



# Office of Children and Family Services

ANDREW M. CUOMO  
Governor

SHEILA J. POOLE  
Commissioner

## Memo

**To:** Facility Directors, Facility Assistant Directors

**From:** Dr. Joseph Tomassone, Acting Associate Commissioner  
Office of Youth Programs and Services

Robert MacGiffert, Associate Commissioner,  
Office of Facilities Management

Dr. James Horne, Chief of Medical Services  
Bureau of Health Services

**Date:** July 29, 2021

**Re:** Availability of COVID-19 Rapid Tests for Facility Staff and Youth

---

### Section One: Testing Available

OCFS facilities have been approved to offer rapid COVID-19 testing (the Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card test) to both facility staff and youth. Testing will be used to identify and respond to possible asymptomatic cases of COVID-19 in DJJOY facilities. COVID-19 testing is **voluntary** for both staff and youth.

#### **Scope and Application:**

The results of a rapid COVID-19 test will be used to identify:

1. Asymptomatic COVID-positive staff. Such staff will be directed to quarantine outside the facility. Note that staff who are symptomatic should not report to work and if testing is indicated or desired, they should obtain it from a community provider or their own self-administered test.
2. Staff and youth who are COVID-19 positive via contacts with asymptomatic, COVID-positive staff or youth.
  - a. Staff who are found to be COVID-19 positive will be directed to follow OCFS' current contact tracing protocols for quarantine and subsequent return to work.
  - b. Asymptomatic COVID-19 positive youth will be directed to the facility's quarantine unit for medical isolation.

#### **Awareness:**

DJJOY facilities will distribute and post educational information to inform staff and youth about the value of COVID testing and to encourage their participation. This information will be forwarded to the facilities and is attached.

## Section Two: Time, Location, and Administration of Rapid Tests

### **Time of Testing (Youth):**

Youth can request a test at any time, however, per CDC guidance, youth can be tested **no more frequently than once every 3 days**. The facility will transport youth to the medical unit or the youth will receive the test on the quarantine unit.

### **Time of Testing (Staff):**

Each facility will offer staff testing on Mondays and Fridays, starting forty-five minutes before the start of each of three shifts on each day. Depending on the facility, testing will occur at 5:45 a.m. or 6:15 a.m.; 1:45 p.m. or 2:15 p.m.; and at 9:45 p.m. or 10:15 p.m.. Due to the testing turnaround time and required youth supervision coverage, staff will be advised that no tests will be offered after **15 minutes before the start** of a shift.

### **Location for Testing (Youth):**

Individual youth not currently on quarantine will be tested in facility medical units with the facility nursing staff wearing PPE in accordance with the posted DJJOY PPE and Quarantine Guidance. Youth currently on a quarantine unit can be tested on their living unit.

### **Location for Testing (Staff):**

Per the NYS DOH and CDC guidelines, facilities must use a larger space like a gym or other large, multi-purpose room. Each facility must identify a designated testing area for this purpose. Tables for testing must be set up and spaced **six feet apart**. All COVID PPE protocols remain in effect for everyone's safety. The testing areas will be cleaned and disinfected before and after each test is administered.

### **Administration of Tests (Youth):**

Testing is voluntary for youth. Facility medical staff will offer and administer tests to youth based on a youth's request to be tested, or to a youth who has had exposure to known or suspected COVID positive individuals and who wants to be tested.

Medical staff will determine the results of the test and youth will be directed to regular program or quarantine (negative result) or medical isolation (positive result) based on the results of the test and in consideration of prior medical status. The number of youth tests conducted and results will be reported to BHS HO.

### **Administration of Tests (Staff):**

Testing is voluntary. Testing must occur prior to the start of shifts. The Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card tests **are self-administered**. Facility medical staff will support staff in learning how to self-administer a test.

The facility will identify a mid-level manager (YC or AOD) to supervise the staff COVID test self-administration area and to verify the results prior to the staff commencing their shift (negative result) or being directed home for quarantine (positive result). The total number of staff test administrations will be recorded and reported to BHS HO. Positive staff results will be communicated to OCFS Human Resources for contact tracing, reporting to DOH, and further action as needed.

### **Test Results:**

Rapid test results should be available in 15-30 minutes from proper administration. **The facility must report all positive COVID-19 test results from staff or youth to the NYS DOH Electronic Clinical Laboratory Reporting System (ELCARS) within 24 hours of test administration.**

### Section Three: Use of the Rapid COVID Test (Youth)

All youth can request a test, in general, whether on a generic unit or on a medical quarantine/isolation unit. **Youth cannot be tested more often than once every three days.**

A positive rapid test in a youth who is asymptomatic means that the youth is infectious. The facility will place the youth in medical isolation for no fewer than **10 days** from the date of the positive rapid test, pending confirmation with a PCR test. A positive rapid test in this circumstance will require confirmation with a PCR test.

If the follow up PCR test is positive, the positive youth will remain in medical isolation. If the youth being tested is from a quarantined cohort, the group's quarantine will reset to end 14 days from the date of the positive PCR test if no other youth in the cohort have positive PCR tests. If the youth's follow up PCR test is negative, the youth will return to quarantine status and the original 14-day quarantine period will be completed by the entire quarantined cohort if no other youth have positive PCR tests.

Any other youth who are identified as contacts of the positive youth will be placed on quarantine for 14 days. These quarantined youth will be offered a rapid test every three days. Quarantine for this cohort will end on Day 14 if all untested youth remain asymptomatic, or until 14 days passes from the date of the last confirmed positive rapid test result among the quarantined youth (if the youth are tested).

For a youth who is on quarantine, the availability of taking of a rapid test will not reduce the required 14-day quarantine time. In DJJOY, the rapid test's purpose is to identify and isolate asymptomatic infected youth so that they do not spread the infection.

### Section Four: Use of the Rapid COVID Test (Staff)

Once a staff self-administers a test, they must wait for their test results. They must maintain 6 feet of social distance from others until they receive their rapid test result.

Staff will read the test themselves and will show the test to the staff who is designated by the facility to oversee the test self-administration. If the result is negative for COVID, staff will put a mask back on and wash their hands/sanitize before reporting to their unit/location.

If a staff receives a positive COVID test, they will be directed out of the facility to quarantine. The employee's supervisor will notify the Bureau of Personnel with the employee's contact information so the Bureau of Personnel can contact the employee.

If there are any questions on this guidance, please reach out to your Facility Manager.

cc: F. Reid  
C. Hernandez  
A. Sapio  
D. Comins  
J. Carroll  
E. Purdy  
D. Nasner  
T. Bromirski  
R. Strauser  
M. Williams