

Frequently Asked Questions COVID-19 Testing Service at Holland Bloorview

On December 9, 2020, Holland Bloorview, in partnership with SickKids, supported by Ontario Health and Toronto Public Health launched a COVID-19 testing service specifically for children with disabilities and complex medical needs.

Below are a series of questions and answers to address immediate questions related to the new service.

1. Why is Holland Bloorview now offering a COVID-19 testing service?

Holland Bloorview's expertise working with children with physical, developmental and complex medical conditions gives us a unique perspective in being able to create a comfortable and safe COVID-19 testing environment for this population.

Families of children with disabilities have been vocal about unsatisfactory experiences accessing COVID-19 testing for their children. By launching a COVID-19 testing service specifically designed to meet the needs of this population, we are fulfilling an important and much needed community resource.

2. When will the service be operational?

The COVID-19 testing service at Holland Bloorview will begin operations on Wednesday, December 9, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday December 12, from 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Appointments are required and can be made by emailing covidtesting@hollandbloorview.ca or calling **647-298-3862**.

Following December 12, Holland Bloorview's COVID-19 testing service will be available on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., as well as Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. All appointments will need to be made through the Toronto Public Health website, who will triage between Holland Bloorview and SickKids depending on where they typically access care, where clinically appropriate, or distance to location.

The clinic will only be available to Holland Bloorview clients and families during the first two days of operations, after which it will begin accepting children with disabilities who meet the criteria for testing who may not be our clients.

3. With the rise of staff cases in the hospital in recent weeks, will this not increase the risk of more cases and ultimately, an outbreak?

Safety is always our top priority and every effort to reduce crossover between staff, clients, families and members of the community accessing the COVID-19 testing service was a priority when planning the logistics and operations of the service.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have followed all public health guidelines to ensure the safety of our community. We have received additional clinical guidelines related specifically to the safe operations of a COVID-19 testing service, which we will also be following closely.

A reminder that, the best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is by wearing mask, physical distancing and washing your hands. We are grateful for all of your efforts to keep our community safe. Please continue to do your part to reduce potential spread of the virus.

4. Is the testing service only accessible to Holland Bloorview clients and families?

In the first two days of the clinic (December 9 and December 12) the testing service will only be accessible to Holland Bloorview clients and families and we encourage our staff to speak to their clients who may require COVID-19 testing to make an appointment by sending an email to covidtesting@hollandbloorview.ca or calling **647-298-3862**.

Beginning December 14, the testing centre will be open to children with disabilities who meet the criteria for testing who may not be Holland Bloorview clients. Families will be able to register for an appointment through the Toronto Public Health website, and will then be triaged to Holland Bloorview or SickKids depending on where they typically access care, or distance to location.

5. What are we doing to reduce crossover of staff and clients?

The COVID-19 testing service will be held during off-peak hours in the entrance of the Bloorview School Authority (BSA) on Monday and Wednesday evenings, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

We are prioritizing the safety of everyone in our community in executing this service, including the staff who will be providing the testing and families who will be accessing it. Specific safety measures:

- testing by appointment only
- ample time for testing and cleaning between clients
- hosting the testing service after-hours
- physical location away from in-patient clients and families with a separate entrance
- use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) by our staff members

Families will also be able to drive-up to the BSA entrance and exit the building as quickly as possible. Families accessing the testing service will not be permitted to use any facilities on-site, with the exception of one bathroom in the BSA.

6. Will we be testing family caregivers and siblings as well?

We will be offering testing to up to two family members (family caregivers and/or siblings) for each child that requires testing. As we have been approved to conduct a limited amount of tests per week (50), we cannot provide swabs to additional family members at this time.

7. Will Holland Bloorview staff be providing the testing?

The testing service will be operated by Holland Bloorview staff, as we are uniquely qualified to provide this essential service to kids living with disabilities. The swabs will be sent to SickKids for analysis.

Staff members operating the clinic will be provided with all of the essential personal protective equipment (PPE) to do their job confidently and safely, while also continuing to provide care in their home positions.

It will remain important for everyone on-site to continue to do their due diligence to protect themselves by washing your hands, wearing a mask and watching your distance.

8. Will Holland Bloorview staff providing testing be allowed to also continue in their roles in outpatient/inpatient units?

Yes, the staff who will be conducting the COVID-19 tests will continue to provide care in the inpatient and outpatient units, depending on their role.

A reminder that staff members operating the clinic will be provided with all of the essential personal protective equipment (PPE) to do their job confidently and safely, while also continuing to provide care in their home positions.

9. How will the screening stations be sanitized and kept clean?

As part of our agreement to operate the COVID-19 testing service, we have received new additional clinical guidelines specifically to ensure the safe operations of a COVID-19 testing service from Toronto Public Health, which we will also be following closely. This includes disinfecting the area between appointments, as well as end-of-day sanitation.

10. Can I refer clients to the clinic?

Yes. On December 9 and December 12, the on-site COVID-19 testing service will be offered to Holland Bloorview clients and families only, **who cannot be served by their local testing centre**. Criteria for testing must be met and can include being referred by the child's school related to an exposure in the classroom. Appointments can be made by sending an email to covidtesting@hollandbloorview.ca or calling **647-298-3862**. We encourage staff to refer clients who may be in need of COVID-19 testing during that time.

As of December 14, all appointments will need to be scheduled through the Toronto Public Health website, who will then triage between clients between Holland Bloorview and SickKids.

11. Can staff and our families utilize the clinic for testing?

The COVID-19 testing service operated at Holland Bloorview is approved to provide 50 tests per week, specifically for children living with disabilities and up to two family members (family caregivers and/or siblings). The testing service is funded by the provincial government and at this time, we do not have the capacity or authorization to provide testing to our staff members and their family. For staff that need testing, please [visit your local testing centre](#).

If you have any questions about the COVID-19 testing centre, please email covidtesting@hollandbloorview.ca