You have an approved agreement in place to work 100% of the time at home and has no expectation, under any circumstances, to be physically present in a state facility or have contact with other state employees or members of the public while performing your duties
Updated 10/29/2021	4.	The policy notes “weekly” testing. What is the definition of “weekly?”	Weekly, within this policy, means taking one test every 7 calendar days regardless of the days or shifts the employee works. If an employee is unable to maintain a weekly testing pattern, they will need to ensure a test is on record within 7 days after the latest test.

Updated 10/29/2021	5.	What if I will be on a paid or unpaid leave of absence, am I still required to test weekly?	Employees who are required to test weekly, and on a paid or unpaid leave of absence for 7 calendar days or more, between tests, must be tested within 72 hours of returning to work. Employees should notify their HR representative prior to being on leave.
	6.	What if a person misses a week of testing or their test date falls a day late (had to test on the 8th day after the last test)?	The policy reflects that weekly testing must occur. You have 7 days from the previous test to take another test. The testing could occur at a more frequent interval if the employee cannot participate in the weekly test on the specific day noted.
	7.	How does the COVID-19 testing process work?	Employees will receive their testing kits from the state. Follow these instructions , which are also enclosed within the COVID-19 testing kit, or the instructional video at www.PictureGenetics.com/covid19 . Employees will be required to create an account with the state's vendor using this link https://www.picturegenetics.com/login to activate and track their testing kit and receive the results.
	8.	How will I receive my COVID-19 test results when they are ready?	Employees will be notified via email of their test results. Results may be viewed and downloaded from their account as a printable PDF. Your test results, with documentation, must be submitted into the Employee Self Service in the STAR Human Resources System, under the My Information Tile - COVID-19 Vaccine/Testing Status section on a weekly basis .
	9.	How long will it take to receive COVID test results?	Results typically take 24-48 hours.
	10.	Will I be allowed to work while my COVID-19 test result is pending?	Employees are allowed to work while waiting to receive their test results. If a positive test is received isolation will be necessary. If an employee, regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status, is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 , they should be tested for COVID-19.
Updated 11/4/2021	11.	What happens if my test results come back inconclusive?	Enter your inconclusive test results in the STAR HR System. There is an option to choose inconclusive results. Complete another COVID-19 test immediately.
Updated 11/4/2021	12.	Will I be allowed to work while my test results were returned inconclusive?	If the employee is not exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, employees are allowed to work while either waiting to receive their test results or while their test results are returned inconclusive.
Updated 10/18/2021	13.	Will employees be paid for their time spent getting tested?	Yes, employees will be given 15 minutes in pay status to undergo testing during their normal working hours.
Updated 10/29/2021	14.	Are employees eligible for mileage reimbursement when traveling to a COVID-19 testing site or when returning COVID-19 test kits?	An employee who is required to participate in testing for COVID-19 would be considered in work status during administration of the test and any necessary drop off. Generally speaking, if the agency headquarters site can act as a drop off site, mileage will not be reimbursed. If an employee must drive to drop off a test <i>at a location other than their agency headquarters site</i> , mileage may be reimbursable if: an employee has a home headquarters site, or the employee seeks reimbursement for the mileage from the nearest drop off location to their headquarters (i.e., not from their home). For questions contact your HR representative.

	15.	Who do I give my tests results to?	Your test results, with documentation, must be submitted into the Employee Self Service in the STAR Human Resources System, under the My Information Tile - COVID-19 Vaccine/Testing Status section on a weekly basis. Your agency HR representative can help employees who may have issues, or those without computer access upload their vaccination status documentation.
	16.	What happens if my test result comes back positive?	If you test positive for COVID-19, whether you are unvaccinated or vaccinated, you should immediately notify your supervisor and isolate yourself immediately, so you don't spread the virus that causes it to others.
	17.	What happens if I come into close contact with someone infected with COVID-19?	<p>If you are fully vaccinated, and have been exposed to COVID-19, get tested for COVID-19 3-5 days after exposure and monitor for symptoms. You do not need to quarantine but you should wear a mask in public indoor spaces for 14 days or until you receive a negative test result. As a reminder, all employees are required continue providing their COVID-19 vaccination status and documentation and continue wearing masks while indoors in state facilities and while conducting state business indoors.</p> <p>If you are not fully vaccinated, get tested for COVID-19 3-5 days after exposure and quarantine to protect yourself, your family, and your community. The length of quarantine depends on how long it's been since you were previously diagnosed; if you previously tested positive, and what type of test was used when you were previously diagnosed; and if you have currently had symptoms. See the CDC recommendations on the duration of quarantine can be found here.</p>
Updated 10/18/2021	18.	Will employees be required to use their own leave time if sent home and unable to work from home, due to a positive COVID-19 test?	Employees will be required to use leave time if they are sent home and unable to work from home. Employees should work with their local Human Resources Office if they have questions.
	19.	I previously had COVID-19. Can I be exempt from the mandatory weekly COVID-19 testing requirement?	Employees with a prior positive COVID-19 PCR or antigen test will not be required to submit to weekly COVID-19 testing until after 90 days from the date of their positive test result. Employees must upload supporting documentation of the positive test results via the STAR HR Employee Self-Service portal, under the My Information Tile - COVID-19 Vaccination/Testing section to become exempt. After 90 days, if the testing requirement remains in effect, you must resume weekly testing due to your potential to be re-infected with COVID-19. Vaccination provides the longest lasting and strongest protection against COVID-19.
	20.	If I get a test to demonstrate that I have COVID-19 antibodies, can I be exempt from weekly testing?	A test demonstrating the presence of antibodies is not sufficient to qualify for an exemption from the weekly COVID-19 testing mandate at this time, as the individual antibody tests can vary widely with regard to their specificity, and other test performance characteristics. Antibody tests are not currently recommended by the CDC to test for immunity in unvaccinated individuals or to determine the need to quarantine after a close contact with someone who has COVID-19 . However, if you have received a positive COVID-19 PCR or antigen test in the last 90 days, you would be exempt from the mandatory testing requirement until the 90 days has passed.
	21.	If I become vaccinated, can I then be exempted from the mandatory weekly testing requirement?	Yes. Once you are considered fully vaccinated, you will be exempt from the weekly testing requirement. You will be considered fully vaccinated two weeks after you receive a one-dose

			vaccine (Johnson & Johnson) or the second of a two-dose vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna). Log into the STAR HR Employee Self-Service, under the My Information Tile - COVID-19 Vaccination/Testing section to upload your vaccination status and supporting documentation. Return to your HR office, any testing kits issued by the state.
Updated 11/4/2021	22.	If I am no longer required to test weekly for COVID-19, what should I do with the state test kits?	Return the test kits to your HR office.
	23.	If my medical or religious accommodation from entering my vaccination status was approved, is weekly testing required still?	Yes, employees with approved medical or religious exemptions to the vaccine reporting requirement are required to be weekly tested. Employees who would like to request a separate medical or religious accommodation should contact their HR representative.
	24.	Can employees who are vaccinated use a state-sponsored testing kit?	Employees who are symptomatic or are a close contact of a person who tested positive for COVID-19, can request through their HR representative, and if available, use the testing kit offered by the state to get tested. Vaccinated employees are not required to test weekly. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) offers additional guidance for vaccinated people , such as when to get tested.
Updated 10/29/2021	25.	Am I required to use the state-sponsored COVID-19 testing kit?	<p>Employees are encouraged to use the state-provided testing kit. However, a non-state sponsored PCR test result may also be used to satisfy the weekly testing requirement for employees who have not provided proof of vaccination. Employees will not be given time in paid status to conduct non-state sponsored tests and will be responsible for any payment associated with a non-state sponsored test. Employees may request to use an alternative non-state sponsored PCR test through their HR director, or by completing the Alternative COVID-19 Testing Request Form. The form will be routed to the agency HR director.</p> <p>The Department of Health Services (DHS) has saliva test options available to the public. Employees who request to use the saliva test option must receive approval to use an alternative non-state sponsored test kit, see form link above. Saliva test kit information is available through DHS.</p>
	26.	Who will my COVID-19 vaccination status and test result information be shared with?	The vaccination status and test result information will be treated as confidential medical records. It will be maintained separately for each employee as required under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Information may be accessed by agency HR staff or other agency staff with a business need to know, and others authorized by law.
	27.	Can my family member or friend use the state testing options to get tested for COVID-19?	No. The state sponsored COVID-19 testing kit will only be provided to current employees. Family members can find a testing options through Public Health Madison and Dane County or by visiting the Wisconsin Department of Health Services website for a list of community and private providers, including pharmacies.
	28.	Who is responsible for making sure employees are complying with the COVID-19 testing requirement?	The Human Resources team will track and monitor COVID-19 test results and compliance with the weekly testing requirement. Employees required to undergo testing who refuse to do so will be subject to discipline. See Bulletin, Establishment of a COVID-19 Testing Discipline Track .

	29.	Do guests or visitors need to show proof that they are vaccinated or have a current negative COVID-19 test to enter a state facility or attend a state sponsored event?	No.
Updated 11/11/2021	30.	Do I need to get a booster with an mRNA vaccine (Moderna or Pfizer)?	Information on booster doses and who should get a booster is available through the CDC. See the CDC COVID-19 Additional and Booster Doses internet page. The state will continue to monitor related national and state guidance.
	31.	Why are vaccinated individuals not being required to test weekly if they are also capable of transmitting the virus?	<p>The continuing high rate of community transmission due to the Delta variant makes this expanded testing requirement necessary. Unvaccinated individuals are at the greatest risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19. The breakthrough rate for those who are vaccinated is currently less than 1% of the vaccinated population, and recent studies in the U.K. suggest that vaccinated individuals are three times less likely to test positive for COVID-19 than unvaccinated people. Additionally, information in Wisconsin earlier this year indicated that individuals who were not fully vaccinated were three times more likely to test positive for COVID-19.</p> <p>By testing those who are unvaccinated, we increase our odds of identifying COVID-19 cases and limiting spread to others, including other at-risk unvaccinated people.</p> <p>The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that vaccinated individuals get tested if they have symptoms or a known exposure, but that unvaccinated people continue to participate in routine surveillance testing.</p> <p>The state is constantly monitoring the COVID-19 health and safety situation and will determine how long to require testing based on assessments of the changing conditions, including federal guidance, state and local public health conditions, and the recommendations of public health experts.</p>
Updated 11/11/2021	32.	If I was vaccinated for COVID-19 outside of the United States, do I need to get or can I get a US-based vaccine?	Review the CDC information pertaining to individuals who have received a COVID-19 vaccine outside the United States .
	33.	What if an employee refuses to submit to COVID-19 testing when required?	Employees subject to testing requirements who refuse to submit to mandatory testing will be subject to discipline. Supervisors should work closely with their HR representatives if this should occur. See Bulletin, Establishment of a COVID-19 Testing Discipline Track .