Saskatchewan Health Authority

Handbook

Monitored Testing Program For SHA Team Members

2021

Saskatchewan Health Authority
Proof of Full COVID-19 Vaccination Policy Directive

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Monitored Testing Program Participant Information

Program overview

The Monitored Testing Program (The Program, or MTP) is designed to reduce outbreaks and the spread of COVID-19 in Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) workplaces through the delivery of a structured and consistent antigen test surveillance program. The program considers the safety of all team members who may come into contact with contagious persons, both within the work environment and within the community, as well as the impact to health care services across the province.

Vaccination remains the best way to protect our patients and our health care workforce.

SHA team members who do not provide proof of full COVID-19 vaccination are required to participate in the SHA COVID-19 Monitored Testing Program at their own cost. Those with an approved accommodation under the *Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* must still participate in the Monitored Testing Program; however their enrollment fees will be waived.

Highlights

- Regular testing protects SHA team members, patients, and the public.
- Full vaccination is the best defense.
- Personal health information accessed by the Testing Program is protected by provincial legislation and the SHA Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

Key Dates

- **November 8-15: Out-of-scope (OOS) staff and employed practitioner staff** must submit proof of vaccination or enroll in the Monitored Testing Program. Those in the Monitored Testing Program will be required to submit their first test November 16.
- **November 15-22: In-scope and practitioner staff** must submit proof of vaccination or enroll in the Monitored Testing Program. Those in the Monitored Testing Program will be required to submit their first test November 23.

Any team member who does not submit their proof of vaccination or enroll in the Monitored Testing Program will be investigated. This may result in putting an individual on leave without pay pending investigation, and/or removal of their practitioner privileges.

There are two components to the Monitored Testing Program.

1. First is a learning module that includes lessons on vaccine efficacy and safety, an overview of the Proof of Full COVID-19 Vaccination policy directive, and information on the MTP. All employees participating in the MTP will be required to complete the learning module prior to their formal enrollment in the program. This learning module is different from the one employees would have completed in order to receive home antigen tests earlier in 2021.

- The learning module is available on the SHA learning platform, which can be accessed via MyConnection under *MyLearning*. It takes about 45 minutes to completed, and is to be completed on the employee or practitioner staff's own time.
- Team members will receive a certificate when they have completed the learning module and are required to upload the certificate to the Monitored Testing Program through MyConnection, as proof of completion; at that point they will be fully enrolled in the testing program.

2. Second is the formal testing program, in which employees will submit regular tests.

At any time a team member can elect to receive full COVID-19 vaccination, after which they may withdraw from the MTP.

As part of the Monitored Testing Program:

- Self-administered antigen tests are required for unvaccinated or partially vaccinated team members regardless of the reason.

- Partially vaccinated team members must enroll in the Monitored Testing Program and submit tests until they are fully vaccinated. If a team member becomes fully vaccinated, upload proof of full vaccination certificate and inform the MTP by email.

- Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated team members are required to test every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday by noon.

   o Team members who have access to MyConnection upload test results and declare the results through MyConnection/COVID-19/Vaccination Program ("the Portal").
   o Team members who *do not* have access to MyConnection upload test results and declare the results to the MyConnection – Proof of Vaccination Portal ("the Portal").

   Note: The Portal is the same place in both instances above. Team members who *do not* have access to MyConnection get to the Portal by a separately emailed link. All team members can bookmark the Portal once they get there the first time.

- Due to the nature of the work environment, all team members should be ready to respond in a moment of crisis. For this reason, all unvaccinated team members, even those working from home, are required to test.

- Those who are off for vacation or on leave will be asked to begin testing 2-3 days prior to their return to the workplace and are not available for call-in when not testing.

For all other information about SHA Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination go to Proof of Full COVID-19 Vaccination | SaskHealthAuthority

Privacy

The SHA is required to adhere to *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* and is following *The Employers' COVID-19 Emergency Regulations* (effective October 1, 2021). *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* requires the SHA to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its team members to the extent reasonably possible. *The Employers' COVID-19 Emergency Regulations* provide legal authority for the SHA to require employees to provide proof of vaccination or to provide a negative test at least every seven days before being allowed into the workplace.

No one is required to be vaccinated or to provide proof of vaccination because the Policy Directive provides the option to be tested as described in *The Employers' COVID-19 Emergency Regulations*.

Your personal health information is protected and kept secure in accordance with The *Health Information Protection Act* (HIPA) and the SHA Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

Employees who provide proof of vaccination to the Monitored Testing Program Team (the "Team") will upload their Proof of Vaccination to MyConnection. The vaccination information is stored securely in MyConnection and is not shared outside of the Team. Watch this video for instructions on how to properly upload your proof of vaccination.

Employees who enroll in the Monitored Testing Program will be required to upload their positive or negative test results to the Team through MyConnection. This personal health information will be shared with Human Resources and / or the employee's manager(s) / supervisor(s) only as required to administer and enforce the Policy Directive. Videos on how to properly upload a test result are included in the learning modules.

Team Member Responsibilities

- Upload test results and declare the results to the Portal every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday by noon. Videos on how to properly upload a test are covered in the learning modules for the program.

- If uploading a positive antigen test result, notify your manager following current notification processes to coordinate a work plan.

  - COVID-19 Return to work (RTW) guide for health care workers
  - Health care worker return to work assessment FAQ
  - Health care worker exposures to COVID-19 toolkit

- Provide the MTP with all confirmatory PCR test results (positive or negative). Test results can be found in your MySaskHealthRecord account.

- If you become fully vaccinated, upload proof of full vaccination certificate and inform the MTP by email.

- Email the MTP to report leaves of absence greater than 7 days.

- Inform manager and/or scheduler of "on leave" status and that you are not able to accept a shift.

- [Email the MTP](#) if symptomatic or require a sick leave.

Manager Responsibilities

- Review the Program reports generated for your team members. The MTP team is working on the frequency of reports for validation.

- To maintain privacy, managers will be notified only:
    - If their staff are enrolled in the Monitored Testing Program; or
    - If they have staff who are deemed non-compliant with the Proof of Full Vaccination policy directive.

- Inform current team members on LOA that they will need to upload their proof of vaccination or enter the Monitored Testing Program prior to returning to work.

- Managers will receive an auto generated email for each team member not fit for work or non-compliant with testing. Those team members will need to have their shift(s) replaced. Non-compliance may require a manager to meet with HR Business Partner/LR consultant.

- Primary manager is responsible to have identified an alternate manager in their out-of-office emails when on holidays and/or on weekends/ afterhours. MTP will attempt to notify the alternate manager of the "unfit for work" alert. It is still the responsibility for the team member to follow current notification processes

Testing Results – Questions and Answers

Why do team members need to test three times a week?

Medical experts have looked at antigen testing and the delta variant and have determined three times per week testing is the minimum acceptable frequency to identify positive asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic COVID cases. The MTP works on the compounding impact of frequent and dedicated testing.

How do I get test kits?

- Team members are encouraged to use [existing processes](#) to pick up a testing kit

- Team members are required to show a certificate of completion of the training required for the program

What is a valid test?

- A photo of an Abbott Panbio Rapid Antigen test strip with the team member's initials and the date the test was taken written on the test strip with permanent marker.

    o The photo must be taken after the test is read and clearly show the control and positive lines.

- A photo or scan of a Third Party proof of a negative/positive PCR test (acceptable within 72 hours from when the test was taken).

What if a team member is symptomatic?

- If the team member is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, they do not perform an antigen test. Instead, obtain an in-lab PCR test to determine infection status.

- The team member will be considered unfit for work until they receive a negative PCR test. Be sure to send an email to the Monitored Testing Program team at monitoredtestingprogram@saskhealthauthority.ca notifying them that you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and that you will obtain an in-lab PCR test.

What if a team member tested positive for COVID-19 prior to this program?

- The team member will enter the MTP program and upload a picture of their positive PCR if it has been less than 10 days* since the date of the positive test. This step is not required if it has been longer than 10 days since the date of the positive test.

- The team member will have their status set to "paused" and will receive an email notifying them of their first required test date.

- Once the first test date is selected, the team member will be set to 'active', will be required to test 3 days per week, and will be added to the Payroll deduction process.

   *More information on antigen testing 10 days after a positive PCR can be found here.

What happens when the antigen test is positive?

- The team member uploads the test results to the Portal.

- The team member selects 'positive antigen test.'

- The system auto-generates a message to the team member stating 'you have indicated that you have a positive antigen test result. Please inform your manager/supervisor/scheduling department (as per usual process).' The team member's manager receives an automated message that they are unfit for work today.

- The system also auto-generates a message to the team member's manager that states:
  "The Monitored Testing Program would like to advise you that XX (Employee name) has reported unfit for work today."

- You are advised to isolate and go for immediate PCR testing at a test site and wait for result to determine next steps. Please follow the Return to Work Guide to determine when you can return to work.

- Upon receipt of your PCR test result (found on your MySaskHealthRecord account) please upload it to the Monitored Testing Program for validation.

- The MTP team changes the status of the team member to 'waiting for confirmatory PCR test.' This pauses the testing component only (payroll deductions will continue for the team member).

- The team member uploads their negative PCR results within 4 days (see next section for positive PCR test).
    - The team member uploads a picture of the negative PCR test result to the Portal (or a screen capture from MySaskHealthRecord).

- The MTP team confirms the upload and changes the team member's status to *active*. The Testing component is reactivated.

What happens when the PCR test is positive?

- The team member uploads a picture of the positive PCR test result to the Portal (or a screen capture from MySaskHealthRecord).

- MTP team validates the positive PCR test.
    - The Team sets the team member status to *Pause* (this pauses payroll deduction and the testing requirement);
    - The Team enters the pause start date (date of submitted positive PCR test); and
    - Calculates the testing resumption date (Pause = positive PCR date + 10 days*)

    *More information on antigen testing 10 days after a positive PCR can be found [here](#).

What happens when the PCR test is negative?

- The team member uploads a picture of the negative PCR test result to the Portal (or a screen capture from MySaskHealthRecord).

- MTP team validates the negative PCR test, and sets the team member's status back to *active* for testing.

What happens if I don't upload my test?

- At 12:01 pm the system will generate a report of all "non-compliant" team members in the system for that day.

- An auto-generated email will be sent to each team member who failed to submit their test in time.

- A member of the MTP team may be contact with team member who is identified as non-compliant.

- Team members will be marked as non-compliant until a valid test is submitted. Continuous failure to submit will result in follow-up with your manager.

What happens if I upload my test and it is rejected?

Review your test submission for possible reasons your test may have been rejected:

- No date or incorrect date
- No initials
- Marking is not completed in permanent marker
- Test result does not match your declaration
- Test is unreadable

You will be marked as non-compliant until a valid test is submitted, please re-take the test following the [guidelines](#) and submit.

I don't have access to a computer or cell phone. Is there another way to upload my Proof of Vaccination or Enroll in the Monitored Testing Program?

- The Proof of Vaccination Portal and the Monitored Testing Program are both digital systems, and the required education component of the Monitored Testing Program is delivered online through MyConnection. There is no option to participate in the program that does not require access to these systems.

- Teams are encouraged to help each other comply with the policy, and come up with creative solutions. Ideas include:

  o Using a friend, family member or colleague's cell phone, tablet or desktop computer – MyConnection can be accessed both from work, and from home.

  o Purchasing a simple cell phone or tablet for common department use
  (note: many long-term care facilities already have access to tablets that are used for virtual family visits)

  o Facility kiosk computers are an option, if you already have a digital photo of your Proof of Vaccination or test result on a USB device.

  o SHA Library locations also have computers for use, as do public libraries.

  Any time you use a shared computer or mobile device, be sure to erase any images you may have uploaded to the device and clear your browsing history. This will protect your privacy.

Note: MyConnection will continue to be the central portal utilized for many staffing tasks in the future, including submitting timecards, accessing T4 slips for tax purposes, accessing schedules, trading shifts and ordering supplies. Access to this online system is not unique to the Proof of Vaccination policy directive for SHA Team Members, and team members should consider how they plan to adapt to this technology for ease of use in the future.

Leaves of Absence

- Team members who are currently on approved leave of absence (LOA) are not expected to upload a Proof of Vaccination certificate, take the training, or participate in testing. They will need to do this when they return from their LOA.

- Team members who wish to pick up shifts while on leave are required to continue to test 3 times per week and have payroll deductions during the leave.

- Team members who choose not to test while on leave are required to submit two tests before they return to the workplace.

- Team Members taking leave longer than 7 days must email the MTP to advise of their leave and have their "active" status changed to "on leave". On leave status will pause testing, or testing and payroll deductions depending on the length of the leave. On leave status means that the team member is not eligible to pick up shifts.

Less than 30 days
- Team members on leave for less than 30 days are not required to test but will still have a payroll deduction.

30 days or more
- Team members on leave for greater than 30 days can be paused in the Program for both testing and payroll deduction.

Sick Leave
- Team members on sick leave should email the MTP to have testing paused. Payroll deduction will continue to have testing paused. Payroll deduction will continue.

- If the sick leave lasts longer than one month the team member will be paused for both testing and payroll deductions.

- If a sick leave keeps being extended until it becomes longer than one month, the team member and their manager can contact Payroll to have the testing fees reimbursed or credited.

Payment

The cost of the Monitored Testing Program involves more than just the cost of the test kits. The program offers a consistent provincial approach for testing proof of entry, including a program team, supply procurement, and software and technology to upload and monitor test results.

Once a team member has a first test date they will become active in the program, and this information is provided to payroll every two weeks. Team members with approved accommodation requests will have their deductions refunded. The cost of the Program for team members who do not have an accommodation is $225 per month. For team members who are paid through the SHA Payroll system this will be a deduction of $103.85/pay period. This payroll deduction is effective the date that you are scheduled to submit your first test. There is no pro-rating for partial months, or part-time or casual team members.

If a team member has no earnings in a two week period the deduction will go into arrears and will be deducted from the next pay period in which there is earnings. The arrears will continue to accumulate until such time that there are earnings in a pay period and will be deducted in one lump sum. If a team member terminates from the SHA any outstanding arrears will be deducted from their final pay.

Payroll will run a monthly report of all team members' statuses to reconcile paused, active, on leave etc.

Practitioner Staff and Applicable Contracted Individuals

As contracted team members participating in the Monitored Testing Program, Practitioner Staff will receive a monthly invoice for the $225 fee. This invoice is to be paid immediately.

Unpaid invoices will follow the normal SHA collections process.

Non-compliance with the Monitored Testing Program

Examples of non-compliance with the SHA Proof of Full COVID-19 Vaccination Policy Directive may include:

- A team member repeatedly fails to upload a test result while enrolled in the Monitored Testing Program. A team member would be placed on leave without pay pending investigation if they failed to upload a test result and they have a shift coming up.

- A casual team member does not upload test results because they don't pick up shifts on a regular basis. The team member would still be required to upload their test results based on the requirements of the Monitored Testing Program.

- A casual team member does not pick up additional shifts and does not upload their test results. The team member would still be required to upload their test results based on the requirements of the Monitored Testing Program and they may be removed from their casual status based on the Collective Agreement language.

- A team member fails to upload a test result because they are working from home and are rarely onsite at an SHA facility. Team members are still be expected to upload their test result since they may be required onsite at any time.

The Monitored Testing Program staff will contact the team member to resolve the issue. If there is no resolution, the team member's manager and/or Human Resources will be informed, who in turn will contact the team member for investigation. All instances of non-compliance will be investigated. This may result in putting an individual on leave without pay pending investigation, and/or removal of their practitioner privileges.

Questions?
Occupational Health and Safety questions about vaccines, positive antigen or PCR results please contact

Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) Health Care Worker Hotline

Phone: 1-833-233-4403
Email: ohs_healthcareworkers_covid19@saskhealthauthority.ca

Monitored Testing Program questions please email monitoredtestingprogram@saskhealthauthority.ca