

MI Backpack Home Tests

An At-Home COVID-19 Testing Program for K–12 Settings

Expanding on the MI Safer Schools Testing Program launched by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) in the 2020-2021 school year, MDHHS has implemented a new program to make a calculated number of free, at-home COVID antigen tests available to students in Michigan's schools in the 2021-2022 school year. This program offers one more tool—in addition to in-school testing, masking, ventilation, and other strategies—to create a safer environment for students, staff, and families. This program has been implemented make free at-home COVID testing available to groups at elevated risk for COVID-19.

What?

MI Backpack Home Tests is a voluntary program offered by MDHHS for Michigan K–12 students, educators, staff, and their families who want an extra layer of protection against COVID-19. Every person enrolled in the program will receive one at-home COVID-19 test “kit,” which includes 2 at-home tests. MDHHS will provide the kits and educational materials, and schools will distribute the kits to students and staff who choose to enroll. There is no obligation to participate.

Who?

K–12 students, teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, teaching aides, and non-instructional staff are all eligible to opt into this program through their participating school or district. We include a pre-survey bit.ly/3DIFAZK which helps MDHHS evaluate testing behaviors and effectiveness of At-Home test provided through schools implementing this program.

Where?

Students and staff who enroll in the program will receive **at-home** COVID-19 tests kits distributed at school. Participants will then be able to test their students, themselves, or other family members right at home.

How?

Schools interested in partnering with MDHHS in the MI Backpack program complete the [MI Backpack program Interest form](#). Once schools are enrolled the contact person on file will receive an information packet via email. The packet includes a program overview, participant communication letter and guidance material. Participants may use the tests any time before the test expiration.

Michigan school districts and schools that are interested in offering this program to their students and staff must agree to the following requirements in order to enroll:

- Identify one point of contact per school and provide corresponding contact information

- Agree to give out information about MI Backpack Home Tests to students and staff and distribute kits to participants (1 kit/participant). Health Resource Advocates or School Liaisons assigned to the school can help distribute tests.

Why?

The state is committed to ensuring that Michigan students and educators are as safe as possible in the classroom to enable in-person learning. Layering prevention measures, like masking, testing, distancing, and ventilation, help create a safer environment for learning and keep kids, staff, and families safer. This program offers one more tool—at-home testing—to help create that environment. More information on COVID-19 and schools can be found at www.michigan.gov/schoolCOVIDtest.