

As Alberta Health Services continues to respond to the COVID-19 global pandemic, we know we are not alone in this important work.

There are many partners and stakeholders right beside us, as we all work together to minimize the risk presented by COVID-19, and protect Albertans.

We are all in this, together.

Beginning April 5, the testing criteria for COVID-19 has been expanded to include first responders, group home and shelter workers, home care workers, correctional facility staff, and anyone who is involved in enforcement of COVID-19 measures.

Testing will now be available to any members of the following groups, if they are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, nasal congestion, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing):

- Group home workers and shelter workers;
- First responders, including all firefighters, EMS, police and RCMP;
- Those involved in COVID-19 enforcement, including police, peace officers, bylaw officers, environmental health officers, and Fish and Wildlife officers; and,
- Correctional facility staff, working in either a provincial or federal facility.

Anyone among these groups is urged to use AHS' online assessment tool for healthcare and shelter workers, enforcement personnel, and first responders, which is available here: [www.AHS.ca/covid_or https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17058.aspx](http://www.AHS.ca/covid_or_https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17058.aspx)

If any members of these groups has any symptoms, or is feeling unwell, they must immediately self-isolate while they determine whether they need to be tested.

The expansion of the testing criteria is in addition to those **symptomatic individuals** who are already being prioritized for testing, including:

- People who are hospitalized with respiratory illness;
- Residents of continuing care and other similar facilities; and,
- Individuals that provide services in a clinical care setting including hospitals, clinics, pharmacies, and any other settings where face-to-face patient care is provided.

This expanded testing criteria will help us protect the most vulnerable, as well as first responders who may be required to work in higher risk areas.

Note: in addition to the above criteria, outreach testing is occurring for other populations at high risk of community transmission and severe outcomes.

At AHS, we are extremely grateful to everyone involved in the COVID-19 response. Albertans are in good hands.

Dr. Laura McDougall

Senior Medical Officer of Health

Alberta Health Services