

For schools: Rapid antigen testing program instructions



From 15 November, schools will commence participation in a statewide program of at-home rapid antigen testing of unvaccinated or partially vaccinated primary close contacts (PCCs) to safely enable an earlier return to school.

Eligibility

At-home rapid antigen tests will be offered to unvaccinated students who are primary close contacts (PCCs) as a result of a positive case at school.

The at-home rapid antigen testing is for:

- primary close contacts of school exposures only, it is not for household primary close contacts or community exposures
- unvaccinated and partially vaccinated primary close contacts only. Vaccinated primary close contacts are already able to leave isolation after seven days and a negative PCR test.

As a condition of participation, students must return a negative day six PCR test and then undertake a daily rapid antigen test at home between days eight and 14.

To attend school, they must return a negative test result each day before arriving at school, and report that result no later than 8:30am. Their testing period then finishes on day 14.

On day 13 of quarantine, students must return a negative day 13 PCR test. The child can return to school on day 15.

School obligations

Schools are required to maintain a system to collect, hold and record the information provided by the PCCs.

Rapid antigen test kits

Schools will be provided with rapid antigen tests. These will be free for families. Families do not need to purchase them.

The provision of rapid antigen tests is for the purposes set out in these instructions and not for use beyond that.

Please arrange a time for families to pick up their kits from the school prior to day eight of PCC's quarantine period. Please request families show their negative PCR result at the time they pick up their kit.

Seeking PCC consent to participate

This is an opt-in program for unvaccinated, or partially vaccinated students who are PCCs. It is not for household PCCs (who live in the same household as a person with COVID-19).

You must provide information about the rapid antigen testing program to help parents and carers decide whether their child should participate in this program. By reading the information and the choosing to participate in this program, they are consenting for their child to attend school after completing seven days of quarantine, conditional on getting a standard PCR test on day six of quarantine and returning a negative result and completing a rapid antigen test at home on school days between days eight and 14 each morning. The rapid antigen tests must be done prior to attending school. Students cease daily rapid antigen testing after day 14 subject to negative results.

Program details

Schools will be required to complete the following steps.

- From the list of students identified as a PCC, identify those who are eligible to participate in the program (students who are unvaccinated and partially vaccinated PCCs only). Email the list of PCCs to your Diocesan COVID Response Coordinator. This will trigger an order for RAT kits to be placed for your school by the Diocesan COVID Response Coordinator.
- Send the template letter to parents and carers (populate the section about how they can collect the kits on or around day seven).
- Organise collection of kits from the school on or around day seven.
- Verify that PCC students are not household contacts and have returned a negative day six standard (PCR) test result before providing two kits of rapid antigen tests (10 tests) for each identified PCC student.
- Verify that students are undergoing at-home rapid antigen tests every school day between days 8-14 and reporting the results to schools via the parent reporting e-form.
 - Every school day between days 8-14, check the school's general email address to review all test result notifications to ensure all identified PCC students have submitted a daily test rapid antigen test result before 8:30am.
 - Check that identified PCC students do not attend school until a **negative** rapid test result has been received.
 - Check that identified PCC students who have submitted a **positive** test result have remained at home and are being taken for a standard (PCR) test.
 - Check that identified PCC students who have submitted an **invalid** test result remain at home and are being taken for a standard (PCR) test.
 - Follow up with families where a rapid antigen test result has not been submitted to check if they need assistance.
 - Record this information on the spreadsheet provided. This spreadsheet must be stored securely and retained to be provided on request to Public Health Authorised Officers.

For more information, refer to these resources:

- [Rapid antigen test reporting e-form for parents](#)
- [COVID-19 testing sites](#)
- [What to do if you have COVID-19](#)
- visit [Rapid antigen self-tests](#) on the coronavirus.vic.gov website for more information about self-testing at home
- watch the video: [Test yourself for COVID-19 with our rapid antigen self-test](#)
- read [the Roche rapid antigen test instructions](#).