



## Durham Region Health Department **Facts about...**



# **COVID-19 Surveillance Testing**

Durham Region Health Department is coordinating enhanced surveillance testing for COVID-19 in congregate living settings such as retirement homes and shelters. The purpose of surveillance testing is to learn more about the spread of COVID-19, especially asymptomatic infection, in the community. This information provides a point-in-time picture of COVID-19 and will help institute timely infection prevention and control (IPAC) strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19 if it is detected.

## **How does surveillance testing differ from usual COVID-19 testing?**

- Testing is available to all residents and staff of the congregate setting whom have not previously tested positive. Agency staff working on site during the day of testing are permitted to be tested.
- Individuals who are tested are asymptomatic, meaning they do not have any signs or symptoms of COVID-19.
- Individuals who are tested for surveillance purposes are not required to self-isolate.
- The household members of the person tested are not required to self-isolate.
- The individual who is tested and their household contacts are not prevented from returning to work or from entering other buildings or settings as a result of surveillance testing.

## **How does surveillance testing happen?**

- Congregate living settings, such as retirement homes and shelters, provide the names of all staff and residents to Durham Region Health Department.
- Testing kits are prepared for each person to be swabbed.
- Experienced Durham Region paramedics conduct the testing at the congregate living setting.
- Most congregate settings can be completely tested in 1 to 2 days.

## **How are the test results shared?**

- COVID-19 positive test results for staff or residents will be communicated to the individual and to the congregate setting as soon as they are received.
- A summary of the surveillance testing results will be provided to the congregate setting once all results have been received.
- Due to high volume of lab submissions, results can take several days.

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905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 | [durham.ca/health](https://durham.ca/health)

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.

