



## COVID-19 Testing Considerations for Iowa Businesses

Updated 3/10/2020

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) recognizes that many businesses might want to provide diagnostic or serology testing for COVID-19 for their employees. It is important to know that there are some limitations to testing. Diagnostic testing provides information about a single point in time and it's possible that someone could test negative one day and positive the next. Serology testing detects antibodies in the blood but we don't yet know how well those antibodies work to fight the virus and provide immunity. This is why it's important that businesses and individuals continue to follow public health guidance. Additional resources for businesses are shared by [IDPH](#) and [CDC](#).

### **Diagnostic COVID-19 Viral PCR Testing**

Healthcare providers can test patients as they deem appropriate for COVID-19 infection at reference or hospital laboratories. If healthcare providers choose to test a patient through a reference or hospital laboratory, there is no need to call IDPH for approval. The specimens should be sent directly to the reference or hospital laboratory in accordance with the laboratory's guidance. These laboratories typically charge patients for this testing.

The State Hygienic Laboratory (SHL) will perform PCR testing at no cost to the submitter. All qualifying testing criteria has been lifted, so SHL will test all submitted specimens.

In addition, all Iowans can receive PCR testing for COVID-19 at no cost through [Test Iowa](#).

### **Serology (Antibody) Testing for COVID-19**

Healthcare providers can order antibody testing at many clinical and commercial laboratories. In addition, SHL will perform serology (antibody) testing at no cost to the submitter. All qualifying testing criteria for serology testing has also been lifted, so SHL will test all submitted specimens

Iowa businesses wanting to perform PCR or serology testing, should arrange testing for their staff through their occupational health provider and send specimens to [SHL](#) for testing.

Iowa businesses wanting to perform PCR or serology testing outside of the SHL can arrange testing for their staff in coordination with their occupational health provider using a clinical or commercial laboratory. The cost of this testing is the responsibility of the business or the employee. Occupational health providers may identify a local clinical laboratory performing COVID-19 testing. Different test assays may have different collection methods and/or performance characteristics.