

## New Mexico Schools COVID-19 Testing Program



Dear School and District Leaders,

On behalf of the New Mexico Schools COVID-19 Testing Program, congratulations on the completion of the 2021-2022 school year. We know this was a difficult year for our school communities; we are grateful for the staff who implemented and maintained testing programs to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in our schools.

The purpose of this letter is to ensure you are aware of program changes in the coming year. We know that it is difficult to plan in an ever-changing environment. Please note that weekly staff surveillance testing remains required. Schools and districts may choose to implement their own Test to Stay program for their school community while still offering in-person learning. For the latest information, visit <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/back-to-school-guidance/>.

### **Full-Service Testing**

No-cost testing through Premier Medical Group (PMG) and Curative will no longer be directly supported through this program as of June 24, 2022. If you wish to continue using a full-service testing vendor, you may engage in a separate contract with these or other contractors. You may request reimbursement from your Direct Funding allocation for any fees or costs associated with testing services or test kit orders. Please feel free to reach out to your PMG regional manager or Curative representative to discuss testing options for next year.

### **School-Administered Testing Services**

Many schools and districts have been administering their own testing programs throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are a few options for acquiring test kits now that they are no longer available through this program. Schools may:

- Contract with another vendor or manufacturer to receive test kits and testing supplies. One list of vendors is available from the Open and Safe Schools website at this link: <https://www.openandsafeschools.org/partners#Testing-Partners>. These tests are reimbursable through the Direct Funding component of this program.
- Request to receive test kits through the Federal SVI program. In order to qualify, a school or district must be located in an area with a high [social vulnerability index](#). The link to request tests in New Mexico is at [www.nmschoolscovidtesting.com/order](http://www.nmschoolscovidtesting.com/order).
- Direct families to use the federal Over-the-Counter [testing program](#).

Your CLIA Certificate of Waiver will last for two years after it was issued. To renew, please contact the Division of Health Improvement at [CLIA.DHI@state.nm.us](mailto:CLIA.DHI@state.nm.us). Alternatively, all schools and districts in New Mexico may request to be added to the CLIA CoW from the Four Corners Regional Educational Cooperative. More information is available at [www.nmrec1.org/clia](http://www.nmrec1.org/clia).

Your school or district will still be subject to federal regulations regarding the administration of tests. For more information, visit <https://nmschoolscovidtesting.com/school-administered-rapid-antigen/>.

### **Direct Funding**

In response to your feedback, unspent funds from the Direct Funding component of the New Mexico Schools COVID-19 Testing program in SY21-22 can carry over into SY22-23.

Similar to the 2021-2022 year, you will receive an award notification and request for signature from “HelloSign” via email to your designated Authorized Signer. This letter should arrive by July 18, 2022. If you do not receive it, please contact [info@nmschoolscovidtesting.com](mailto:info@nmschoolscovidtesting.com). The award letter will contain new information about allowable expenses and processes for the upcoming year.

These funds are available to strengthen and support your school health services infrastructure and may be used as you see fit to prevent, mitigate, and reduce the consequences of COVID infections in your schools through testing. Please note that, unlike SY21-22, you *will* be able to request reimbursement for test kits and testing vendor services.

### **Technical Support**

For technical assistance on your testing program, we recommend contacting your School Health Advocate. Their information is as follows:

- **Northeast:** Kate LaRose, [Katherine.LaRose@state.nm.us](mailto:Katherine.LaRose@state.nm.us)
- **Northwest:** Rhonda Miranda, [rhonda.miranda@state.nm.us](mailto:rhonda.miranda@state.nm.us)
- **Metro:** Rhonda Miranda, [rhonda.miranda@state.nm.us](mailto:rhonda.miranda@state.nm.us)
- **Southeast:** Maricelda Pisana, [Maricelda.Pisana@state.nm.us](mailto:Maricelda.Pisana@state.nm.us)
- **Southwest:** Crista Pierce, [Crista.Pierce@state.nm.us](mailto:Crista.Pierce@state.nm.us)

We will be hosting a series of Q&As throughout the summer on the following dates at 2 p.m.: June 23, July 21, August 4 and 18. You may register here: [www.tinyurl.com/elcsummercheckin](http://www.tinyurl.com/elcsummercheckin).

For questions about this program, please contact [info@nmschoolscovidtesting.com](mailto:info@nmschoolscovidtesting.com).

Thank you for your support of this program. We wish you a safe and restful summer break.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
*James Farmer*  
4315E39EDB1E45F...

Jim Farmer  
Director  
Office of School and Adolescent Health  
New Mexico Department of Health

DocuSigned by:  
*Gregory Frostad*  
96DA8683D92942F...

Greg Frostad  
Director  
Safe and Health Schools Bureau  
New Mexico Public Education Department