

CALIFORNIA

# COVID-19 diagnostic testing for teachers and school staff



Testing plays a major role in fighting COVID-19 — for your health, the health of our communities, and to help safely reopen businesses, schools, and more. Information about testing is changing often and while testing supplies across the nation have been limited, we continue to expand testing.

We recommend getting a diagnostic test if you currently have symptoms of COVID-19. If the test shows you're infected, you should isolate to help prevent spread. Testing also helps public health agencies monitor the spread of the disease.

Kaiser Permanente is currently testing members with and without symptoms, including teachers and school staff who are deemed "essential workers".

To self-schedule a diagnostic test for COVID-19, Kaiser Permanente members can complete an e-visit or contact their doctor's office. For an e-visit, members need to sign in to [kp.org](https://kp.org), select an e-visit and choose COVID-19. Test results are usually available within 3 days.

## Frequency of testing

The California Department of Public Health recommends that school districts and schools test staff periodically, as testing capacity permits and as practicable. Examples of recommended frequency include testing all staff over two months, where 25% of staff are tested every 2 weeks, or 50% every month to rotate testing of all staff over time. Kaiser Permanente continues to comply with all state and local public health guidance on testing frequency.

## Teachers and School Staff as Essential Workers

Based on Department of Managed Healthcare (DMHC) guidelines, teachers and school staff are deemed "essential workers" if they have frequent interactions with students or the public. The specific wording of "education sector" includes public and private childcare establishments, public and private pre-kindergarten programs, public and private primary and secondary schools, and public and private colleges and universities. If teachers are teaching remotely, they are not deemed essential workers.

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## Getting tested outside of Kaiser Permanente

In addition to testing available through Kaiser Permanente, members may choose to be tested at an external licensed, independent facility (for example, CVS, Walgreens, Walmart or other retail locations or at a private lab). Many of these facilities bill Kaiser Permanente directly, so members may not have to pay anything out of pocket. If charged, members should go to [kp.org/coverageandcosts](https://kp.org/coverageandcosts) and follow these steps to request reimbursement for a COVID-19 test taken outside Kaiser Permanente:

1. Below “Helpful resources,” click “Submit a claim.”
2. Below “Claim forms,” click the PDF to download. (If you’re redirected to our Claim Services website, select “Documents and Forms” from the Resources menu and then download the medical claim form.)
3. Fill out the form and then mail it to the address listed on the form.

School districts and schools may prefer to engage with a lab vendor (such as Quest or LabCorp or another licensed lab vendor) to provide testing for employees. If so, please have the lab submit claims directly to Kaiser Permanente via existing claims submission processes. Kaiser Permanente will provide reimbursement for the cost of the test as long as it is FDA-approved and conducted by a licensed facility.