



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Washington, D.C. 20230

COVID-19 Screening Testing Program

DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team

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Introduction

In accordance with Safer Federal Workforce guidance regarding mandatory testing for unvaccinated federal employees, the Department of Commerce (DOC) has established a **COVID-19 Screening Testing Program for DOC employees who are not fully vaccinated**. Fully vaccinated is defined as two weeks having passed since completion of a two-dose mRNA series (Pfizer or Moderna) or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson Vaccine.

The Screening Testing Program will be activated locally, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) [COVID-19 Community Risk Tool](#). For offices located in a county with medium or high-risk, screening testing will be required as outlined in this document. Bureau offices will make risk determinations each Friday with appropriate COVID-19 protocols effective the following week.

According to the CDC, Screening tests are intended to identify people with COVID-19 who are asymptomatic and do not have known, suspected, or reported exposure to SARS-CoV-2. Screening helps to identify unknown cases so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission. Diagnostic testing is intended to identify current infection in individuals, including those with signs or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and/or following recent known or suspected exposure. **DOC diagnostic testing information is included in the final section.**

Given operational and administrative considerations associated with differing roles, functions, or work environments, bureaus are required to adhere to the following general principles in implementing their testing program and protocols:

Testing Frequency and Standards

- The testing frequency for unvaccinated employees will be a minimum of every 7 days for any week during which they work onsite or interact in person with members of the public as part

of their job duties. More frequent testing can be performed at the discretion of each DOC facility to meet the many workplace and workforce needs within the Department. If a facility is occupied by more than one DOC tenant, the DOC tenants must agree on, and implement, the selected testing frequency and standards.

- Any [FDA-authorized COVID-19 test](#) may be used for screening.
 - Bureaus may choose to utilize:
 - In-store or drive-through point-of-care testing, such as at pharmacies;
 - In-house capabilities, such as onsite clinics;
 - Swab-testing that enables self-collection and shipping or drop off at a laboratory;
 - Over-the-counter tests, as long as tests are not both self-administered and self-read, unless observed by a designated agency person of contact or an authorized telehealth provider; and,
 - Bureaus should establish a means of verifying the date and result of a test.
 - Employees must be truthful in certifying their test results. Self-reported test results must be accompanied by a certification by the employee that all information provided has not been knowingly or willfully falsified (By submitting this test result I certify that: 1) the test result submitted is my own; 2) the test was administered on the date indicated; 3) neither the test nor the result has been altered or interfered with in any way that might call into question the accuracy of the result I am submitting. This certification is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I understand that either falsification or lack of candor in the submission of test results may form the basis for disciplinary action up to and including removal from the Federal service.)
 - **Tests should not be both self-administered and self-read by the employee, unless supervised.**
- **An unvaccinated employee who tests positive for COVID-19 may produce official documentation or proof of recovery instead of a COVID-19 test result for 90 days following a positive test.**
 - Documentation of recovery is a letter from a licensed healthcare provider or a public health official stating recovery from COVID-19, paired with a positive COVID-19 test result no more than 90 days old. The letter must be on official letterhead with the name, address, and phone number of the healthcare provider signing the document, and must include identifying information including name and date of birth for the individual who has recovered from COVID-19.
 - Proof of recovery is a negative COVID-19 test result paired with an earlier, positive COVID-19 test result that is no more than 90 days old.

Administrative Considerations

- Employees must be in full compliance with the Screening Testing Program to access a DOC building, but do not need to show proof of a negative test result upon entry.
 - Employees at another agency’s worksite are generally considered visitors and should follow the procedures of the host agency.
- **Bureaus do not have to include contractor employees in their testing programs** but may choose to do so according to their unique circumstances.

Testing Results and Information

- Under Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recordkeeping requirements, **if an employee tests positive for SARS-CoV-2 infection, the case must be recorded on the OSHA Illness and Injury Log** if each of the following conditions are met:
 - The case is a confirmed COVID-19 infection.
 - The case is work-related (as defined by [29 CFR 1904.5](#)).
 - The case involves one or more relevant recording criteria (set forth in [29 CFR 1904.7](#)) (e.g., medical treatment beyond first aid, days away from work, etc.).
- Any employee who tests positive must follow DOC Isolation Policy found on the [COVID-19 Information Hub](#).

Funding, Costs, and Duty Time

- **Bureaus are required to pay for the cost of screening testing pursuant to the program.**
 - Bureaus are responsible for paying the cost of required testing should an employee visit another Federal agency if approved in advance.
 - Employees may also use free testing options if they otherwise meet the FDA authorization, individual Bureau, and documentation requirements.
- **Time spent on testing required by the program, including travel to an authorized site, is duty time.**
 - Employees do not need to take administrative leave for testing.
- Pre-approved testing expenses, if incurred, should be documented and submitted through normal reporting channels.

Enforcement

- **Refusal to take a required test, refusal to provide the results of the test and/or failure to truthfully attest to the test results may result in disciplinary measures.**
 - In addition to disciplinary action, Bureaus may take measures for the safety of others in coordination with human resources and other relevant stakeholders.

Diagnostic Testing

- When DOC requires diagnostic testing for employees, it provides employees with such diagnostic testing at no cost to the employee, such as through the screening testing program, in-house capabilities for diagnostic testing at the worksite, or through an alternative process the DOC determines.
 - This includes, for example, testing required for employees at least 5 full days after a known close contact with someone with COVID-19 when such employees are working onsite at a DOC workplace or interacting with members of the public in person as part of their official responsibilities (unless the employee tested positive for COVID-19 with a [viral test](#) within the previous 90 days and subsequently recovered and remains without COVID-19 symptoms, in which case they do not need to get tested after close contact).
 - This also includes any testing required for employees who have had probable or confirmed COVID-19 and who have been isolating, prior to such employees returning to a Federal workplace or interacting with the public as part of their official responsibilities.
- When CDC recommends that travelers *consider* COVID-19 testing for current SARS-CoV-2 infection with a viral test prior to or following travel, DOC employees traveling on official business should consider being tested consistent with such CDC guidance.
 - When CDC otherwise recommends or requires COVID-19 testing prior to or following travel, DOC requires employees traveling on official business be tested consistent with such CDC guidance, pursuant to Executive Order 13991.
 - DOC may provide any recommended testing and will provide for any required testing associated with official travel at no cost to the employee, such as through the screening testing program, in-house capabilities for diagnostic testing at the worksite, or through an alternative process determined by DOC.
 - The cost of such testing recommended or required for official travel, and not available through a Federal dispensary or not covered (or reimbursable) through travel insurance, can be claimed in a travel voucher as a Miscellaneous Expense under DOC travel policies.
- **DOC is not responsible for providing diagnostic testing to an individual as a result of a potential exposure that is not work-related.** An employee or contractor employee who comes into close contact with a person with COVID-19 outside of work should follow CDC guidelines for testing and quarantine consistent with their vaccination status.

Simplified Overview

Situation	Covered Individuals	Testing Requirements	Allowable Tests	Time and Payment
Screening for Employees Not Fully Vaccinated	All employees not fully vaccinated or who refuse to provide their vaccination status	Employees must follow the local DOC facility testing requirements applicable to their specific job function before working onsite or interacting in person with members of the public as part of their job duties.	In general, any FDA authorized test may be used for screening. Tests may not be both self-administered and self-read. Tests or protocols should have a means of verifying the date and result of the test taken. Examples of allowable tests include point-of-care, in-house, and over-the-counter if observed by a designated agency person of contact or authorized telehealth provider. Given the priority of timely results, rapid antigen testing is the preferred method of screening. For unique situations, such as official travel, further standards may need to be met, including for international travel.	Bureaus are responsible for paying for the cost of testing pursuant to the program. Time spent on testing required by the program, including travel to an authorized testing site is considered duty time. Pre-approved testing expenses, if incurred, should be documented and submitted through normal reporting channels. Employees may also use free testing options if they otherwise meet the FDA authorization, individual Bureau, and documentation requirements.
Screening Required to Visit Another Agency	Employees visiting another agency in person who obtain approval in advance	Employees visiting another agency may be required to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test to gain entry.		
Screening Required for Official Travel	Employees approved for official travel	Employees traveling may need to provide testing results, particularly for entry to foreign countries, and may also need to seek testing upon return to meet CDC recommendations about testing after travel.		