

## Federal Public Health Emergency ends: How does this impact community testing?

With the ending of the federal Public Health Emergency, there have been changes to how testing can be implemented in a community setting. We're providing the following information to help you understand the current environment for testing in a community setting.

**The federal Public Health Emergency ended on May 11, 2023. As a result, DOH authorizations and standing orders have expired and are no longer available for use.** These authorizations granted and expanded to some individuals and entities the legal authority to non-medical staff to administer COVID-19 tests and provided broad immunity protections from suit and liability under the federal PREP Act ([Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act](#)). Specifically, the following have expired and are no longer available for use:

- PREP Act Authorization for Medical Assistants to Administer, Deliver, Distribute, and Dispense COVID-19 and Influenza Tests and Vaccines, dated 12/22/2022
- Standing Order for COVID-19 Screening in Certain Congregate Facilities and Agencies

Here is some additional information regarding testing in a community setting after May 11<sup>th</sup>:

- State law governs who may prescribe and administer COVID-19 tests and under what circumstances. While this is not an exhaustive list of who may perform tests under state law, individuals should refer to their respective licensing boards for more information on testing authorization and practice:
  - Nurses may reach out to [NursingPractice@doh.wa.gov](mailto:NursingPractice@doh.wa.gov)
  - Medical assistants may reach out to [hsga.csc@doh.wa.gov](mailto:hsga.csc@doh.wa.gov)
  - Pharmacy professionals may reach out to [WSPQAC@doh.wa.gov](mailto:WSPQAC@doh.wa.gov)
  - EMT/Paramedicine professionals may reach out to [hsga.csc@doh.wa.gov](mailto:hsga.csc@doh.wa.gov)
- Any person who administers a COVID-19 test as authorized by state law will continue to have protections against suit and liability through December 31, 2024, under the federal Public Readiness and Emergency (PREP) Act.
- Organizations may provide on-site point-of-care testing as permitted by state law, distribute self-tests for home use, and provide information on where to access tests.

**Testing resources and access to testing supplies for LHJs and tribal partners will remain available through DOH.**

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