Introduction
The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) is sharing these Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to help answer common inquiries about how to get tested for COVID-19.

This document is organized into four sections about COVID-19 testing:

- General information about COVID-19 testing (pages 2 – 3)
- Test results (pages 3 – 6)
- Testing for K-12 schools and child care (pages 6 – 8)
- Testing information for travelers (pages 8 – 10)

Helpful links and phone numbers:

- Test scheduling portal: portal.ri.gov
- Test result portal: portal.ri.gov/results
- COVID-19 testing information: covid.ri.gov/testing
- COVID-19 Info Line: 401-222-8022 or email RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov
- K-12 Test Scheduling Service: 844-857-1814
- Business Testing Contact Center: 888-662-4354 or email RIDOH.COVID19BizTesting@health.ri.gov.
General Information

1. Who should get tested for COVID-19?

   If you're fully vaccinated, the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) recommends COVID-19 testing if:
   - You have symptoms of COVID-19.
   - You plan to travel out of state.
   - You are returning from out-of-state travel.

   People are considered fully vaccinated two or more weeks after they have received the second dose of a two-dose series (for Pfizer and Moderna vaccines) or two or more weeks after they have received the single dose of the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine. Learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine.

   If you're not yet fully vaccinated, get tested weekly. You should also get tested if you are not vaccinated and have been identified as a close contact of someone who tested positive.

2. How can I get tested for COVID-19?

   There are several ways to get a COVID-19 test.
   - Schedule a free test for yourself or a dependent child at a State COVID-19 test site. All Rhode Islanders can schedule a test at one of these State-run locations online at portal.ri.gov or by calling 401-222-8022. Services are available in multiple languages.
   - Get a free rapid test in your local community. Pawtucket and Central Falls residents can call the Beat COVID Hotline at 855-843-7620 to learn more.
   - Call your primary care provider or child’s pediatrician. Ask if they do point-of-care testing or if they can schedule a test for you.
   - Make an appointment at a respiratory clinic.

3. How much does it cost to get a COVID-19 test?

   The State of Rhode Island will cover the cost of COVID-19 testing for anyone without insurance who schedules on portal.ri.gov. Rhode Islanders are also encouraged to attend free testing.
4. **What kind of COVID-19 test is used at the State’s general public test sites?**

   - **PCR test:** This type of test is sent to a lab for processing. Results are usually ready in about one to two days. Since most states with travel restrictions require proof of a negative result from a PCR test, this type of test is specifically recommended to anyone who must travel.

   - **BinaxNOW rapid test:** For rapid testing, go to portal.ri.gov and schedule an appointment for a BinaxNOW rapid test at one of several locations across the state. Locations that offer BinaxNOW rapid testing are noted on the self-scheduling portal. The State also offers [free rapid testing without appointment at some community-based locations](#).

5. **Do I need to get tested for COVID-19 before receiving either dose of vaccine?**
   No, you do not need to get tested for COVID-19 prior to receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. If you are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or have known current COVID-19 infection, you should not get vaccine until after you have completed your isolation or quarantine requirements. [Learn more about testing and the COVID-19 vaccine](#).

6. **Do I need to get tested for COVID-19 after receiving the vaccine?**
   Because there’s a small chance you may still get infected and spread the virus to others, continue to take part in required and optional testing at your workplace and elsewhere once you’ve gotten any COVID-19 vaccine. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, [isolate at home](#) and [get tested](#). If you test positive for COVID-19, you must still isolate for 10 days after your symptoms start or after your test date if you have no symptoms.

**COVID-19 Test Results**

7. **How do I get my COVID-19 test results?**
You can access your test results at portal.ri.gov/results. To access this portal, you must enter your personal information and the date you were tested. The information you enter must match the information used to schedule your test. You will get an error message if you try to access this portal before your results are ready. This step-by-step guide has tips on how to use the result portal.

8. How long will I have to wait to get the results of my COVID-19 test?

Rapid test results are usually available in the test result portal on the same day that you were tested. PCR tests are sent to a lab for processing. PCR test results are usually ready in one to two days.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, stay at home and isolate to avoid spreading your symptoms to others in your household. If you do not have symptoms but think you may have been exposed to COVID-19 or are recently returning from travel to a state with a COVID-19 positivity rate greater than 5%, quarantine while you wait for your results. Learn more about quarantine and isolation.

9. What should I do if my test result is positive?

- **Stay home (isolate) for at least 10 days.** Someone with COVID-19 needs to isolate even if they do not have symptoms of COVID-19. If you have symptoms, stay home for at least 10 days since you started having symptoms. If you do not have symptoms, stay home for at least 10 days from the day you were tested.

- **Answer the phone when RIDOH calls you.** Your name and contact information will be shared with public health staff at RIDOH to help with case investigation. Someone from RIDOH will call you and ask you for a list of people you have had close contact with during your infectious period.

- **Get support.** You may be eligible for support to help you isolate. Call 2-1-1 and choose option 6 or visit covid.ri.gov/whattodo for more information.

- **Inform your close contacts.** If you spent more than 15 minutes with them in a 24-hour period, they should quarantine for 10 days from the last time they were with you. They should go to portal.ri.gov to get tested on day five or later of their quarantine and should monitor for symptoms. Quarantine can be shortened to 7 days if they have a negative
result from a test taken at least 5 days after they were exposed. Regardless of length of quarantine, they must continue to monitor symptoms for 14 days from the last date of exposure. Residents of long-term care facilities must quarantine for 14 days.

- **Get treated immediately.** There is an effective treatment for COVID-19, but supply is limited and reserved for high-risk patients. You may be eligible to receive this treatment if you:
  - Are 65 or older or have chronic health conditions and
  - Have COVID-19 symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, fever, etc.) and
  - Tested positive for COVID-19.

If you have a regular doctor, contact them for a referral for treatment as soon as possible. If you don't have a regular doctor, there are other ways to get an online referral. [Learn more about COVID-19 treatment and online referral options.](#)

10. I don't have symptoms but I got a positive result on my rapid antigen test. Do I need to isolate?

Yes. You may have COVID-19 even if you do not have symptoms. You should get a PCR test to confirm your results. [Stay home and away from others](#) while you wait for your PCR test result.

- If your PCR test result is negative, you can end isolation and return to school or work.
- If your PCR result is positive, you need to [continue isolating for 10 days](#) from the date of your first test.

11. How soon after my rapid antigen test do I need to get my follow-up PCR test?

It is highly recommended that you get your follow-up PCR test on the same day you had your rapid antigen test. But results from PCR tests that are collected within 48 hours may be accepted as a confirmatory test result.

If you do not get your recommended PCR test within 48 hours after your rapid test, RIDOH will consider your positive rapid result final and start contact tracing.

12. How do I get my follow-up PCR test?
Any State-run test site can give you the follow-up PCR test. If you leave the test site before your rapid result is ready, you can schedule a follow-up PCR test at portal.ri.gov or by calling 401-222-8022.

If you got your rapid test at a K-12 school, you can go to any general-public test site or K-12 test site to get your follow-up PCR test.

PCR tests are sent to a lab. Results are usually ready in 1 to 2 days on portal.ri.gov/results.

It is very important that you stay home and away from others as much as possible while you wait for your PCR results. Do not go to school or work.

**Testing for K-12 and Child Care Students and Staff**

13. Who is eligible to get tested through the State’s K-12 testing program?

The State’s K-12 testing program is open to all staff and students in Pre K-12 schools and child care. RIDOH recommends testing for:

- Students or staff members who have COVID-19 symptoms.
- Students or staff members who are identified as a close contact of someone else who tested positive for COVID-19. A close contact is someone who was closer than six feet for more than 15 minutes.

More information about testing for students and staff is available here.

14. How can students and staff get a COVID-19 test?

There are places all around the state where students and staff can get a free COVID-19 test. A list of those test sites is available here. Appointments are required.

To schedule an appointment, parents, guardians, staff members, and students older than 16 can call the K-12 COVID-19 test scheduling service at 844-857-1814 or create an account on portal.ri.gov. The test scheduling service number is open from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekdays and 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekends.

15. Can parents and other family members also be tested through the State’s K-12 testing program?
Currently, the K-12 testing program is only for students and staff in K-12 schools and child care settings. Family members who would like to get tested can self-schedule an appointment on portal.ri.gov.

16. What kind of COVID-19 test is used at K-12 test sites?
Anyone tested at K-12 test site will get a PCR test.

17. How will I get my/my child’s test results?
You will receive an email or text notification when your child’s COVID-19 test results are ready. Results can be accessed at portal.ri.gov/results. You will be asked to enter your child’s personal information and the date they were tested. The information you enter must match the information used to schedule the test. You will get an error message if you try to access this portal before your child’s results are ready.

- PCR test results are usually ready in one to two days.
- If you have questions about K-12 test results, you can call 844-857-1814. Please wait 48 hours before calling for the result of your PCR test.

18. What should students and staff members do while they wait for their test results?
- If you have symptoms, isolate yourself from other people in your home as much as possible while you wait for results.
- If you are a close contact of someone who tested positive, but you do not have symptoms, stay home and follow quarantine guidance while you wait for your results.

19. My child was tested at school. They do not have symptoms, but they got a positive result on their rapid antigen test. Do they need to stay home from school?
Yes. Your child may have COVID-19 even if they do not have symptoms. Your child should get a PCR test to confirm their results. Your child should stay home and away from others as much as possible while they wait for their PCR test result.

- If the PCR test result is negative, your child can end isolation and return to school.
Frequently Asked Questions About Rhode Island COVID-19 Testing

Updated May 24, 2021

- If the PCR result is positive, your child should continue isolating for 10 days from the date of the first test. You and anyone else who lives with your child should also get tested and stay home from school or work.
- If your child does not get the recommended PCR test within 48 hours after their rapid test, RIDOH will consider their positive rapid result final and start contact tracing.

COVID-19 Testing for Travelers

20. I plan to travel to Rhode Island. Do I need to quarantine or get tested when I arrive?

Anyone coming to Rhode Island from a country outside of the United State (US) or US territories or a hot spot within the US or US territories must quarantine for 10 days.

**Domestic travel:** If you are travelling to Rhode Island from a hot spot within the US or US territories, you can end quarantine with a negative result from a test taken after you arrived or no more than 72 hours before you arrived.

If you arrived from a hot spot within the US or US territories, you do not have to quarantine if:

- You’re traveling for work.
- You’re a public health, public safety, or healthcare worker.
- You’re traveling for medical treatment; to attend a court hearing; to attend funeral or memorial services; to get necessities such as groceries, gas, or medication; to drop off or pick up children from care; or to work on a boat.

**International travel:** If you arrived in Rhode Island from a country outside US or US territories, RIDOH recommends testing on day 5 of quarantine or later. If you have a negative result, you may shorten your quarantine to 7 days.

**Even with a negative test result,** you still need to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days after travel, wear a mask any time you’re near people you don’t live with, and follow physical distancing guidelines.

- The purpose of these restrictions is to allow time for travelers from locations with high community spread to start quarantining and self-monitor for symptoms during the days that COVID-19 can develop after exposure, and to prevent hundreds of people in the public from being unknowingly exposed, including tourists.
Frequently Asked Questions About Rhode Island COVID-19 Testing

Updated May 24, 2021

• Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 should avoid travel, stay home, and schedule a test.

21. Can I travel without quarantining if I have been fully vaccinated?

If you’re fully vaccinated, you do not need to quarantine if:

• You’ve gotten a final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, that is authorized by either the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or World Health Organization (WHO), at least 14 days before your last exposure or out-of-state travel and

• You haven’t had symptoms of COVID-19 since your last exposure or out-of-state travel.

Vaccinated travelers are still encouraged to get a COVID-19 test between 5 and 10 days after out-of-state travel. Always watch for symptoms for a full 14 days after travel. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, isolate at home and get tested. Learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine.

22. I am a Rhode Islander who anticipates traveling out of state. Can I get tested?

• Rhode Islanders planning to travel out of state should check to see if there are any quarantine or testing requirements in place at their destination. Some states require that visitors provide proof of a negative test result taken within 72 hours prior to their arrival.

• Rhode Island residents who anticipate traveling out of state are eligible to schedule a free test through portal.ri.gov. Since some states and airlines require a lab report as proof of a negative result, RIDOH recommends travelers schedule a PCR test. The result of this test is usually ready in two days. For guidance on how to integrate COVID-19 testing into your itinerary, review this document.

• You can access your results at portal.ri.gov/results one to two days after your test. Print or take a screenshot of your test result so you may easily access it during your travels.

23. I am a Rhode Island resident returning home after out-of-state travel. What should I do?

Rhode Island residents returning from a state with a high rate of community spread should quarantine for 10 days. You can end quarantine with a negative result from a test taken after
you arrived or no more than 72 hours before you arrived. Rhode Islanders may schedule free a COVID-19 test on portal.ri.gov, but must remain in quarantine while waiting for results.

- If you receive a test during your quarantine in Rhode Island and get a negative test result, you can stop quarantining. However, you still need to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days, wear a mask in public, and follow physical distancing guidelines.
- If you return to Rhode Island and begin to experience symptoms of COVID-19, contact your primary care provider or a respiratory clinic and schedule a test.

24. Who is exempt from travel-related quarantine/testing requirements?

- Per executive order, these quarantine and testing requirements do not apply to public health, public safety, or healthcare workers, people traveling for medical treatment, to attend a funeral or memorial service, to obtain necessities such as groceries, gas, or medication, to drop off or pick up children from day care or summer camps, or to anyone who must work on their boat.
- Children are not exempt from these quarantine/testing requirements. A parent or guardian can use their own account to schedule a COVID-19 test for a child. Children older than 16 should create their own account.
- If you're fully vaccinated, you do not need to quarantine if:
  - You've gotten a final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, that is authorized by either the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or World Health Organization (WHO), at least 14 days before your last exposure or out-of-state travel and
  - You haven't had symptoms of COVID-19 since your last exposure or out-of-state travel.

Vaccinated travelers are still encouraged to get a COVID-19 test between 5 and 10 days after out-of-state travel. Always watch for symptoms for a full 14 days after travel. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, isolate at home and get tested. Learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine.