



CITY OF BERKELEY HEALTH ADVISORY UPDATE COVID-19 TESTING GUIDANCE 5/12/2020

The following updated guidance for COVID-19 laboratory testing is intended aid decision-making by clinicians and other testing providers. The guidance identifies groups that should be prioritized for testing but it is not a requirement to test in these groups. Testing decisions and policies must be flexible to account for ongoing limitations in testing resources and protective equipment. Clinical judgment should be used to guide testing of symptomatic persons.

Please also refer to California Department of Public Health (CDPH) testing guidance in the [All Facilities Letter 20-44.1](#) updated on May 2, 2020 and the [CDC testing guidance](#) updated on May 3, 2020.

Actions Requested of Clinicians

Clinicians are encouraged to test¹ for COVID-19 in:

- Hospitalized patients
- Healthcare workers, first responders, and other essential service workers
- Persons with [COVID-19 symptoms](#) who are ≥65 years of age OR any age with chronic medical conditions² that increase the risk for severe disease
- Persons identified for testing by City of Berkeley Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Unit (COB-CDPCP) case, contact, cluster or outbreak investigations
- Persons with [COVID-19 symptoms](#) residing in congregate settings³
- Asymptomatic persons residing or working in congregate settings in certain situations:
 - If results can be used to inform outbreak response, infection control efforts, resident placement, staff and resident cohorting, and continuity of care when residents are transferred or discharged
 - Screening before or at admission or re-admission

Persons under 65 not meeting the above criteria who are otherwise healthy and experiencing mild symptoms should be tested as resources permit and according to clinical judgment.

Routine clinical testing of asymptomatic persons not in a priority group and without suspected exposure to may be performed for prevention, screening, research or surveillance purposes.

¹ Diagnostic testing for COVID-19 should be done using an FDA-approved or FDA-EUA test for viral RNA or antigen

² Refer to CDC guidance for [People Who Are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness](#) for a list of chronic medical conditions

³ Congregate settings include but are not limited to licensed skilled nursing and residential care facilities, correctional facilities, shelters and encampments for unhoused persons, board and care homes, and similar settings



All testing providers should have plans to disclose test results, link persons to appropriate care, and report cases to the City of Berkeley Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Unit (COB-CDPCP) or the health jurisdiction of residence. According to state regulation,⁴ race and ethnicity information must be included when reporting cases.

Results from serologic tests for COVID-19 should be interpreted with caution in the clinical setting. In general, they should not be used for acute diagnosis of COVID-19 disease or to infer immunity to SARS-CoV-2. Molecular testing should be used to make a diagnosis when acute cases of COVID-19 are suspected. Serologic testing for diagnosis of acute COVID-19 infection is not currently recommended.

Ill persons should stay home and away from others until there has been no fever with the use of fever-reducing medications, there has been an improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) for at least 3 days; AND it is at least 10 days since symptom onset⁵.

Local Health Department Contact Information

- **City of Berkeley Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Program:**
 - Weekdays 8AM – 5PM Phone: (510) 981–5292
 - After-Hours Phone: (510) 981–5911 and ask for the Health Officer on call
- **Alameda County Acute Communicable Disease Control:**
 - Weekdays 8:30AM – 5PM Phone: (510) 267–3250
 - After-Hours Phone: (925) 422–7595 and ask for the public health duty officer on call
 - For non-immediate concerns, email nCoV@acgov.org
- [Contact Information for all other Local Health Jurisdictions](#) is available online from CDPH

Resources

- [California Testing Taskforce Website](#)
- [City of Berkeley Coronavirus Website](#)

⁴ Health & Safety Code, Title 17, Section 2500 specifies required information to be reported.

⁵ Refer to CDC guidance for criteria on removal from isolation in [home](#) setting or [healthcare](#) setting