

Executive Officer Notice: Discontinuation of Publicly Funded COVID-19 PCR Testing in Ontario Pharmacies

Effective June 1, 2026

This notice constitutes a Ministry of Health (ministry) policy, and compliance with all ministry policies is required under section 3.2 of the Health Network System (HNS) Subscription Agreement for Pharmacy Operators.

Summary

- **Effective June 1, 2026**, The COVID-19 PCR testing program in Ontario Pharmacies will be discontinued.
 - PINs associated with COVID-19 PCR testing program **will be deactivated as of June 1, 2026**
 - Testing supplies and/or materials related to PCR Testing that were previously ordered through the PPE Supply Portal can **no longer be ordered as of May 15, 2026**.
- Free rapid antigen tests continue to be available for eligible individuals through pharmacies and primary care providers. PCR testing continues to be available through primary care, high-risk community settings (e.g., long-term care homes) and hospitals.
- Pharmacies can continue to order free rapid antigen tests through the [PPE Supply Portal](#) (requires registration with the [Provincial Antigen Testing Program](#)) for use on patients with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection who would be eligible for COVID-19 treatment if they tested positive. **Note:** Pharmacies cannot submit claims for payment to the ministry for screening individuals for rapid antigen tests (RATs).
 - The distribution of RATs is voluntary and will not be remunerated by the Ontario Government. Publicly funded RATs, if distributed, must be distributed free-of-charge.

Pharmacy Record Requirements

Pharmacists shall keep records consistent with their obligations under the *Pharmacy Act, 1991*, the *Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act* and any instructions or guidelines provided by the Ontario College of Pharmacists (OCP) or the ministry.

For purposes of post-payment verification and compliance with applicable legislation, pharmacy records related to claims for pharmacy services related to COVID-19 testing services must be maintained in a readily available format for the purpose of ministry inspection for a minimum of 10 years from the last recorded pharmacy service provided to the patient, or until 10 years after the day on which the patient reached or would have reached the age of 18 years, whichever is longer. Overpayments due to inappropriate claim submissions are subject to recovery.

Under this ministry policy, the records that must be maintained include all information detailed in the EO Notice: Publicly Funded COVID-19 PCR Testing Services in Ontario Pharmacies, dated August 29, 2025.

Additional Information:

For pharmacies: For inquiries, please call ODB Pharmacy Help Desk at: 1-800-668-6641

For all other Health Care Providers and the Public: Please call ServiceOntario, Infoline at 1-866-532-3161 TTY 1-800-387-5559. In Toronto, TTY 416-327-4282