

Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital Policy and Procedure		
COVID – Testing		
Effective: January 2021	Revised: April 2023	Due to Review: April 2025

POLICY

The Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital (VPCH) will provide COVID-19 testing as may be recommended and/or required by the Vermont Department of Health (VDH). Surveillance testing will aid in the early identification of COVID-19 positive cases and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 across the hospital. Evolving COVID-19 test requirements will be communicated by the VPCH Executive Leadership Team.

DEFINITIONS:Personnel:

The (IFC) 86 FR 6155 vaccine requirements applies to any individual who provides any care, treatment, or other services for the facility and/or the individuals it serves, regardless of clinical responsibility or contact with hospitalized persons including, but not limited to:

- Facility Employees
- Licensed Practitioners
- Students, trainees, volunteers, etc.

Any individuals who provide care, treatment, or other services for the facility and/or the individuals it serves, under contract or by any other arrangement.

Hereafter, individuals meeting the above listed criteria are referred to as *personnel*.

Clinical Personnel: Employees who are clinically licensed to provide Nursing, Psychiatry, Medicine, or Pharmacy services.

COVID Screening Test: Test for individuals without symptoms indicative of COVID-19 infection or following possible exposure.

COVID Diagnostic Test: Test for individuals with symptoms indicative of COVID-19 infection.

PROCEDURE

The following procedure is specific to routine screening and diagnostic testing. In case of facility outbreak(s) of COVID-19, testing plans for outbreak response will be developed in consultation between VDH and the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and may be different than this procedure.

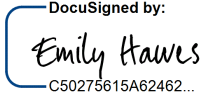
- VPCH will provide surveillance and diagnostic testing for personnel and hospitalized individuals who would like and/or who require testing.
- Testing will occur in accordance with current VDH guidance.
- VPCH will adjust testing frequency recommendations/requirements based on evolving VDH guidance.

- VPCH will follow VDH recommendations for the types and methods of testing utilized whenever possible. The general availability of various testing supplies may impact the resources available to VPCH.
- Rapid Antigen testing may be performed when rapid result times are required, and when supply is available.
- VPCH will maintain the privacy of any individual being tested during the testing process.

Personnel Testing:

- VPCH personnel may, at times, be required to complete COVID testing. VPCH will provide testing for personnel who require testing and meet this requirement at the VPCH facility.
- Personnel may, in appropriate circumstances, be given the option to meet testing requirements at any available test site. Regardless of the testing location, required tests must occur within the defined testing period and results must be provided to the VPCH Staffing Office, or the VPCH Infection Preventionist, as required.
- Those who seek testing at alternate locations may be responsible for any associated costs.
- Every effort will be made to perform required testing during personnel’s normally scheduled work hours. Personnel who are not scheduled to work during a required testing period, will NOT be required to come to the facility to be tested. Required testing may be performed upon return to the workplace.
- Testing requirements, test results management, and notification will be accomplished in a way that limits access to personnel test results to:
 - Those who are required to inform individuals of their test results.
 - Those who are required to meet state of Vermont reporting requirements.
 - Those who are required to institute facility operational changes in response to positive test results.
- If VPCH is provided with testing kits that allow for specimen self-collection, this testing format will be encouraged. Specimen collection will be performed or observed by VPCH clinical personnel. Specimens that are self-collected still require observation by clinical personnel.
- Personnel who refuse required testing or who fail to provide testing results will be considered insubordinate and subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. The *VPCH Isolation and Quarantine Algorithms* and *VPCH Return to Work Guidance*, available on the VPCH SharePoint, shall be referenced when determining an appropriate response to a positive COVID test.

Test results will be utilized to guide operational adjustments in response to positive results to minimize impact to the health and safety of close contacts, institute internal contact tracing, and to guide medical follow up based on potential exposure risk.

Approved by	Signature	Date
Emily Hawes Commissioner Vermont Department of Mental Health	 <p>DocuSigned by: Emily Hawes C50275615A62462...</p>	4/4/2023