

January 25, 2022

Dear Healthcare Leaders,

Thank you for all you have done and continue to do to protect your communities during our ongoing response to COVID-19. We wanted to provide you visibility on our current challenges with procuring and distributing testing supplies, and to thank you for your grace and understanding as we work to improve supply availability into the future.

As a result of record high case volumes here in Washington state and nationwide, the state has shipped more than 1.2M tests out to schools, local and tribal public health, and other high-risk settings across the state *in the first half of this month*. In our highest prior full month, we shipped 900K tests. We have over 11,000 unique organizations that are currently accessing our ordering portal for testing supplies, up from 7,000 the prior month.

This unprecedented spike in testing demand is exacerbated by a current national testing supply chain challenge that is slowing down the movement and receipt of testing supplies. As a result, we are temporarily shifting our COVID-19 testing supply distribution processes and prioritizing our current limited resources, especially with regard to point of care antigen tests. While we believe these challenges will be short-lived, we know that these changes may have immediate impacts on some of your ongoing response operations.

Healthcare facilities such as critical access hospitals are among our highest priorities for test supplies along with local and tribal public health, schools, and congregant living or work settings.

To support timely distribution of testing supplies, DOH is working with multiple shipping partners to improve shipping times and tracking of all test kits being distributed across the state. Additionally, we are developing a limited will-call process for partners. We should have more details about these broader resources by 1/31/2022.

We are grateful for your continued patience as we work to stand-up new processes to improve current distribution strategies around testing supplies. Even with these improvements, we still *do not have the supply to meet the current demand even across our top tier priorities for distribution*.

As we have said since the start of this pandemic, if your facilities have resource constraints, **healthcare leaders should prioritize resources to critical access facilities first**.

We understand the current testing needs, spread of omicron and scarcity of tests may necessitate a revision of the current requirements.

Additionally, we ask you to consider these recommendations from DOH for prioritization of testing.

1- Highest Priority:

- Critical Access Hospitals
- Long term care facilities in pending or confirmed outbreak status

2- Medium Priority:

- Hospitals and Clinics; FQHCs
- Behavioral Health Facilities
- Long term care facilities

3- Lowest Priority:

- Medical and dental offices
- Coroners office

We are committed to keeping you updated on the evolving supply chain shifts in the coming weeks and how that may lead to changes in our distribution strategies. Thank you again for everything you do to preserve the health of your communities. If you have specific questions in regards to your current orders please direct those to covidtestingsupport@doh.wa.gov

Thank you,

Statewide Testing Team
Washington Department of Health
covidtestingsupport@doh.wa.gov