Coronavirus Disease 2019

COVID-19

The Colorado State Public Health Lab will continue to prioritize analysis of COVID-19 samples based on the following criteria adapted from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services testing priorities.

TIER 1

- Hospitalized patients
- Health care workers with symptoms

TIER 2

- Patients in long-term care facilities or other residential settings such as homeless shelters or correctional facilities with symptoms
- Patients over age 65 with symptoms
- Patients with underlying conditions with symptoms*
- First responders with symptoms
- Critical infrastructure workers with symptoms**
- People with symptoms who work with vulnerable populations or in group residential settings

TIER 3

- Other individuals with symptoms

For persons that are part of a high risk job category, call 303-692-2700 to be directed to a testing facility.

Not everyone with COVID-19 symptoms needs a test or will be able to be tested.

- CALL OR EMAIL a telehealth line, nurseline, or your health care provider. If the provider recommends you get testing or care, follow the provider's advice BEFORE going into any health facility. Ask your provider about private lab sites where you can get tested.

- DO NOT go to an emergency room to get a test for COVID-19 unless you are having a medical emergency. For COVID-19, that means severe respiratory symptoms such as shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.

- DO call 911 or go to an emergency room if you are having a medical emergency. Tell the dispatcher your symptoms.

You must have an order from your health care provider

People with mild to moderate illness that does not require hospitalization, must have an order from a healthcare provider.

Do you need a test?

Whether or not you are diagnosed with COVID-19, if you don't need to be hospitalized, your treatment will be the same, no matter the test result.

Why be tested for COVID-19?

For people whose symptoms are severe enough to need medical treatment in a hospital, a positive or negative test result is important. The diagnosis helps the hospital decide what interventions the patient needs and where they should be assigned to stay in the hospital.

- The state lab captures patient information to ensure tests are prioritized appropriately. If a test is marked as meeting Tier 1 or 2 criteria, these samples will be processed prior to Tier 3 samples. Non-prioritized samples will be tested afterwards or sent to a commercial lab for testing.
- A number of Colorado hospitals either can or soon will be able to test for and diagnose COVID-19 in-house, without having to wait for results from the state or a private lab.

Does the state lab have any drive-up testing sites?

- Not at this time. The state lab currently must prioritize tests for critically ill people who need test results quickly, for people who work in health care and other facilities that serve high-risk populations, and when the state needs to monitor outbreaks in specific communities and long-term care or other facilities.

- If you have COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath), consider a telehealth visit or nurseline advice before seeking in-person care. Ask your primary care provider if they offer telehealth visits, or call one of Colorado's nurselines.

Some people may not need to be tested for COVID-19.

- People with early, mild symptoms (might include a combination of cough, body aches, fatigue, and chest tightness, with or without fever): Self-isolate, and use over-the-counter medications to treat your symptoms -- like you would for a cold or other respiratory illness.
- People with more definite COVID-19 symptoms: (fever, cough, shortness of breath), Self-isolate, use over-the-counter medications, and, if you think you need medical advice, consider a telehealth visit or nurseline advice before seeking in-person care.

Letters for work must come from your doctor. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment does not have, and cannot provide, you with a letter clearing you to go back to work. If you had symptoms consistent with COVID-19, you should isolate yourself for 7 days after symptoms started, and continue isolating yourself until you are fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing medications) for 3 days. Public health is not requiring people to have a negative test to return to work. If your employer is requiring this, you may want to contact your doctor, or another health care provider, or direct your employer to this website.

Private provider testing for the public

The following private providers have indicated that they are able to provide COVID-19 testing to members of the general public who have symptoms.

People who wish to be tested have to go through a screening to ensure they qualify for tests based on symptom and exposure screening questions.

For more information, please contact these companies directly. Because they are private providers and not operated by the State of Colorado, neither the State nor CDPHE is responsible for the information about or operations of these testing sites:

- Advanced Urgent Care & Occupational Medicine
- American Family Care Urgent Care
- Rocky Mountain Urgent Care & Family Medicine
- Stride Community Health Center

San Juan Basin providing community testing

COVID-19 testing will be available at San Juan Basin Public Health Monday – Friday from 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. starting Thursday, April 9. Testing is open and available to all individuals but appointments are required. Cost is $75, but might be covered by insurance. Please call Cedar Diagnostics for appointments, payment information, and testing locations at 970-247-0937, (dial 2 for Durango and Pagosa Springs, dial 3 for Cortez). Individuals who do not make an advance appointment will not be tested. For more information, go to sjbpublichealth.org/coronavirus/.