

**School Year 2022-2023  
K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program FAQ**  
**August 22, 2022**

**School Year 2022-2023: K-12 COVID-19  
Testing Program FAQ**

**Opt-in Application Process**

**1. What are the eligibility requirements for our school to participate in the SY22-23 COVID-19 Testing Program?**

**APPLICATION ELIGIBILITY:**

1. Any public or private K-12 school system interested in participating in this program must complete the new application process regardless of if they previously opted in the state's COVID testing programs.
2. School systems must implement a screening testing program to participate in the [K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program](#). Screening testing is defined as targeted testing of asymptomatic individuals.
3. School systems where pre-K/daycare students share a building/co-mingle with K-12 students are eligible for participation in the grant.
4. Public & private school systems that participated in the SY2021-2022 Reopening Schools Grant must have completed all the [closeout activities](#) to be eligible to apply for SY2022-2023 Reopening Schools Grant.
5. The City of Houston also received funds through the same federal grant program to support a [set of public and private school systems](#) within the City of Houston boundaries. If you are in the Houston area, please [review the list of school systems](#); the City of Houston will support and determine if you are considered eligible for their program. If so, once you apply, you will receive an allocation from the City of Houston to use throughout SY 2022-2023 in TEA's program for rapid antigen tests only. The City of Houston will directly provide PCR tests and staffing support through its program.
6. All participating school systems must adhere to the [SY2022-2023 K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program Guidance & Eligibility Requirements](#).

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7. Pre-K-only providers and/or daycare providers are NOT eligible for participation in this grant.

### **2. The federal guidance documents reference K-12. Are my Pre-K staff not eligible to be covered under this program?**

Stand-alone Pre-K-only and childcare providers are not eligible. However, if your Pre-K program is in the same building as your K12 students and they co-mingle, they are an eligible population to test.

### **3. I am already enrolled in the testing program; do I need to apply again?**

Public or private K-12 school systems interested in participating in this program **must complete the [new application process](#) regardless of if they previously opted into the state's COVID testing programs.**

- School systems where pre-K/childcare students share a building/co-mingle with K-12 students are eligible for participation in the testing program.
- Pre-K-only and/or daycare providers are NOT eligible for participation in this testing program.

### **4. I'm a private school; how do I participate in the K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program?**

Private schools interested in the SY22-23 COVID-19 Testing Program should complete the [new application process](#). As school systems are approved, TEA will update the allocation amounts accordingly.

### **5. What is the turnaround time for our school system to hear back regarding our application approval? **NEW-8/22/2022****

School systems will receive a status update email on their submitted application within 3-5 business days, depending on when their application is submitted.

### **6. I'm a school system that has already submitted my application, but the student enrollment and/or staff count was incorrect. Can I update the student and staff count that was previously provided?**

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Once submitted, if your enrollment increases later in the school year by more than 10%, send an email to [COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov](mailto:COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov) with the subject line: Updated Student/Staff Count and your full School System Name (**no abbreviations**).

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### **7. I'm an eligible school system, but we are not listed on the Allocation Spreadsheet. How do I participate in the SY22-23 K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program?**

Any K-12 public or private school system in Texas meets the eligibility requirements to participate in the *SY 2022-2023 K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program*. The goal of this program is to support safe, in-person instruction in kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) schools with funding primarily focused on providing needed resources to implement screening testing programs. The [new application process](#) will officially launch Thursday, July 21, 2022.

### **8. I'm an Education Service Center. Am I eligible to participate in the SY22-23 K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program?**

Unfortunately, Education Services Centers do not meet the eligibility requirements under these federal grant dollars.

### **9. What is the deadline to opt into the K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program?**

**Application Deadline: Thursday, September 22, 2022, at 11:59 PM.**

### **10. How long is this testing program slated to run?**

The dollars associated with the federal grant expire on July 31, 2023. The K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program is slated to run the entire school year, including summer school.

### **11. The Opt-In List and Test Allocation Spreadsheet show a dollar amount. In essence, is this amount a "credit" that we are allowed to "purchase" testing kits from the vendors on the Vendor Resource Sheet?**

That is correct. These dollars can be used to "purchase" services through the vendors. As services are requested, the testing vendors will bill DSHS directly. TEA and DSHS will subtract your expenditures from your allocation and update the list 1-2 times per week.

### **12. My school is not shown on the allocation spreadsheet; how many tests may I receive?**

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Your school system does not appear on the allocation sheet because your application has not been approved, or there might be another issue. Please contact [COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov](mailto:COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov) for further details and the next steps.

### **13. What is a Test Coordinator, and do I need one?**

Participating school systems must identify one school Test Coordinator, an alternate Test Coordinator, and a superintendent/executive director/headmaster. The Test Coordinator will serve as the primary point of contact with TEA and DSHS related to this testing program and will receive testing information or guidance from TEA or DSHS.

They will also:

- Serve as the primary Point of Contact (POC) for interactions with any testing vendors the school system chooses to engage with.
- Serve as the POC for Administrators at the various campuses participating in the testing program
- Coordinate with schools within the District/Private School participating in the testing program to identify Test Administrators, if applicable.
- Ensure all reporting requirements for the school system are met timely and accurately.
- Help reconcile any discrepancies in invoicing between DSHS and the testing vendor, as well as discrepancies in the numbers of tests administered.

### **14. Who should I tell if I need to change my Test Coordinator or alternate test coordinator?**

Send an email to [COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov](mailto:COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov) with your entire school system name, unique school system ID number, and the contact information (new test coordinator name, email, and cell phone number) of your new test coordinator and/or alternate test coordinator.

### **15. How will I know when my school system's application is officially approved?**

After your application is submitted, it will be thoroughly reviewed, and if it is approved, you will receive an official SY22-23 K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program.

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Welcome email, and your school system's name will appear on the allocation spreadsheet. The allocation spreadsheet is posted weekly on Mondays and Thursdays at 5:00 PM unless one of those days falls on a holiday or TEA closure day.

If your application is not approved, you will also be notified and provided details, including the next steps to resolve the issue.

### **Test Usage**

#### **1. Do we have to use the tests specifically or on populations?**

The objectives and goals of this funding are primarily focused on providing needed resources to implement screening testing programs, including recurring testing of asymptomatic individuals. School systems will need to develop a screening testing plan (a required component in the new application) that details strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and maintain safe operations as community transmission and/or vaccination rates change. All plans must describe the role of screening testing as it pertains to the changing conditions of the pandemic.

While each school system will develop a screening testing plan that works for their local situation, they must also adhere to the following limitations:

- All testing in school systems as a part of this program will be conducted voluntarily.
- Tests will only be conducted on staff and students of the K-12 public or private school.
- Individuals under the age of 18 will be required to have a signed legal guardian permission slip.
- All school-based personnel conducting the testing must be training and administer tests per the instructions for use for the test being administered.
- Individuals tested will not be charged for the test; and
- All results of the tests will be reported through the appropriate vendor web-based portal/system.

#### **2. What are the testing requirements for the SY22-23 K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program?**

School systems that choose to participate in the K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program and the SY 2022-2023 School Health Support Grant must develop a

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plan for and implement a screening testing approach but may also utilize others.

testing methods, such as diagnostic or surveillance. See the [CDC COVID-19 K-12 Guidance Document](#) for additional information on a screening test.

**\*\*\* Screening testing is the targeted testing of certain asymptomatic populations.**

### **According to the CDC:**

- At a minimum, screening testing should be offered to students who have not been fully vaccinated when community transmission is at moderate, substantial, or high levels
- At any level of community transmission, screening testing should, at a minimum, be offered to all teachers and staff who have not been fully vaccinated.
- To be most effective, the screening program should test at least once per week and (within 24 hours) report results to the staff or student tested.
- Screening testing more than once a week might effectively interrupt COVID-19 transmission.
- Schools may consider multiple screening testing strategies, such as conducting [pooled testing](#) of cohorts.
- Schools can routinely test student-athletes, participants, coaches, trainers, and other people (such as adult volunteers) who could come into close contact with others during sports and other activities with elevated risk. Schools should consider implementing screening testing of participants up to 24 hours before sporting, competition, or extracurricular events. Schools can use different screening testing strategies for lower-risk sports.

### **3. How many tests are available for this program?**

There is a finite amount of money allocated to this testing program. School systems must adjust their screening testing plan as needed throughout the school year, order what they believe they will use in the upcoming month, report test results thoroughly and accurately, and reorder testing supplies and services only as needed.

### **4. Will the state provide personal protective equipment (PPE) to accompany this testing program?**

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The state will not provide PPE to school systems as part of this testing program; however, PPE is an allowable expense under the [School Health Support Grant](#). School systems can use their funds from other sources to purchase PPE for their needs. Vendor staff must provide their own PPE.

### **5. Can we require a student or staff member to take a COVID-19 test?**

School systems **cannot** mandate the use of COVID-19 tests on their staff or students. They cannot mandate the use of COVID-19 tests on specific groups like student-athletes or those participating in extracurricular activities.

### **6. Can I use this testing program to test my athletes for extracurricular activities?**

It is up to the individual school system to develop a screening testing plan that will be reviewed and approved by TEA that works for their local needs; however, schools cannot mandate COVID-19 tests on their staff or students. All school systems must submit their testing plans as part of the [SY22-23 application process](#).

### **7. Can relatives of school system employees or students be tested through this program?**

No. Testing allotments are based upon staff and student counts. You **must** be a student or staff member employed by the school system or a school board member to be eligible to receive testing.

### **8. Can we charge students or staff to take a COVID-19 test obtained through this program?**

No, you cannot charge for these COVID-19 tests. These tests are being provided free of charge as part of a grant the Department of State Health Services received from the federal government.

### **9. Can these funds cover the cost of testing for individuals covered under the state employee health plan or other health insurance?**

Regarding insurance billing, this funding can be used in the following ways:

- Uninsured: Funds can cover costs associated with screening testing for the uninsured.
- Billing serves as an actual or perceived barrier to timely test delivery: Funds can cover costs associated with screening testing when establishing billing services (directly or through a contractual agreement) would delay testing and/or reduce the jurisdiction's ability to rapidly increase testing

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capacity to meet needs.

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- Payor of last resort when billing insurance: In situations where screening testing is billed to insurance and is either not covered or partially covered by a third-party payor (e.g., private insurance, CMS, etc.), after the claim is rejected or partial reimbursement occurs, the outstanding balance can be covered using these funds.

### **10. We are not participating in the SY22-23 COVID-19 Testing Program; however, we still have carried over COVID tests from SY21-22. Can we return these COVID tests?**

No. TEA, DSHS, nor the vendors will accept unexpired working tests. Your school system should keep those COVID tests and use them for screening testing or to test staff or students that become symptomatic during school hours or if there is an outbreak within your school system. You are still required to report the testing results in the vendor portal.

## Test Types

### **1. Where can I find the vendors we are allowed to use for this new testing program?**

The list of vendors is on TEA's COVID-19 Website under the Tools, Templates, and Resources List. The [Vendor Resource Chart](#) provides information about each vendor and allows you to compare and choose the vendor most aligned to your needs.

### **2. What type of tests will be provided by the state? Who is the manufacturer?**

Tests include Point of Care (POC) rapid antigen tests and Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)\_tests. PCR tests include individual and pooled tests, although all vendors may not offer both types of PCR tests. Please be sure to check out our [Vendor Resource Guide](#) to learn more information about the different manufacturers.

### **3. What are the differences between an antigen and a PCR test?**

The antigen tests identify the virus by detecting the proteins from the virus. Rapid antigen results are typically available in about 15 minutes. While quick, rapid antigen tests are less sensitive than PCR tests. False-negative results can vary by brand and range from 4.8% to 16.5% compared to PCR tests.

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The molecular test (RT-PCR) detects the virus's genetic material to see if you have an active coronavirus infection. Molecular tests must be sent to a lab to be processed, and results are available in 24-48 hours. False-negative results for PCR tests are generally less than 2%.

## **Test Administration**

### **1. Who will be administering the tests?**

In some cases, public and private school systems have the option to administer tests themselves. There is also an option to request test administration support through vendor staffing support; please review the [Vendor Resource Guide](#) to learn more information, as this varies by vendor and test type.

### **2. If we administer the test ourselves, do test administrators have to be medically trained?**

No, however, individual test administrators must fully complete any required training offered by their selected [testing vendor](#).

### **3. Are permission slips/consent forms required to administer tests on students or staff? Permission slips/consent forms are not required for individuals over 18 years old.**

Permission slips/consent forms are not required for individuals over 18 years old.

Permission slips/consent forms for students under 18 years old are required. In most cases, the testing vendor you select will have a permission slip/consent form available in multiple languages for your school system to access. You can also find a sample permission slip/consent form within [TEA's Public Health Orders Card](#). (click on the 2020-2021 Tab at the top of the screen)

### **4. How long do the tests take to yield results?**

This will depend on the test your school system decides to administer. Antigen tests generally provide results in 15 minutes, while molecular/PCR tests take 24-48 hours to receive results.

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### **5. How long will it take to get the molecular results back for my school system?**

Review the [Vendor Resource Chart](#) for more information as this varies by vendor and test type but typically within 24-48 hours.

### **6. Who is liable if the testing injures a student or staff?**

Consult your school system's legal counsel.

### **7. If we choose to administer the tests ourselves, are the used test kits and PPE considered medical waste for disposal?**

Used COVID test kits are considered Medical Waste and must be disposed of according to [Disposal Guidance for COVID-19 Rapid Testing Kits from Schools \(texas.gov\)](#)

Unused COVID test kits can be discarded with your school system's regular waste disposal.

PPE used while handling and administering the COVID-19 test kits is not considered medical waste.

### **8. Can these tests be used on asymptomatic individuals?**

Yes. This program's focus is screening testing, which is the regular, targeted testing of asymptomatic individuals. Please refer to the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) Instructions for Use for each type of test and specific brand. Not all tests are intended for asymptomatic individuals, and since you are required to follow the EUA-IFU under the SDO, we recommend you reference the EUA instructions.

### **9. Can these tests be used during outbreaks or for symptomatic individuals?**

Yes. If a student or staff member becomes symptomatic while at school, the on-site resources for a school screening testing program could certainly be extended to test that student or faculty member. It should be noted, however, that students or staff who are symptomatic should not go to school and should be directed to seek testing in clinical care sites or at existing testing sites in the community. If only diagnostic testing is desired, other federal funds may be a more appropriate fit to support those testing needs.

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### **10. Can we test our central office staff?**

Central office staff members are allowed to be tested and were accounted for in the allocation.

All staff members throughout the school system (central office and school-based staff) should be included in the staff count when [submitting your application](#).

### **11. Once we order from one of the testing vendors, what is the turn-around time from ordering to receiving tests?**

This will vary by vendor. Each vendor has its timeline and onboarding process. Please review the [Vendor Resource Chart](#) to find out more.

### **12. We are currently partnering with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party to administer our tests. Can we use them as a vendor instead of choosing one from the Vendor Resource Sheet?**

Under the *K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program*, your allocation can only be used with the six approved vendors on the [Vendor Resource Chart](#). If school systems have separate funding, you are welcome to work with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor.

## **Allocation Methodology**

### **1. What is the allocation methodology for the SY2022-2023 COVID-19 Testing Program?**

#### Allocation Planning

The K-12 Testing Program was created to support screening testing in school systems across the state. Schools must have a screening plan that supports their district's needs. Schools must only order what they intend to use in a month. Last year, on average, school systems tested 3% of their total district population each month. School leaders and testing coordinators can review the K-12 Testing Allocation Sheet (*this list will be posted on July 25, 2022, and updated weekly throughout SY2022-2023*) for a recommended number of initial tests to order.

#### Initial Order

Once an initial order is placed and received, no further orders will be allowed until a minimum of 80% of the current testing supply has been reported as used through results reporting.

#### Holds

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To adhere to the CDC grant's requirements and ensure proper federal funds' spending, it may be necessary for TEA and DSHS to place holds on school systems. These holds are not necessarily punitive but a way for the state agencies and school systems to better monitor spending and equitable usage of the grant funds.

Type of Hold	Cause for Hold	Clearing the Hold
Tests and Services Received Report (TSRR) Hold*	1. The school system failed to report the receipt of tests or staffing services within the required reporting window or 2. Reported information did not match the vendor-supplied information	1. Submit the required <a href="#">TSRR form</a> . 2. Email <a href="mailto:COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov">COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov</a>
Reporting Hold	The school system has placed an order and has not reported using at least 80% of those tests.	The Reporting Hold will automatically be removed once the school system has reported using at least 80% of its current stock.
Staffing Hold	If it is determined that school systems are not adjusting staffing requests based on testing demand, the school system will be put on a staffing hold and unable to utilize the vendor's staff until resolved.	Email <a href="mailto:COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov">COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov</a> to schedule a staffing meeting.
Carryover	The school system has sufficient tests from the SY2021-2022 Testing Program to cover their current need, so they will not be permitted to order new COVID tests.	Email <a href="mailto:COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov">COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov</a> if you have questions or need support.

3. **What do I need if my school system's monthly incremental allocation isn't enough to purchase COVID tests from our desired vendor? **August 8, 2022****

School systems with a low allocation and cannot afford to work with their desired vendor should email [COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov](mailto:COVIDCaseReport@tea.texas.gov) for potential next steps.

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### Reporting

#### 1. What is the reporting mechanism, and can I use one platform even if I work with different vendors?

[Each vendor](#) under the SY2022-2023 has its reporting structure that will be used. If you are working with multiple vendors, you must report the tests received from that vendor through their portal.

#### 2. Do I just report positive tests?

No. The total number of rapid antigen tests administered, the number of PCR tests administered, excluded tests, and the number of positive tests must be reported for this program to meet grant requirements. Excluded tests include those damaged and issued as controls if the control tests are part of the number of tests ordered.

#### 3. What happens when someone tests positive at school?

This is a process that will be determined at the local level.

#### 4. How is my personal information used that is captured by the testing vendors?

All personal health information collected in registration and results will be handled under local, state, and national privacy rules.

Individual-level registration and results from information in the registration application will only be shared with the Department of State Health Services as required by Laws.

Aggregate level information without personally identifiable information may be shared with school systems and the public.

#### 5. What reporting is required by the school system?

School systems must follow all reporting requirements outlined below to adhere to the federally funded CDC grant requirements. **Failure to submit timely and accurate reports will result in removal from the testing program.**

1. Tests and Services Received Report must be submitted within 48 hours of:

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- Receiving ordered tests.
- The last day of consecutive staffing services. If staff are on-site Monday – Friday, the form must be submitted by close of business the following Monday
- [Test and Services Received Full Instructions](#)

<b>Example</b>	<b>Testing Days</b>	<b>Must Report by End of Day</b>
1.	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday	Friday
2.	Monday – Friday (all week)	Monday the following week
3.	Monday & Wednesday	Wednesday and Friday

### 2. Test Administered and Results Reporting:

For all tests administered:

- School systems must submit testing results (number of tests administered, excluded, and positives) to the vendor through the vendors’ web-based portal for all tests conducted by close of business on Friday; however, TEA and DSHS recommend 24 hours after the end of the testing day as a best practice.
- School systems with multiple vendors are responsible for submitting COVID test results in each of the chosen vendor’s online reporting portals.

For Positive Tests:

- All school systems must notify their local public health authority of positive COVID cases.

### 3. Grant Programmatic Surveys & Additional Reports/Submission

4. School systems must respond to any additional data collection survey and/or report requests to remain in compliance (i.e., the SY2022-2023 End of Year Inventory Report).

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### 5. Test Administered and Results Reporting:

For all tests administered:

- School systems must submit testing results (number of tests administered, excluded, and positives) to the vendor through the vendors' web-based portal for all tests conducted by close of business on Friday; however, TEA and DSHS recommend 24 hours after the end of the testing day as a best practice.
- School systems that work with multiple vendors are responsible for submitting COVID test results in each of the chosen vendor's online reporting portals.

For Positive Tests:

- All school systems must notify their local public health authority of positive COVID cases.

### 6. Grant Programmatic Surveys & Additional Reports/Submission

7. School systems must respond to any additional data collection survey and/or report requests to remain in compliance (i.e., the SY2022-2023 End of Year Inventory Report).

**\*Failure to comply with the reporting requirements of the grant may lead to a delay in receiving future tests, a freeze on your allocation, or removal from the testing program altogether.**

### **8. Is the test information shared with the local health department and DSHS, or do school systems need to report these cases to the appropriate authority?**

School systems are responsible for reporting their positive test results to the public health authority.

### **9. How do we report expired tests after their expiration date?**

**UPDATED- 8/22/2022**

A [Test & Services Received Report form](#) must be submitted one business day after your COVID tests (antigen and PCR) expire.

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### **10. Do we need to continue our current weekly COVID-19 Case Reporting Form submission? How will the state use the data?**

Yes, the [COVID-19 Case Reporting form](#) is still in effect until further notice, and the data will be publicly reported on the current [Department of State Health Services Texas Public Schools COVID-19 Data page](#).

## **Miscellaneous**

### **1. What fund and object code does my LEA record for test kits received through this federal grant?**

The district would record the test kits as revenue to fund 199 and object code 5829. Please refer to the [Vendor Resource Chart](#) to determine the exact pricing of each test you used.

### **2. Who is providing funding to support this testing program?**

This K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program is supported by the CDC of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$800M with 100 percent funded by CDC/HHS. Please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website for more information.

### **3. I want to advertise the availability of these test kits to our parents and school employees. Is there any language I need to ensure is included in the information I provide?**

Yes. You need to ensure the following statement appears on any collateral associated with test kits provided under the SY22-23 K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program:

*This K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program is supported by the CDC of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial Assistance award totaling \$800M with 100 percent funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS or the U.S. Government. Please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website for more information.*

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### **School Health Support Grant**

#### **1. Do we have to participate in the testing program to apply for this grant?**

No. A school system does not have to opt into the K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program to apply for the School Health Support Grant. However, schools must implement a screening testing program to receive School Health Support Grant funds.

#### **2. What are the allowable expenses for these dollars?**

At this time, the current allowable expenses will include (SY22-23):

- PPE (including but not limited to masks, gloves, gowns, and face shields),
- Hygiene and cleaning supplies,
- Portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) fan/filtration systems or other small items that may allow for improved air circulation,
- Public health events that include students and other community members and are aimed at providing opportunities for increased detection and prevention of COVID-19, and
- Vaccine promotion
- CLIA waiver
- Partial funding for staff conducting additional grant-related duties that are outside of the staff's everyday activities, including screening testing, COVID prevention programs, or grant reporting

#### **3. Can these grant dollars be used for payroll purposes or stipends?**

Partial funding for staff conducting additional grant-related duties outside the staff's normal activities including s, including screening testing, COVID prevention programs, or grant reporting, is allowable. Stipends are not allowable.

### **CLIA Waiver**

#### **1. What is a CLIA waiver?**

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A CLIA Certificate of Waiver is a certification that allows a facility to legally examine a person through waived antigen tests to assess health, diagnose, and determine treatment. *In other words, as it pertains to the SY22-23 K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program, it provides certification allowing the administration of COVID-19 rapid antigen tests at school sites by school personnel or vendor staff.*

### **2. Where do we submit the completed CLIA waiver application?**

Once the CLIA waiver [application](#) is completed, applicants need to scan and email the form to their Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) zone; see more information [here](#) (see page 13 for a list of Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) zone email addresses).

**School systems do not need to send their completed CLIA application to TEA or DSHS.**

### **3. Do we need to apply for a CLIA waiver if we only work with vendors that already have CLIA waivers for their antigen tests?**

Please revisit the [Vendor Resource Chart](#) to determine which vendor will require school systems to obtain their own CLIA Waiver.

We strongly suggest all school systems (public and private) apply and secure their own CLIA waivers.

### **4. Do we need to apply for a CLIA waiver if we solely use vendors' staff to administer all tests?**

YES – one IS needed even if only vendor staff is administering antigen tests.

### **5. We received Abbott BinaxNOW rapid antigen tests from DSHS. Do we still need a CLIA waiver?**

Yes, you will need to obtain a CLIA waiver for these tests.

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### 6. Does my school system need a CLIA waiver since the vendors already have CLIA waivers?

All vendors have CLIA waivers for **PCR** tests that are run in their labs. See further details on the [Vendor Resource Chart](#), in which it is stated that Quest is the only vendor that takes care of CLIA waivers for schools. Working with the other vendors requires schools to obtain a CLIA waiver for rapid antigen tests administered on campuses or at district facilities.

### 7. How much does the CLIA waiver application cost, and will the state cover the cost?

The CLIA waiver application cost is \$180. This is an allowable cost under the Grants to Schools program. Schools not participating in the School Health Support Grant can pay for the CLIA waiver out of their budgets or use ESSER funds.

### 8. Where do we submit the CLIA waiver \$180.00 application fee for reimbursement? May we use the money allocated for COVID testing to help pay the \$180 CLIA waiver application fee?

The application fee is an allowable grant expense for reimbursement under the School Health Support Grant.

### 9. How long does a CLIA waiver last?

A CLIA waiver is good for two years.

### 10. Does a school system need to wait until they receive the official CLIA certificate to begin testing?

No. Once you submit your application for a CLIA waiver, you will be provided with a certificate number indicating you have been approved. School systems may not receive the actual certificate immediately due to processing time. Still, **as long as you receive a CLIA waiver number, they can administer rapid antigen tests.**

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### 11. For the CLIA waiver for a school district, who would be the 'Director of the lab' and the 'owner of the lab'?

You can indicate the Test Coordinator's name in this section and/or another designated school system/district official involved with this COVID-19 Testing Program.

### 12. If additional vendors are added with rapid antigen tests not currently provided on the vendor sheet, does the school system need to apply for a new CLIA waiver?

No, school systems with current/active CLIA waivers are not required to submit a new application or notify CMS when adding waived tests. They should contact the CMS zone and inform them of the updates/changes; see more information [here](#) (see page 13 for a list of CMS zone email addresses)

## Standing Delegation Order

### 1. What is a Standing Delegation Order (SDO)?

Standing delegation orders (SDOs) are **written instructions, orders, rules, regulations, or procedures prepared by a physician**. SDOs provide authority and a plan for use with patients presenting themselves before being examined or evaluated by a physician. It also outlines the requirements of both testers and the facility operating under the SDO.

### 2. How long will the SDO for the new testing program last?

The delegation order will remain in effect until the Governor's Disaster Declaration expires or until Dr. John Hellerstedt, M.D rescinds.

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### **3. Does the SDO cover both antigen and PCR testing?**

Yes. The SDO authorizes any school participating in the DSHS/TEA ELC Reopening Schools: Support for Screening Testing and Keeping Schools Operating Safely grant to administer molecular and antigen tests to detect SARS-CoV-2, consistent with the SDO and grant terms. Additional facility and tester requirements are outlined in the SDO.

### **4. What does the SDO require of testers?**

Testers are required to do the following:

- Receive appropriate training to administer the test as defined in the EAU requirements.
- Administer the test consistent with that training.
- Obtain appropriate written consent before administering the test.
- Collect a specimen for a molecular or antigen test approved by the U. S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or authorized by the FDA through Emergency Use Authorization.
- Ensure appropriate personal protective equipment is worn, such as gloves, N95 masks, and eye protection.
- Follow manufacturer-specific and/or laboratory-specific instructions for administering the test.
- Follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines for the performance and processing of antigen tests for SARS-CoV-2



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