New Zealand Government

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
MANATŪ HAUORA

COVID-19

Interim Guidance Framework for the Provision of Rapid Antigen Screening for COVID-19 in Clinical and Non-Clinical Settings

November 2021

This document provides guidance for Rapid Antigen COVID-19 Screening in clinical and non-clinical sites in New Zealand during the COVID-19 response.

These interim guidelines recognise that individual facilities will need to tailor their response to local patterns of disease and available resources. For those industries and other non-health care settings this document provides high level guidance.

These interim guidelines should be used to support pandemic planning for the COVID-19 response.

Interim Guidance Framework for the Provision of Rapid Antigen

Purpose

This Framework has been developed to guide the delivery of high quality, safe and appropriate rapid antigen screening for COVID-19 in non-clinical and clinical settings in order to:

- Support the uptake of frequent COVID-19 testing in high priority settings
- Increase the proportion of people who can access frequent testing
- Reduce the number of people with undiagnosed COVID-19 infection in priority settings.

The Director General of Health has confirmed that, where the requirement for a rapid antigen test applies, of a kind approved by the Director General of Health, the approved process is set out in this document under the Rapid Antigen Testing Indicative Process.

Background

New Zealand has implemented a range of measures to promptly identify cases of COVID-19 infection and prevent transmission of COVID-19 in New Zealand, including rapid antigen screening and conventional laboratory (PCR) testing.

Should a person in New Zealand be confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, the Ministry of Health and regional Public Health Units have procedures in place to identify people they have been in close contact with. Those people are provided with advice about self-isolation to minimise spread of infection.

The Government is committed to working with industry, aged care facilities, and other health providers to introduce rapid antigen screening, to mitigate against outbreaks in workplaces and health care settings. Where application of rapid antigen testing is not appropriate to undertake at a particular site, a range of other screening options can be explored to detect COVID-19. This includes PCR testing, point of care PCR testing and highly pooled saliva/PCR screening.

Rapid antigen screening is another tool to support the pandemic response but does not replace the usual mask-wearing, hand hygiene and distancing rules that need to remain in place, as well as the need for vaccination and ongoing education of the community. This includes not coming to work or school if unwell, isolating if instructed to by the local medical officer of health and, where necessary, verbal screening of people to ensure they have not attended a venue of concern.

The rapid antigen test is quick and easy. Typically, it involves a nasal swab (using a cotton bud-like instrument) that is then placed into a chemical solution and the solution is tested on the receptacle, which displays a result within 10-15 minutes. Further information is detailed within this guidance.

Rapid antigen screening can be performed onsite in selected workplaces and health care settings under appropriate supervision to ensure advice is available on the process for testing and how the result is interpreted.

Rapid Antigen Test documentation sets out the conditions that must be followed in relation to the nature of supervision and training that is required to undertake testing.

Please review these Frequently Asked Questions on the Ministry of Health site as they cover issues such as the role of the health professional, training of staff, and models of testing supervision

Rapid antigen screening is one pathway to increase testing for COVID-19; particularly for people who reside and/or work in a priority setting or regional traffic light risk area of high vulnerability. The addition of rapid antigen screening to the mix of options increases access to screening for COVID-19 as well as provides extra convenience to people who are required to test more frequently.

When rapid antigen screening may be appropriate

Rapid antigen tests performed at frequent intervals have been used internationally and in New Zealand industries for some time as an indicative screen for COVID-19 in their asymptomatic employees.

Frequent rapid antigen screening can reduce the number of new infections in the community, especially amongst people who do not show any symptoms. To maximise the public health benefit, screening individuals two to three times per week is recommended.

The benefits of rapid antigen screening are relative to the amount of disease that is present in a population (prevalence), with greater benefit from settings with high prevalence. At low levels of prevalence, the risk of having a false-positive test results will exceed the public health benefit.

Although these tests have some limitations when compared to the nose and throat swabs undertaken with a laboratory PCR test, rapid antigen screening can be performed easily and onsite with results available within minutes.

The choice of target populations and how tests are performed are important considerations. Mass screening in samples of the population alongside contact tracing can focus the containment effort in affected communities and can assist with relaxing lockdown restrictions.

When rapid antigen screening is not appropriate

If a person has flu-like symptoms or symptoms associated with COVID-19, or is a close or casual contact for COVID-19, rapid antigen screening should not be used, and the person should be directed immediately for a laboratory-based PCR test for COVID-19. The location of PCR testing sites across New Zealand can be found **here** or **here** .

Service Model

Only rapid antigen test devices approved by the Ministry of Health can be used for COVID-19 testing in New Zealand.

Please note that in line with current directives, self-testing at home remains prohibited. Rapid antigen testing must be performed in conjunction with a health professional who can conduct or oversee the performance of the testing and provide immediate clinical advice if required. See "Supervision of Testing and Workforce" section of this Framework for more information.

Use of rapid antigen tests

Rapid antigen testing for COVID-19 should be used as a screening test and is not suitable for use as a diagnostic test. Rapid antigen screening should be conducted two to three times per week with individuals in identified priority settings.

A person who receives a positive rapid antigen test result needs to have an urgent PCR test on a second collection to determine whether COVID-19 is in fact present.

When a person has a positive rapid antigen test result, they must isolate and be directed to a CTC or General Practice for an urgent PCR. The CTC or the General Practice must be notified ahead of time to ensure appropriate infection prevention and controls can be put in place.

The person with a positive rapid antigen test result must remain in isolation until a definitive result is available.

Where a person declines a rapid antigen test at their place of work, then it is recommended that they do not enter the site until they can provide evidence of a COVID-19 test in the past 72 hours.

Information on what supports for people who live in New Zealand and cannot earn an income because they must self-isolate or quarantine or are caring for someone with COVID-19 can be found **here.** We suggest that this is a discussion between an employer and employee.

Sites for rapid antigen testing

Rapid antigen testing is designed to be done in a range of sites including non-clinical and clinical settings such as construction sites, educational institutions, fixed and temporary community-based sites, aged care residential facilities, pharmacies and commercial businesses such as logistics sites.

The Ministry of Health has established guidance for workplaces conducting rapid antigen screening

onsite. The Ministry of Health sets out regulations that apply to rapid antigen test kits and conditions of supply through the Principles of Supply as in Appendix 1.

General procedures for how to use a testing device are set out on the Appendices of this document. The Ministry of Health recommends following the manufacturer's instructions for the kits purchased as individual devices may vary. Procedure examples provided by the Ministry of Health are as indication of how the test kits are used generally.

Conditions for the provision of safe and high-quality rapid antigen screening

Provision of safe and high-quality rapid antigen screening requires that:

- The testing environment is fit for purpose. All equipment is in good working order, all procedures
- are carried out accurately, efficiently and safely and the wellbeing and confidentiality of the
- individual is respected, especially in relation to test result.
- The Standard Operating Procedure set out below for rapid antigen screening in New Zealand is adopted by sites providing rapid antigen screening for COVID-19 (inclusive of clinical and non-clinical settings).
- The Standard Operating Procedure includes:
  - establishing appropriate clinical governance
  - the standard workplace health and safety assessment
  - information on administering a test and delivering a test result
  - establishing a mechanism for confirmatory testing for individuals who receive a positive test result
  - reporting of data to Regional Public Health and the Ministry of Health if requested.
- All health professionals and persons under their supervision must be trained in the correct use of the device and the interpretation of the test results. A health professional remains responsible for the conduct of testing and must be available to provide assistance or advice as required to persons under their supervision in the correct use of the device and the interpretation of the test results (either in person, or available on the phone or by videoconference).

Standard Operating Procedure for the Provision of Rapid Antigen Screening for COVID-19 in Clinical and Non-Clinical Settings

OVERVIEW

Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening sites can be established to mitigate against outbreaks in workplaces, aged care facilities and healthcare settings as well as increasing local testing capacity. This document provides guidance on how to establish a COVID-19 screening site safely and efficiently during the COVID-19 response.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of establishing a rapid antigen COVID-19 screening site include:

- To promote early detection of community-acquired COVID-19 cases by maintaining a testing schedule for individuals every two to three days; and
- To support and encourage workers in industry to get tested by making testing access easy and convenient.

Establishing Rapid Antigen Testing COVID-19 screening sites can provide increased testing capacity to areas of need, promote testing in areas with low testing rates and to mitigate against outbreaks in priority settings including workplaces, aged care facilities and some communities.

Rapid antigen screening is one pathway to increase testing for COVID-19; particularly for people who reside and/or work in a priority setting under the COVIC-19 Protection Framework (Traffic Lights). The addition of rapid antigen screening to the mix of options in New Zealand increases access to screening for COVID-19 as well as provides extra convenience to people who are required to test more frequently.

LOCATION

Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening sites are located on a safe and easily accessible site.
The person responsible for each site will need to determine the suitability of the proposed Rapid Antigen COVID-19 testing location to ensure it is both safe and easily accessible. It will also need to be sign posted so workers can find it easily and are appropriately spaced while waiting to be tested.
Signage and instructions about social distancing, checking in and checking out and mask-wearing can

be downloaded from the **Unite COVID-19 website** to assist with consistent messaging.

If it is determined that a location may be suitable for a Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening site, a site checklist (see Appendices) should be completed to ensure other relevant factors have been considered prior to set-up. The chosen site should be monitored and checked daily for any environmental changes.

The key questions below should be considered when determining the suitability of the site.

- Is there access to utilities including power, wi-fi and water?
- Is the site mobility friendly (if required)?
- Is the site well-lit?
- Consider security of any equipment/structures that may be left unattended after-hours.
- Are there staff amenities within proximity including a toilet (both male and female)?
- Does the site offer weather protection e.g. ability to erect awning or marquee for sun, wind and rain during testing?

MANAGEMENT OF SITES

Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening sites are run safely and efficiently.

The person responsible will need to ensure site governance is established and communicated to workers and any health professionals and supervisors overseeing the testing process.

The key questions below should be considered for safe and effective management of site staff who are undertaking and supervising the testing process.

- Is there an agreed orientation process for all health professional and supervising staff to the site?
- Is their sufficient staff mix to ensure wait times for workers and students is minimised and allowance for staff breaks?

The ratio of health professionals or supervisors to people under their supervision will vary from site to site depending on the size and complexity of the site as well as the experience of the staff in performing the test.

- Are all health professional and supervising staff aware of the need to correctly use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)? Is enough PPE available including medical masks, gloves and a safe disposal process for waste materials?
- Is their suitable hand sanitising stations for workers set up to avoid congestion?
- Are QR codes clearly established to assist with the check in and check out process and spaced sufficiently to avoid congestion?

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Provide Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening in a culturally safe and appropriate manner.

COVID-19 testing is a core strategy in limiting the spread of COVID-19 across New Zealand. It is vital that all parts of the population can access testing when appropriate. With regards to Rapid Antigen COVID-19 testing, vulnerable populations may include Māori and Pacific communities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and those who may have mobility issues or other special needs.

The key questions below should be considered to support Rapid Antigen COVID-19 testing for vulnerable populations.

- Is there an opportunity for members of the Aboriginal health workforce to be trained to perform swabs?
- Are testing sites in the area mobility friendly? Particularly where students and workers are known to have mobility issues.
- Have opportunities to promote COVID-19 testing within existing health activities for vulnerable populations been considered and implemented?
- Is translated material available as required to assist with messaging?

SIGNAGE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The screening clinic has clear signage indicating the Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening site's location and instructions for users whilst on site.

The person responsible will need to ensure planning of appropriate signage to indicate the location of the site and any other relevant information. Advice for workers ahead of screening should be considered. An example of messaging for individuals is listed here, together with supporting fact sheets for industry.

Depending on the needs of the local community, signage in alternate languages should also be considered.

Signage should be weatherproof and secured to objects with consideration of work health and safety principles.

Signage and instructions about social distancing, checking in and checking out and mask-wearing can be accessible from the **Unite Against COVID-19 website** to assist with consistent messaging.

General materials are also available.

The key questions below should be considered when developing and publishing communication or signage.

- Has the location and hours of the site been communicated to the target audience?

- Do workers have access to instructions as to site process?
- Have information brochures for individuals been developed and distributed?
- Has appropriate signage been set up upon entry to the site?

EQUIPMENT, CONSUMABLE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

Rapid Antigen COVID-19 screening sites and site staff have adequate access to identified resources and re-supply pathways and are aware of escalation pathways.

The person responsible will need to determine the anticipated demand for stock and the logistics for safe storage and re-supply of both test kits and supporting materials like PPE. Staff working on site should be familiar with the location of stock and stock ordering procedures. For publicly funded health care workers access to rapid Antigen Test kits is available through HealthCare Logistics. Please refer to the Principles of Supply (Appendix 1). Businesses can access and secure Rapid Antigen Tests through approved providers.

Please visit the **Ministry of Health website** to find information on approved Rapid Antigen Tests in New Zealand .

Waste management on site should be considered and planned.

Used rapid antigen test kits are considered medical waste, so need to be disposed of safely.

Test and swab disposal will depend on the volume of testing being conducted and whether the kits used for the rapid antigen test returned a positive or negative result.

For PPE, swabs, and kits from negative rapid antigen tests:

- a **biohazard bin** is recommended for large volumes at a single site where rapid antigen testing is being undertaken frequently and on a continuing basis; or
- a **sealed zip lock bag placed in a refuse bin** is suitable for small companies or one-off testing.

If the rapid antigen test was positive, the swab and kit should be put in a zip lock bag and disposed of with normal rubbish.

- Used PPE is considered general waste (materials are not recyclable) and do not require special disposal arrangements, however, it is recommended that waste be disposed of safely and in sealed rubbish containers. Regular emptying of rubbish containers should be undertaken to avoid overflow or the need to touch used materials again, once disposed of.
- Is there an agreed process for removing waste safely from the site?

TESTING SITE OPERATIONS

Registration processes, privacy concerns and traffic movement within the site are clear and effective.

Information should be available to workers that use the site to inform them of their privacy and how personal information will be used.

Where the Ministry of Health seeks any testing data to evaluate the program, no personal health data is used without consent.

The key questions below should be considered when documenting and communicating the operational processes of the site.

- Have flow pathways been clearly mapped out and communicated to staff to ensure there is no congestion in testing sites?
- Does the flow of traffic take into consideration the need for physical distancing at all times – is this clearly signposted/documented?
- Have site registration processes (such as QR code check in and check out) been clearly documented and communicated to workers and test site staff?
- Have considerations been made as to how site operations should change during periods of surge activity? Have these processes been agreed?
- Are new staff provided with site processes and protocols during orientation?

SUPERVISION OF TESTING AND WORKFORCE

Supervision is a key responsibility for controlling the risks to worker safety and welfare that may arise while providing a testing service. Supervision of testing goes to the professional conduct of a health professional in a healthcare setting and resides with the nominated person responsible in a business of industry.

Once appropriately trained in the correct use of the device, persons under the supervision (either in person, or available on the phone or by videoconference) of a health professional or a nominated and suitably trained industry supervisor may perform the test or observe the test.

The relevant health professional in a healthcare setting is responsible for supervision of testing and is required to ensure all people performing the test (including sample collection, performing tests and interpreting test results) under their supervision are appropriately trained in all matters related to good testing practice, including:

- infection control practices, including assessment of any site-specific work, health and safety risks;
- the collection of samples, or where applicable the supervision of self-collection in order to verify
- patient/healthcare worker identification, sample collection, test performance and test results;
- the correct use of the device and interpretation of test results;
- protocols for recording results and requirements for notification of positive results;
- protocols and referral processes for recollection and confirmatory testing; and

- protocols for reporting any problems or adverse events associated with performance of the test

to Medsafe.

A health professional remains responsible for the conduct of testing and must be available to provide assistance or advice as required to persons under their supervision in the correct use of the device and the interpretation of the test results (either in person, or available on the phone or by videoconference).

The ratio of health professionals to people under their supervision will vary from site to site depending on the size and complexity of the site as well as the experience of the staff in performing the test.

Employers and industries implementing rapid antigen testing screening for their workforce may engage a third party provider to manage this process.

Where samples are self-collected by individuals, the collection must be supervised to verify patient identification, sample collection, test performance and the interpretation of test results.

Support Workers

In addition to health professionals and trained staff engaged to oversee the testing process, and dependent on numbers of workers requiring testing in a period, organisations should consider support services including a concierge function and/or COVID safe marshal for logistics and crowd control and administration staff to support the process.

MANAGEMENT OF RESULTS

– Positive Results

In line with the Rapid Antigen Testing Indicative Process, a person who receives a positive rapid antigen test result needs to have an urgent PCR test on a second collection to determine whether COVID-19 is in fact present.

When a person has a positive rapid antigen test result, they must be referred to a CTC or general practitioner for an urgent PCR.

The person with a positive rapid antigen test result must remain in isolation until a definitive result is available. People with a confirmed positive test will have their results reported immediately to the PHU in line with high-risk results procedures.

– Negative Results

In line with the Rapid Antigen Testing Indicative Process, where a person receives a negative result, they must have the test result registered with testing supervisor; the person can then check out of rapid antigen testing site and go to their work site.

Individuals must continue to follow the latest health advice and restrictions in their area.

If individuals develop any symptoms, even if mild, they must immediately get a standard COVID-19 test and isolate until they get a negative result.

Appendices

1. Principles of Supply – Rapid Antigen Test
2. Testing clinic site checklist
3. Training materials and link
4. Supervisor Competency Assessment Checklist
5. Supporting communications material

Appendix 1

Principles of Supply: Rapid Antigen Tests

Overview

Rapid Antigen Test (RATs) kits for New Zealand's COVID-19 response is sourced and distributed as part of a nationally coordinated approach, managed by the Ministry of Health. A nationally coordinated approach enables supply directly to health and disability sector groups that need RATs and overall stocktaking and management of supplies at a national level.

The Ministry's COVID-19 Central Supply services New Zealand's publicly funded health care organisations that contribute to New Zealand's response to COVID-19.

Organisations register for the online Portal via Health Care Logistics. Once registered, organisations can place orders for RATs to be delivered to you. Only one authorised person can access the portal per organisation or healthcare service.

Ask the identified people who will place orders to go to **http://healthppe.org/** and register to the site (see image below). An existing email can be used to create a new username. A new password will be sent to the email address when the new user has been created. If you have any trouble with this, HCL can support.

RATs distributed from the COVID-19 Central Supply has gone through a robust quality assurance process with verified documentation and product certification. Products are approved and authorised for use in New Zealand. These clinical, science and laboratory groups consider all of the evidence to make informed decisions about whether products are fit for purpose in localised settings.

How the Ministry makes decisions around RATs supply

RATs from the COVID-19 Central Supply is provided to publicly funded health and disability organisations in accordance with the direction set by Ministry's COVID-19 surveillance and testing strategy and the current COVID-19 response settings.

The Ministry reviews and approves RATs for import and use. The Ministry reviews and approved domestic health and disability sector orders for RATs by considering evidence of an organisation's requirements, including the number of staff, patients, residents or visitors and COVID-19 average weekly information on settings.

We will review holdings regularly and replenish supply of RATs as required.

Types of RATs held in Central Supply

The COVID-19 PPE Central Supply is comprised of 3 brands of RATS currently:

- Roche – SARS -CoV-2 Rapid Antigen Test
- Abbott – Panbio COVID-19 Ag Rapid Test Device
- Pantonic Health – CareStart COVID-19 Antigen rapid test

You should also follow each RATS instructions and guidance for the use that are applicable to you.

Remember that RATs is just one measure to identify and prevent transmission of COVID-19. To continue to protect yourself and those you interact with you should follow basic hygiene measures including remembering to:

- Get Vaccinated
- Wear appropriate level of PPE and face coverings
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or by covering your mouth and nose with tissues
- Put used tissues in the bin or a bag immediately
- Wash your hands with soap and water often (for at least 20 seconds) or use hand sanitiser when washing your hands is not practical
- Avoid close contact with people if you feel unwell or if others are unwell
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth if your hands are not clean
- Clean surfaces regularly.

RATs Principles of Supply and eligibility

The Ministry of Health has developed Principles of Supply to guide the distribution of RATs from the COVID-19 PPE Central Supply.

Under this system:

- district health boards (DHBs), managed isolation and quarantine facilities, border services, general practices and urgent care, pharmacies, aged residential care, disability support services and home and community support services, receive RATs directly from the central supply in line with the principles for supply
- private providers use their own networks to source and purchase RATs.

The current guidance for the supply of RATs is outlined in the table below. Note that there will be exceptions to the guidance, and the overarching principle is that RATs will be available to those who require it to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 within their health and disability settings. Any situations where organisations are being supplied outside of the matrix will continue for the time being. If you have any queries about RATs supply and distribution email COVID.HealthSupplyChain@health.govt.nz.

Principles for supply

- The Central Supply enables RATs to be sourced to meet demand from essential publicly funded services that are in scope.
- RATs for non-publicly funded services should be sourced from commercial or retail suppliers.
- The ability to pay is not a consideration in prioritising distribution from the central supply.
- RATs must be used according to the relevant guidance and processes published by the Ministry, and any orders from providers must be reasonable, evidence based and proportionate to demand.
- In times of increased demand, decision-making criteria are used to understand where RATs are to be distributed first, based on the following:
  - the type of service that requires the RATs (criticality of the service, e.g. hospitals, CBAC)
  - vulnerability of the community for whom the service is intended (high risk populations)
  - the level of inventory: stock on order, on hand and consumption rates (manage risk with early identification of supply shortage)
  - urgency of need across the country (balancing competing demand).

Category	Service	Criteria	Guidance	Assessment
A	Critical essential services – Tertiary & Secondary services	Providing direct services with public patients and returnees where hierarchies of control may not be easily observed and surveillance is required for Healthcare workers and certain patients entering the setting.	Includes DHB healthcare services, ambulance services, diagnostic services, select non-health services (Customs, managed isolation facilities and managed isolation quarantine facilities). Orders must be supported with appropriate usage and forecast information.	Access to RATs with operational plan in place for use approved. In a **Red** or **Orange** Traffic light area – RATS will be provided for use at no charge., when supported by robust evidence of demand and forecasting information. At **Green** there will be no RATs supply unless specifically deemed necessary.

B	Essential community health services that are publicly funded	Providing services into homes and unable to practise physical distancing Recommended or required to regularly test to prevent the potential for transmission	Includes aged residential care, disability care services, lead maternity carers and home and community support services. This includes Māori and Pacific health and disability providers. Need to confirm the purpose for which they are ordering RATs and that any orders are proportionate to demand.	Access to RATs with operational plan in place for use approved. In a **Red** or **Orange** Traffic light area – RATS will be provided for use at no charge., when supported by robust evidence of demand and forecasting information. At **Green** there will be no RATs supply.
C	Core essential health services that are publicly funded	Providing a core medical service to the public, and unable to practise standard transmission and surveillance protocols	Includes general practice, urgent care, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, registered and publicly funded school nurses etc. Need to confirm the purpose for which they are ordering in line with IPC guidance and measures, and that any orders are proportionate to demand.	Access to RATs with operational plan in place for use approved. In a **Red** or **Orange** Traffic light area – RATS will be provided for use at no charge., when supported by robust evidence of demand and forecasting information. At **Green** there will be no RATs supply.
D	Non-essential health services	Unable to put in practical physical distancing measures or are working at the public interface.	Includes non-essential allied health services, funeral directors, chiropractors etc. RATs should be sourced from commercial or retail suppliers. Ministry is a supplier of last resort.	NIL unless with exemption

E	Non-health essential services	Inability to practise physical distancing. Either non-public facing but staff that can be directed, or workers who require RATs for BAU work.	Includes plumbers, electricians etc who go into homes, waste management etc. RATs should be sourced from commercial or retail suppliers. Ministry is a supplier of last resort.	NIL unless with exemption

Appendix 2

Testing clinic site checklist

ITEM COMPLETED (tick / cross) DATE:

SITE REQUIREMENTS	Tick (Yes)	Cross (No)
1. Connection to essential utilities		
2. Clear signage to identify clinic location		
3. Signage to indicate process / directions to individuals including entry exit, registration location etc.		
4. Adequate space for QR code registration space outside or immediately inside building allowing for adequate social distancing		
5. Adequate space to allow social distancing when lining up prior to receiving test (1m between people clearly marked / indicated)		
6. Adequate space to maintain social distancing in entire area		
7. Signage to reinforce social distancing requirements		
8. Wheelchair access – where required		
9. Accessible toilets with social distancing signage		
10. Undercover wet weather area (allowing for social distancing)		
11. One-way flow i.e. one entry and one exit		
12. Adequate ventilation for enclosed spaces		
SCREENING REQUIREMENTS	**Tick (Yes)**	**Cross (No)**
13. Privacy considerations		

14. Bench or table for storage		
15. Garbage bin – secured and emptied regularly		
16. Adequate numbers of tables and chairs for testing staff (allowing for social distancing)		
PPE REQUIREMENTS	**Tick (Yes)**	**Cross (No)**
17. PPE for workforce (medical mask, gloves)		
18. Masks for support staff		
19. Masks for all individuals awaiting test (to sit at registration tables)		
20. Signage to reinforce appropriate mask use		
EQUIPMENT & ICT REQUIREMENTS	**Tick (Yes)**	**Cross (No)**
21. Tape to mark social distancing requirements		
22. Hand sanitiser for registration space and waiting areas		
23. Information sheets for patients/employees		
24. Wifi for QR codes and downloading information;		
25. Mobile range to make calls to PHU if required for positive test results		
26. Stationery		
STAFF INSTRUCTIONS	**Tick (Yes)**	**Cross (No)**
27. Staff orientated to site and workflows		
Staff provided with re-stocking of kit supplies process		

APPENDIX 3

Training materials and links

A range of training materials have been developed by the Ministry of Health to support rapid antigen testing in clinical and non-clinical settings:

1. **Handwashing and Drying Poster**
2. **Handrub (Sanitiser) Guideline Poster**
3. **COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Testing Guide**
4. **CareStart™ - COVID-19 Antigen RDT - Instructional Video**
5. **Roche SARS-CoV-2 Rapid Antigen Test: Covid-19 Testing**
6. **Abbott Panbio™ COVID-19 Ag Rapid Test Device Nasal Swab Procedure**

Appendix 4

Supervisor Competency Assessment Checklist

Element	Operator must understand the rationale and procedural task	Trainee	Supervisor
1. Site preparation	i. Prepares necessary equipment and supplies ii. Supplies and inventory are adequate for site iii. Checks expiry dates of tests and accessories iv. Ensures test and supply inventory is managed and records maintained	☐	☐
2. Workplace safety	i. Site design is fit for purpose ii. Privacy aspects are adequate iii. Understands site workflow iv. Hand washing / sanitising between clients v. No eating, drinking, smoking permitted on site vi. Personal protective equipment vii. Workplace (surface and waste) decontamination procedures viii. Disinfectant management/preparation procedures ix. Accident/incident reporting x. Site emergency procedures (fire, evacuation) xi. Waste disposal procedures (for clinical waste)	☐	☐
3. Worker consultation	i. Welcomes individual ii. Introduces self and designation iii. Checks correct client information	☐	☐
4. Communication	i. Communicates effectively ii. Uses pleasant and respectful manner, uses language appropriate to client's level of understanding, uses open body language	☐	☐

5. Professional conduct	i. Understands and operates within the professional conduct of the responsible service ii. Maintains professional boundaries and does not disclose personal information - maintains confidentiality iii. Maintains a professional and friendly demeanour	☐	☐
6. Immediate management plan – performance of test	i. Offers rapid antigen test ii. Validates test overall result iii. Completes Result Worksheet iv. Arranges ongoing management – where applicable	☐	☐

Appendix 5

Supporting communications materials

1. Information for employers and employees
2. Information for Small Business
3. Ministry of Health Rapid Antigen Test information

COVID-19 rapid antigen testing and screening in workplaces

Information for employers

Benefits of rapid testing

Rapid antigen tests are important screening tools to help you protect your employees, customers, their families and the community where they live.

Not everyone who has COVID-19 will show symptoms. Studies suggest that people without symptoms may still cause COVID-19 transmission in a significant number of cases. You can help reduce the risk of outbreaks by regularly testing and screening your employees.

Regular rapid antigen tests provide an extra layer of defence against the spread of the virus, along with COVID-safe behaviours such as frequent handwashing, physical distancing, wearing a mask and vaccination

To ensure more workers have quick and easy access to COVID-19 rapid tests, Ministry of Health is supporting industry partners to provide rapid antigen tests for use as part of workplace screening initiatives. Rapid antigen tests are quick, easy and safe. They provide results in 10 to 15 minutes.

Rapid antigen test kit access and conditions

The use of rapid antigen tests as a screening tool is another layer of protection. It's not a substitute for testing requirements set out in legislation or Health Order(s) or other public health measures such as mask wearing, hand hygiene, getting tested if you have any symptoms, physical distancing, proper ventilation and getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Employers can implement rapid antigen testing screening for their workforce. The Ministry of Health has established guidance for workplaces conducting rapid antigen screening. Industry partners who provide rapid antigen testing for workers need to:

- procure authorised rapid antigen test kits as prescribed by the Director General Health
- screen employees according to the guidelines in line with advice from the Ministry of Health
- collect and report on usage if requested by the Ministry of Health

Industry partners may be requested to provide information collected to help streamline and improve the rapid antigen testing process.

When a person has a standard nasopharyngeal based PCR COVID-19 test, following a detection, indeterminant or invalid rapid antigen test, they must self-isolate (home quarantine) until they receive a negative result or until advised by Public Health.

As the initial pilot progresses, the Ministry of Health may continue to provide guidance to support industry in implementing rapid antigen testing.

Information for employees

Why rapid antigen testing is being implemented in your workplace?

Your employer has implemented a regular workplace screening initiative to protect you, your family, your colleagues and customers.

Screening employees at least twice a week can help to quickly identify and isolate those who have COVID-19, including those who don't have any symptoms. Early identification helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in your workplace and in your community.

Rapid antigen tests detect proteins from the virus that causes COVID-19. They're quick and easy to use. Results are provided in 10 to 15 minutes.

If you've been vaccinated, you should still take part in your workplace screening initiative. The vaccines are safe and effective and can significantly reduce your chance of spreading the virus to those around you.

How is rapid antigen testing different to other testing?

There are two kinds of tests, diagnostic and screening tests.

Rapid antigen tests are a screening test that are used to potentially identify positive cases earlier to help reduce the spread of the virus and prevent outbreaks. When used regularly, rapid antigen tests may help identify individuals who may be infectious early on. Individuals can be pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic but still carry the virus and may transmit it to others.

A standard test such as polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests, is a diagnostic test, and can confirm if someone has COVID-19, with results available in 24 to 48 hours. These tests take a deep nasal sample and throat sample and are tested in laboratories.

A positive rapid antigen test doesn't mean you necessarily have COVID-19, it means you need to get a standard (PCR) test straight away.

If I get a positive test result ?

If you get a positive rapid antigen test result, you must immediately get a nasopharyngeal swab and a laboratory PCR test, at a CTC or through your GP, to confirm the result of your screening test.

Rapid antigen tests will detect most cases of COVID-19 but are not as accurate as a PCR test. Isolate until you get a negative result. Isolating immediately can help break chains of transmission and limit the spread of COVID-19 at your workplace.

If I get a negative test result?

Continue to follow the latest health advice and restrictions in your area. If you develop any symptoms, even if mild, you must immediately get a standard COVID-19 test (nasopharyngeal swab and PCR test) and isolate until you get a negative result.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or are a contact of someone with COVID-19?

Do not undertake a rapid antigen test and do not attend the work site. You must immediately get a standard COVID-19 (PCR) test and isolate, including from your household members, and follow the advice given by Ministry of Health. The only way to rule out COVID-19 is to have a PCR test, even if you have only mild symptoms.

Is personal data collected?

Any testing data collected will only be used to help Ministry of Health make public health decisions. None of your personal health data is used without your consent.

Question and answers for small businesses on rapid antigen testing

Requirements following a positive rapid antigen test result

If a rapid antigen test result is positive:

- You must self-isolate away from your workplace
- Book a standard COVID-19 PCR test to confirm the result. Visit healthpoint.co.nz/covid-19
- Follow all public health measures

What happens if a PCR test confirms a positive rapid antigen test result?
Self-isolate and follow the advice of Public Health. They will also provide guidance on the requirements for testing and isolation for other workers along with family members and contacts of the person who has returned the positive PCR test for COVID-19.

How should staff be managed in the event of a positive RAT result?
We are currently working on guidance for businesses. This will include details on how to set up processes around staff management so that in the event of a positive RAT result not all staff necessarily need to be stood down.

Requirements following an invalid rapid antigen test result

If a rapid antigen test is invalid, you can take a second test as per manufacturer's instructions. The most likely reason for an invalid result is the sample was too small or there were not enough drops on the testing strip.

If the second rapid antigen test is invalid:

- You must self-isolate away from your workplace
- Book a standard COVID-19 PCR test to confirm the result. Visit healthpoint.co.nz/covid-19
- Follow all public health measures

If invalid results are happening often, further training may be required on how to collect an accurate sample for the rapid antigen testing.

What happens if a PCR test is positive after an invalid rapid antigen test result?
Self-isolate and follow the advice of Public Health. They will also provide guidance on the requirements for testing and isolation for other workers along with family members and contacts of the person who has returned the positive PCR test for COVID-19.

Requirements following a negative rapid antigen test result

A negative rapid antigen test result does not guarantee you are COVID-19 free. Continue to follow all public health measures and get tested if you are unwell or develop COVID-19 symptoms.

Disposal requirements

Used rapid antigen test kits are considered medical waste, so need to be disposed of safely.
Test and swab disposal will depend on the volume of testing being conducted and whether the kits used for the rapid antigen test returned a positive or negative result.

For PPE, swabs, and kits from negative rapid antigen tests:

- a **biohazard bin** is recommended for large volumes at a single site where rapid antigen testing is being undertaken frequently and on a continuing basis; or
- a **sealed zip lock bag placed in a refuse bin** is suitable for small companies or one-off testing.

If the rapid antigen test was positive, the swab and kit should be put in a zip lock bag and disposed of with normal rubbish.

PPE (Personal protection equipment) requirements

PPE requirements will vary depending on the rapid antigen test kit being used. Please follow the recommendations provided by the supplier of the kit.
As a minimum, a mask and gloves should be worn when administering a rapid antigen test. This also applies to a support person overseeing testing.

Other general questions

Can we use rapid antigen testing kits that use saliva as the sample for the test?
Currently no rapid antigen tests that use a saliva as a sample for the test have been approved for supply and use in New Zealand.

There are three rapid antigen tests authorised for import and supply under the COVID-19 Public Health Response 2020 (Point of Care) Order and approved by the Ministry of Health for use in New Zealand in specific settings.

These tests all use a front of the nose nasal swab to collect the sample for the rapid antigen test.

Do we need to record the batch number/lot number against each test conducted?
The batch/lot number does not need to be recorded against each test. However, record keeping for when a batch/lot is opened and used should be in place.

Is there a "Ministry of Health's Collection Management System (CMS)" where we need to register participating employees?
The Ministry of Health does not have a register for participating employees.