

Who has to get tested?

Starting the week of Monday, September 27, 2021, all Mount Sinai Health System (MSHS) employees, hospital staff, faculty members, students, and trainees with:

- An approved exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine mandate determined by the MSHS Exemption Committee, or
- A pending request for an exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine mandate submitted in accordance with MSHS policy

Do I need to enroll in the testing program?

All individuals with approved or pending exemptions must complete the [Informed Consent for COVID-19 Saliva Testing](#) form **by Friday, October 1**, and return it to their line manager. Upon completion of this form, no additional enrollment is required.

When does testing begin?

Testing began on Monday, September 27, 2021. Consent forms for testing and the first tests must be submitted by Friday, October 1, 2021.

How can I withdraw my request for vaccine exemption?

You may choose to withdraw your medical or religious exemption request at any time by [clicking here](#). Should you choose to withdraw, you will be required to receive your first vaccine dose within 7 days and, if a second dose is required, it should be received within 30 days of the first.

How often do I need to be tested?

If you have an approved or pending exemption to the vaccine mandate, you are required to get tested **weekly** for infection with SARS-CoV-2 as a condition of continued employment or matriculation.

How will I be scheduled for testing?

You are responsible for self-scheduling your weekly tests. EHS will have test kits available for you to pick up and return with your saliva specimen. Testing kits can be picked up and dropped off at your local EHS office during its hours of operation.

Please check the [Information on the Mandatory COVID-19 Testing Program](#) web page for hours of EHS operation to pick up testing kits and drop off specimens.

Do I need to test on the same day every week?

The testing week is defined as Sunday through Saturday, and testing through EHS must be completed:

- At least three days apart (e.g. if test is on Friday, the next test **cannot be before** Monday), and
- No more than eight days apart (e.g. if test is on a Monday, the next test **must be on or before** Tuesday of the following week.)

What happens if I am out sick or on PTO for the entire week?

If you are on an authorized leave of absence for the entire work week (e.g., vacation, sick leave, jury duty, bereavement leave), you are not required to undergo testing for that week. It is your responsibility to notify both EHS and your line manager that you will be out of the office for the entire week.

How long do I have to complete my test upon return from PTO/authorized leave that extends beyond an entire work week?

If you miss a week of testing because of extended leave, you are required to submit a test within two business days of your return.

If I work remotely and have an exemption, do I have to be tested?

Employees who work remotely only need to be tested on weeks that they are working onsite. It is the employee's responsibility to notify EHS when they are working remotely.

If I had COVID-19 recently, should I still get tested?

If you received a **conditional** medical exemption due to a recent COVID-19 infection, you do not have to undergo weekly testing. If you are newly diagnosed with COVID-19 and have a positive PCR test positive through the testing program, EHS will provide guidance on the appropriate testing protocol.

What if I have symptoms of COVID-19?

If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of PCR test results, you **must** contact your supervisor immediately and leave the workplace. Additionally, you **must** report the symptoms to EHS through the [EHS COVID Illness REDCap tool](#). To access the tool click the link or scan this QR code. You may not return to work onsite until you are cleared by EHS.



If you are undergoing weekly testing, and test positive for COVID-19, weekly testing will be suspended for up to 90 days from the date that you tested positive. Do not report to work or school if you test positive, and contact EHS to determine duration of isolation. EHS will notify you and your line manager when testing must be restarted.

Where can I test if I do not work near an EHS location?

In addition to the seven EHS sites, EHS has partnered with five Network locations where you can pick up and submit a saliva test kit in Hewlett, Greenlawn, Jackson Heights, Staten Island (Klondike), and Manhasset. Email testingexempt@mountsinai.org for more information on the satellite sites. Employees can also choose to get tested at a location outside MSHS and upload their results to REDCap ([click this link](#)). Any cost associated with testing outside these EHS and Network sites is the employee's responsibility.

If I work nights and/or weekends, can I pick up testing kits and drop off my specimen during my shift?

It is your responsibility to contact EHS if you will not be on site during EHS hours of operations. EHS will work with you to make sure you are compliant with the weekly testing requirements.

If I work at multiple sites, where do I go to be tested?

You can pick up your testing kit and drop off your specimen at any MSHS EHS location during regular EHS business hours.

What happens if I miss my weekly test?

If you miss your weekly test and/or do not submit a specimen within eight days from your last test, your supervisor and Human Resources will be notified; you will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

How does the testing process work?

A home collection PCR saliva test is used for the weekly testing program that you complete on your own time. You will receive a home saliva testing kit from EHS each time you drop off your current

week's specimen. The following week, you will prepare your saliva specimen no more than 12 hours prior to dropping it off at an EHS site, with tests at least three but no more than eight days apart.

Can I eat or drink before taking the test?

You cannot eat or drink anything other than water, smoke or chew gum for at least **30 minutes** before you provide the saliva sample for your test. You cannot brush your teeth or use mouthwash for at least **two hours** before you provide the saliva sample for your test.

If you have eaten, drunk, brushed/washed, chewed gum, or smoked more recently than the recommended time, you will need to wait until enough time has passed to complete the test.

How will I get my results?

Results are typically available 24 to 36 hours after samples are dropped off at EHS. Negative test results will be sent to MyChart for you to view; a member of the EHS team will call you if your test results are positive.

What happens if my PCR test results are positive?

EHS will contact you if your PCR results are positive. You will need to immediately leave work (if you are contacted during your work shift) and self-isolate for 10 days. During this time you will have to use accumulated PTO or other leave time if available as appropriate. You may work remotely if previously approved by your manager. You may not return to work onsite until you are cleared by EHS. Weekly testing will be suspended for up to 90 days.

Can I be tested outside of EHS if I prefer?

If you do not live and/or work near an MSHS EHS site, you can choose to be tested weekly outside of MSHS and report your results to EHS. If you test outside of EHS, you are responsible for any costs related to testing.

If I choose to be tested outside of EHS what type of tests are accepted?

With few exceptions, MSHS will accept all SARS-CoV-2 PCR (NAAT) tests that have received an EUA (emergency use authorization) from the FDA and are performed at a CLIA-approved lab. Tests currently **NOT** accepted include: Abbott IDnow SARS-CoV-2 Point of Care PCR; rapid antigen tests such as the Abbott Binax Now and the BD Veritor Plus Antigen test.

If I choose to get tested outside of EHS, how often do I need to get tested?

Testing must be completed and submitted **weekly** to EHS. The testing week is defined as Sunday through Saturday and testing must be completed:

- At least three days apart (e.g. if test is on Friday, the next test **cannot be before** Monday), and
- No more than seven days apart (e.g. if test is on a Monday, the next test **must be on or before** Monday of the following week.)

If I get tested outside of EHS how do I report the results?

You are required to upload a copy of the test results into the [Mandatory Testing REDCap tool](#) within 24 hours of your receiving the results.