



# STOP THE SPREAD AND STAY SAFE AT WORK AND AT HOME!

COVID -19 PROGRAMS FOR  
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PROGRAM INFORMATION & APPLICATION SUPPORT

*March 2023*

### **CONTENTS**

PROGRAM INFORMATION

2

APPLICATION SUPPORT

3

Canada



Canadian  
Red Cross

Croix-Rouge  
canadienne

# PROGRAM INFORMATION

## 1. What is the program?

The Stop the Spread and Stay Safe! program was launched in partnership with Health Canada to provide free take-home COVID-19 rapid tests and masks to community organizations to help keep their personnel and the people they serve safer.

The Stop the Spread and Stay Safe! program provided individuals and families with tools to manage their risks and health decisions in the pandemic, in addition to getting vaccinated and following other public health measures.

Through this stream, community organizations received free COVID-19 rapid antigen tests and masks to distribute to the people they serve, their personnel and partner organizations for them to use at home.

## 2. What types of organizations qualified for the program?

The program was available to Canadian community organizations that were undertaking frontline or direct service delivery of critical services or supports and included organizations operating in high-risk settings where public health measures can't be implemented.

For the purposes of this program, community organizations included:

- Charities
- Non-profit organizations

## 3. What types of organizations were not eligible for the program?

Government bodies and for-profit businesses were not eligible to apply for this program, but could access COVID-19 rapid antigen tests through [Health Canada](#).

Individuals were not eligible to apply for this program but may have had access to COVID-19 testing through local health providers and pharmacies. Please check your local public health authority for more information.

Provincial and territorial health departments are the primary source of access to rapid COVID-19 tests for all residents, including Indigenous Peoples. If there are challenges for Indigenous communities in accessing rapid tests, please contact Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) regional offices or your local health authority.

## 4. What was the objective of the program?

The goal of the Stop the Spread and Stay Safe at Home! program was to provide individuals and families with a tool to manage their risks and health decisions in the pandemic, in addition to getting vaccinated and following public health measures.

## 5. Where was the program available?

The *Stop the Spread and Stay Safe at Home!* program was available to community organizations in every province and territory in Canada.

## 6. What is a rapid antigen test?

Rapid antigen testing is used for serial testing individuals without symptoms and can help identify active COVID-19 infection based on the presence of antigens. The sample is collected using a shallow nasal swab. Test results are typically available within 10-30 minutes.

Note: Rapid antigen tests are not as accurate as "PCR" laboratory, Polymerase Chain Reaction tests. If a rapid

antigen test is positive, depending on their provincial or territorial guidance, the individual may be asked to go for a Lab PCR COVID-19 diagnostic test to confirm the result. This also allows local public health authorities to identify the nature of the virus and track variants of concern.

### **7. What is the difference between a rapid COVID-19 antigen test (rapid test) and a public health (PCR, polymerase chain reaction) test?**

Rapid antigen screening tests typically provide rapid results within 10-30 minutes, however they are less sensitive and therefore are not as accurate as PCR test. This means that there may be more false negatives. The test is only to provide an indication, not a diagnosis. PCR tests are the tests formally administered by your local health authority and are used to diagnose people who are infected with COVID-19. After a preliminary positive screening, a follow-up PCR test may be needed within 24 hours to confirm the diagnosis. However, you should always follow your provincial and territorial health guidance regarding who can access PCR tests and when they are necessary.

### **8. Can the rapid tests be used as an alternative to a PCR test?**

Follow your provincial or territorial guidance with regards to the use of rapid tests.

### **9. What kind of masks were available through the program?**

The Canadian Red Cross (CRC) distributed KN95 masks (non-fit tested respirator type) that have been generously provided by the Government of Canada.

### **10. Who do I contact if I have questions?**

You can contact us by email at [COVID19ScreeningProgram@redcross.ca](mailto:COVID19ScreeningProgram@redcross.ca) You can also go through the Frequently Asked Questions to see if what you need is in this document.

### **11. What was the deadline to apply for the program?**

Applications for this program closed on **February 10, 2023**.

## **APPLICATION SUPPORT**

The program is now closed. If you have any questions, please contact us by email at [COVID19ScreeningProgram@redcross.ca](mailto:COVID19ScreeningProgram@redcross.ca).