

Free Rapid COVID-19 Testing For Eligible Workplaces



Recently, a number of initiatives have been unveiled that will provide free rapid antigen testing to small and medium-sized businesses.

Federal

On May 7, 2021, the Federal Government announced that certain businesses and organizations can apply for free rapid tests for workplace screening projects. Rapid tests will be available to employers through:

- Shoppers Drug Mart locations in COVID-19 hot spots in Ontario for small- and medium-sized organizations;
- The Canadian Chamber of Commerce, which will enable local chambers to distribute rapid tests to smaller organizations;
- The Canadian Red Cross, which will provide non-profit, charitable and Indigenous community organizations with access to rapid tests through pre-registration;
- A new federal portal, which will allow larger organizations with close-contact employees to request rapid tests; and
- More federal workplaces, which can launch workplace screening programs using rapid tests where workers are at higher risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Ontario

On the same day, the Ontario Government announced that it is establishing a COVID-19 Rapid Screening Initiative for small and medium-sized businesses in partnership with the Federal Government and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. This initiative will provide free rapid antigen tests for employees of eligible businesses through their participating local chamber of commerce.

On May 12, the Ontario Government announced that, in addition to its partnership with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, it has launched a new rapid testing portal to make it easier for essential businesses to access free rapid testing for employees. Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, is asking “every business that’s able to be open, and particularly those in hot spots, to participate in Ontario’s COVID-19 Provincial Antigen Screening Program.”

Alberta

On May 12, 2021, the Alberta Government announced a partnership with Alberta Chambers of Commerce to provide access to rapid testing kits for small and medium-sized businesses. Interested businesses and not-for-profit organizations can apply to their local chamber of commerce for access to the kits.

Businesses and not-for-profit organizations do not need a chamber membership to apply, but they must ensure that anyone administering the test is adequately trained and they will need to report back to their local chamber about how many tests were performed, how many had a positive result and how many were confirmed by PCR testing.

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