



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

COVID -19 PROGRAMS FOR
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PROGRAM INFORMATION & APPLICATION SUPPORT

November 2022

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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 provides 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 receive 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 qualify for the program?

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

For the purposes of this program, community organizations include:

- Charities
- Non-profit organizations

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

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

Individuals are not eligible to apply for this program but may have 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 is the objective of the program? Why should my community organization apply?

The goal of the *Stop the Spread and Stay Safe at Home!* program is 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 is the program available?

The *Stop the Spread and Stay Safe at Home!* program is currently 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 are available through the program?

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

10. What if my organization only wants rapid tests, and does not want masks?

You can select to receive rapid tests only in the application form, and not select to receive masks.

11. Who do I contact if I have questions?

You can contact us by email at COVID19ScreeningProgram@redcross.ca or call the call centre at 1-888-381-8246. You can also go through the Frequently Asked Questions to see if what you need is in this document.

12. What is the deadline to apply for the program?

Please note that the **deadline for submitting new applications is February 10, 2023.**

APPLICATION SUPPORT

13. Where can I apply for the program?

Interested community organizations can apply by visiting the [application portal](#) and creating an account.

14. Do I have to complete my application all at once?

No, you can save your application and come back to it later until you are ready to submit.

15. Can multiple people in our organization access the application form?

Yes, multiple users can access the same application form for your organization, but all must have their own individual user accounts to do so.

16. Can organizations make changes to their application after it has been submitted?

No, you cannot make changes after your application is submitted, but you can contact us [by email](mailto:COVID19ScreeningProgram@redcross.ca) at COVID19ScreeningProgram@redcross.ca if you have forgotten something or want to provide more information.

17. Will I be required to provide documentation to validate my organization?

If you are a non-profit organization, you will be required to provide some documentation. You can find that on page 4 of the [Application Guidelines](#). You can upload the required documents through the application form.

If you are a registered charity, you need to provide your CRA Registration number in the application form.

18. I can't get access to the required documents as we are all working remotely.

Most documentation should be also available online and copies of originals are permissible. However, we recognize that COVID-19 may continue to present some challenges for applications. Please contact us at

COVID19ScreeningProgram@redcross.ca for more assistance. Please put as much information in the email as you can outlining what documentation is not accessible.

19. How long does the application take to complete?

Each application takes about 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

20. Can I apply on behalf of a different organization?

No. Each organization is required to submit their own application. If your organization is approved, you will access required information and reporting templates through your profile on the application portal. Each organization must have a unique profile in the system.

Note: Although your organization cannot apply on behalf of a different organization, you can distribute rapid tests and masks to other community organizations. You will be required to report back to the CRC on how many rapid tests were distributed to these other organizations.

21. What if my organization has multiple locations? Can I submit those in one application?

If your organization has multiple locations that want to participate in the program, we ask that **each location submit an individual request form** within the application portal. This is because the requirements of each location are critical to the success of your program.

We will need to understand how many clients and personnel your organization can distribute masks and tests to monthly, the storage options for tests, contact people and delivery details for each location.

22. How will I know the status of my application?

You can check your application profile and status in the [portal](#).

23. How many rapid tests and masks can I apply for?

Each organization can request approximately six weeks of supplies. A maximum limit for the size of orders is set.

24. What kind of reporting is required?

Organizations are required to report how many rapid tests and/or masks they distributed to individuals, and how

many they distributed to other organizations. This information is required every two weeks.

25. Can I distribute rapid tests to other community organizations?

Organizations can distribute rapid tests and masks to other community organizations. All organizations participating must report back to the CRC on how many rapid tests were distributed to individuals and other organizations.

26. Can the rapid tests be distributed to family members of community organization personnel?

The primary intent of the *Stop the Spread at Home!* stream is to provide community organizations with COVID-19 rapid tests and masks to distribute to their personnel, clients, and partner organizations.

27. What support is available to Official Language Minority Communities for the application process?

The application form and all support materials are available in both official languages on the CRC [website](#). Further, the call centre is also available to support both English and French callers, as is the program team who can provide support to successful applicants.

28. Do rapid tests detect COVID-19 variants?

Rapid tests indicate whether there is a presence of COVID-19 antigens in your body. If there are antigens, you will get a “presumptive positive” result. Please refer to your provincial and territorial health guidance for more information.

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.

29. What kind of supports are available to my organization in order to set up this program and will these be available to individuals who receive tests?

The CRC can provide your organization with supports but cannot provide individualized support to personnel or clients who receive tests. Supports to organizations include:

- rapid antigen test information will be provided to organizations for them to pass along to individuals who receive tests.
- access to the call centre or email for basic questions and help. You can call us at 1-800-418-1111 or email us at COVID19screeningprogram@redcross.ca.

Personnel or clients who have specific questions or concerns about using the tests should visit the COVID-19 rapid antigen test company's website for further instructions.

30. What kind of test will be distributed (brand)?

The CRC distributes rapid tests approved and provided by the Government of Canada. The brand may vary.

31. How and where should rapid tests be stored?

Follow the instructions provided by the manufacturer regarding storage. Some tests need to be stored at room temperature, some do not.

32. How quickly do you get results from these tests?

Depending on which brand of test you use, it typically takes anywhere from 10 to 30 minutes to receive a result.

33. What is the accuracy of these tests?

Rapid antigen tests cannot be used to confirm COVID-19 but can be used to detect if someone is at risk for having COVID-19. However, this means that there are also false positives, such as detecting antigens from previous infections.

34. I've heard that some rapid tests only show if you have a respiratory illness. What do these tests look for?

The approved rapid antigen tests are specific to testing for traces of the COVID-19 virus, in asymptomatic cases. It is not a fully diagnostic test, meaning that it will not confirm that you have COVID-19. If your result is a presumptive positive, you need to follow the next steps from your provincial government guidelines, typically accessible through your local public health authority. Remember that you can be asymptomatic and still have COVID-19.

35. Why were these antigen-based tests chosen to be distributed by the Canadian Red Cross as opposed to other tests?

The Government of Canada determined which brands would be distributed through this program.

36. How is the test administered - through the nose or mouth?

The rapid antigen tests provided through this program are a short nasal swab type test and are minimally invasive. Follow the instructions provided with the test.

37. Is a deposit or payment required to apply to the Program? Does the Canadian Red Cross ever ask for banking info, credit card info, or extensive personal information as part of its application process?

At the point of application for this program, the CRC requires extremely limited personal information. We do not require financial deposits, payments, or contributions at any time for the Stop the Spread and Stay Safe! Program. Please note that the CRC will never ask for your banking information or credit card information (except when you are making a financial donation).

Unfortunately, bad actors and individuals seeking to commit fraud see health emergencies and disasters as an opportunity to commit fraud against those impacted and organizations like the CRC. If you receive an email or phone call from someone posing as the CRC, and when in doubt, you can call us at 1- 800-418-1111 or email us at COVID19screeningprogram@redcross.ca to validate that the outreach is from the CRC.

38. I am worried that I have received a fraudulent survey, that it is not real, or that I have been contacted by a fraudulent party in relation to the Stop the Spread at Work! and Stop the Spread at Home! programs.

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