

FAQ Airport Testing – June 9

Why are you using a PCR test and not a rapid test at the airport?

We recommend that travellers should get tested on day one or two of their self-isolation; if they're still in Nova Scotia, they should get tested again on day 12, 13 or 14. Some people, like rotational workers, specialized workers and temporary foreign workers are required to get tested three times during their 14 day self-isolation.

By offering a PCR test at the airport, we are allowing people to complete their first swab at the at the Halifax Stanfield International Airport.

We are using a PCR test because it is our gold standard test. The risk of importation of COVID-19 by travellers is still high. We don't want to use a test in this population that has reduced sensitivity, like rapid tests, because it may mean that we miss cases.

If I am a rotational worker or specialized worker, will this test count towards one of my mandatory tests?

Yes. Since this is a PCR test and is lab-verified, it counts towards one of the mandatory tests for rotational workers, specialized workers and temporary foreign workers.

When can I expect my test results?

People will receive results by phone or email within 72 hours of completing the test at the airport or dropping it off at one of the primary assessment centres.

What type of PCR test is this? Is it a nasal swab?

The swab being used at the airport is a nose and throat swab. Complete instructions on how to perform the swab will be given to travellers when they get their self-swab kits.

What can I expect when I get to the airport?

After travellers get their bags, they will enter a queue and either register or opt out with a testing clerk. Travellers that choose to be tested will be provided with a self-swab kit, which will include the swab, a specimen tube to put the swab in, a label for the specimen tube and a set of instructions on how to complete the test. Nova Scotia Health Authority staff will be onsite daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. to swab anyone who is unable to self-swab or needs support.

I don't want to test myself at the airport, can the NSHA staff just do it for me?

Travellers who arrive at the airport will be provided with a kit and instructions to complete their self-swab onsite at the airport. Nova Scotia Health Authority staff will be onsite daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. to swab anyone who is unable to self-swab or needs support.

I don't want to be tested at all at the airport. Do I need to opt out?

Testing at the airport is voluntary, but passengers will need to opt out at the point of registration.

If my flight comes in overnight can I do the swab at the airport and leave it there?

No. Travellers who arrive between 8 p.m. and 10 a.m. will take their self-swab kit to their self-isolation location to complete there. The swab must be completed within 48 hours of arriving in the province and can be dropped off at a primary assessment centres.

Why can't overnight travellers leave the swab at the airport?

Nova Scotia Health Authority will only be onsite during the day to oversee the self-swabbing taking place at the airport to ensure all public health measures are being taken. The infrastructure needed to store and transport completed tests will not be available during the late evening, overnight and early morning hours at the airport.

My flight comes in overnight and I don't have access to a car to drop off my swab at one of the PACs. Will someone pick it up for me?

If you do not have the ability to drop off your swab at one of the PACs then you should not take one of the at-home self-swab kits.

My flight came in overnight and I'm doing a take home swab. Where can I drop off my swab?

You can drop off the take home swab kit at any of the primary assessment centres. A list of the primary assessment centre locations and hours can be found online at:

<https://www.nshealth.ca/coronavirustesting>