



August 10, 2020

COVID-19 Weekly Testing Summary

On June 30, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) released [updated COVID-19 testing guidance for health care providers](#). The updated guidance recommends that any person with symptoms consistent with COVID-19, regardless of severity, be tested for COVID-19. OHA recommends limiting testing of people without symptoms consistent with COVID-19 to the following groups:

- 1.) Close contact of confirmed or presumptive COVID-19 cases
- 2.) People exposed to COVID-19 in congregate settings (e.g., residential care facilities, group homes, schools, agricultural workplaces, food processing plants, jails or prisons, and shelters)
- 3.) Migrant and seasonal agricultural workers upon arrival in Oregon
- 4.) People who identify as Black, African-American, Latino, Latina, Latinx, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Asian-American, or Pacific Islander
- 5.) People who identify as having a disability
- 6.) People whose first language is not English

The testing guidance is an essential component of active surveillance, which includes case investigation and contact tracing, to better understand and stop the spread of disease.

Summary of Oregon test results through 8/08/2020

	2/29	3/7	3/14	3/21	3/28	4/4	4/11	4/18	4/25	5/2	5/9	5/16	5/23
Positive	2	16	58	261	434	506	410	349	388	421	466	368	265
Negative	16	195	1583	6994	6292	9985	8630	8506	12179	11207	13143	16939	16597
Total results	18	211	1641	7255	6726	10491	9040	8855	12567	11628	13609	17307	16862
% Positive	11.1	7.6	3.5	3.6	6.5	4.8	4.5	3.9	3.1	3.6	3.4	2.1	1.6

	5/30	6/6	6/13	6/20	6/27	7/4	7/11	7/18	7/25	8/1	8/8	Total to date
Positive	326	678	1059	1196	1530	1779	2292	2188	2033	1968	1380	20385
Negative	17538	20323	25197	29315	30181	31878	37353	38024	33294	29437	24364	429244
Total results	17864	21001	26256	30511	31711	33657	39645	40212	35327	31405	25744	449629
% Positive	1.8	3.2	4.0	3.9	4.8	5.3	5.8	5.4	5.8	6.3	5.4	4.5

**The summary of Oregon test results time frame has shifted to match with CDC's MMWR report week, which is reported Sundays through Saturdays.*

This week, OHA has begun using specimen collection date as our denominator for COVID-19 test results, including percentage positivity, across all of OHA's reported testing data. This change means testing data will be reported based on the date/week in which specimens were collected. The new method was used in the numbers reported in the table above.

We do not anticipate this will affect the test positivity percentages significantly. Before this change, these reports used different methodologies related to the date to which a test was assigned. We consider aligning these methods to be the best practice to ensure clarity and accuracy.

When using specimen collection date, there is a lag between when the specimen was collected, when the test was performed and when the result was reported to public health. This means that the results for the most recent week are not complete because many test results have not yet been reported to public health.

As of August 8, Oregon's cumulative positive testing rate is 4.5% of tests performed. This is considerably lower than the national average of 9%. The number of tests performed each week has generally been holding steady, but supply chain issues continue to restrict Oregon's testing capacity, as discussed below. The number of positive cases and the test positivity rate have generally been increasing since late May, but this week saw a decrease in test positivity to 5.4%.

Testing capacity, testing turnaround times and supply chain issues

The Oregon State Public Health Laboratory (OSPHL) monitors testing capacity and supply allocations for in-state laboratories. The most recent weekly in-state theoretical testing capacity estimate is 48,000 tests for the week of July 22 based on supply, reagent and staff availability. This does not include capacity at out-of-state commercial laboratories, such as Quest, Labcorp or ARUP.

Several major manufacturers have informed OHA that testing supply allocation to OSPHL and clinical labs in Oregon may be reduced over the coming weeks due to the recent spike in positive COVID-19 cases nationally and increased demand for testing. These shortages are being addressed through testing on multiple platforms and sending specimens to outside laboratories for testing. Approximately 30% of specimens were sent out for testing last week.

Testing resources

To prepare for the upcoming influenza season, OSPHL will be implementing a new CDC multiplex RT-PCR assay, which tests respiratory specimens for SARS-CoV-2, influenza A and influenza B.

Technical assistance

The Oregon Public Health Clinical Laboratory Consortium meets weekly to share technical information, updates about testing efforts, and information about supply-chain barriers. OSPHL continues to provide technical assistance to laboratories working to implement COVID-19 testing. OHA continues to evaluate new COVID-19 testing platforms as they become available.