



Spring 2021 Semester Mandatory COVID-19 Testing Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What kind of test is being administered?

We are using a saliva-based PCR test. The collection device is a Spectrum Solutions LLC SDNA-1000 Saliva Collection Device, and it has been authorized by the U.S. FDA under an Emergency Use Authorization for use by authorized laboratories.

Where are my samples being shipped, and what company is administering the tests?

Tests will be processed by Infinity BiologiX Laboratory, Rutgers University Campus–New Brunswick in Piscataway, NJ. The lab is authorized by the U.S. FDA for COVID-19 saliva testing using the SDNA-1000 (FDA EUA200090). This lab has a 100% specificity rate (true negative), and a 98% sensitivity rate (true positive).

I noticed when I was registering my test, it said that I should isolate while waiting for my test results. Is that true?

It depends. If you are not feeling well or have been exposed to someone who tested positive, then yes, you should stay home and isolate. However, if you are simply taking this test as part of the required testing program and do not have symptoms, you do not need to isolate.

Why do I have to put my name on my test?

We need to match individuals with test results in order to respond to positive tests with appropriate safety measures. Our ability to limit the spread of the virus on our campuses depends on us knowing where and when an infected individual was during the infectious period. We need the ability to identify facilities that require a deep cleaning, to instigate contact tracing, and to inform whether certain classes or programs need to be paused.

How are you protecting the security of my test results?

In order to protect your privacy, identifiable information will be held in the strictest confidence by the College. In addition, no members of the College shall request information pertaining to COVID-19 from any individual (faculty, staff, student, etc.), regardless of symptoms or concern unless you are a College official responding directly to a COVID-related incident.

How are we assured samples have been handled correctly?

The registration process includes a date/time stamp when the sample is collected. This information is shared with the lab. UN3373 shipping protocols are being followed to ensure proper transportation to the lab.

What medical direction/ physician is overseeing this process?

The College partnered with 1Health on our testing program, and 1Health referred to a medical doctor who wrote the prescriptions to cover these tests.

If you're only testing once a week, how can you be sure everyone is COVID-19 negative?

We can't. The weekly testing program is intended to help us stay apprised of the number of cases on each of our three campuses. We will monitor cases by number, class, and campus to help ensure there is no outbreak occurring. However, keeping everyone safe is a shared responsibility. Our testing program alone cannot ensure everyone's safety. We rely on each member of the MassBay community to act responsibly and safely on- and off-campus throughout this pandemic, recognizing anyone's reckless behavior endangers the health and safety of everyone.

I have been vaccinated. Do I have to do this weekly testing, and if so, why?

Yes, everyone is required to take a weekly test, even those who have been vaccinated. As we see different strains of the virus emerging, it is important to verify through testing that the vaccinations are working. In addition, as Dr. Larry Madoff, Medical Director, Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has said, knowing the vaccine is effective in at best 95% of the population, at least 5% of vaccinated individuals may still have the virus and can spread it.

I am vaccinated, and as a result my test results are going to be positive.

This is inaccurate. We use a PCR test rather than an antibody test, so whether you've been vaccinated or not will not affect your test results. We have already received negative COVID-19 tests from previously vaccinated individuals as part of our beta process prior to starting the testing program.

I am a health sciences student and am already regularly tested at my clinical site. Why do I also have to do the MassBay test?

We recognize many health sciences students are already being tested for COVID-19. However, since we cannot access those test results nor the veracity of testing being administered by a different organization, you are still required to take our weekly test.

Are there consequences if I choose not to take the test?

YES. This is a mandatory testing program. Faculty, staff, and students coming to campus on a regular basis are required to take part in the testing program. We have implemented this program to provide for the safety of our community, and to continue offering face to face classes and critical operations this semester.

Non-compliance with the testing program is considered a code of conduct infraction for students. Students not in compliance will be held responsible, up to and including expulsion from MassBay. For faculty and staff who choose to be non-compliant, the matter will be handled by your Dean or supervisor and Human Resources, and may include discipline in accordance with the applicable Collective Bargaining Agreement or Handbook.