



Testing Criteria for SARS-CoV-2 in Western Australia #1

effective from 17 April 2020

New information

- Primary care providers are now able to **request COVID-19 testing**.
- The patient must be referred for the specimen to be collected at either a COVID Clinic, a Chief Health Officer (CHO) approved private pathology COVID collection centre or Commonwealth endorsed GP respiratory clinics.
- WA Testing criteria must be followed by persons requesting or conducting testing for COVID-19.

WA Testing criteria (items 1-4 form the testing criteria)

1. Who to test

- *Consider testing* for COVID-19 where an alternative diagnosis is not more likely in any person with documented fever ($\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$) **OR** recent history of fever (e.g. night sweats, chills) **OR** acute respiratory symptoms.
- Asymptomatic patients **are not to be tested** and testing **should not be performed** for 'clearance', fit for work purposes or return to work purposes (except when ordered or approved by Public Health, e.g. COVID cases who are healthcare workers or other limited situations).

2. Specimen Request information

- All requests must include patient demographic information (name, residential address, date of birth, gender), date of test, clinical reason for testing and location test was taken.

3. Specimen Collection

- Testing can be performed at COVID clinics, Commonwealth endorsed GP respiratory clinics, and CHO approved private pathology COVID collection centres as listed on [Healthy WA](#).
- Regional testing can occur in hospitals, COVID clinics, Commonwealth endorsed GP respiratory clinics, health centres and remote health clinics operated by WACHS, Silver Chain, Aboriginal Medical Services or RFDS.
- Appropriate use of PPE must be considered in all testing locations to ensure adequate protection for staff and patients as well as ensuring preservation of PPE supply. Please see [here](#) for further information. PPE will not be supplied by Department of Health.
- To perform specimen collection, use a single swab for oropharyngeal sampling followed with either nasal (if using rigid shaft swab) or nasopharyngeal (if using flexible shaft) sampling. Self-collection is NOT advised.
- Patients who are displaying **severe** symptoms should be referred to the nearest Emergency Department for assessment and testing (call ahead).

4. Patient advice

- People who are tested for COVID-19 **must** be advised to self-isolate until they receive their COVID-19 result.
- The doctor who orders the test is responsible for ensuring a system is in place for informing the patient of their negative test results.

- If COVID-19 negative, patients can cease self-isolation but should stay home until well **unless** they have returned from interstate/ overseas travel or have been informed they are a close contact of a positive case. In this case they **must** complete 14 days quarantine from last travel or case exposure **even with** a negative result.
- If COVID-19 positive, patients will be contacted by the Department of Health and must self-isolate until they have been provided a clearance letter by the Public Health Operations team.

Reporting

- **Notify suspected COVID-19 cases** by completing the notification form either [ONLINE](#) or by printing out the notification form. Notifying by phone is not necessary.
- The private laboratories must report both positive and negative results.

Dr Clare Huppatz, PHEOC Coordinator

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL DIRECTORATE

Last updated 17 April 2020

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

© Department of Health 2020

health.wa.gov.au