

City of New Bedford announces 3rd round of FREE at-home COVID test kit distribution

Free tests available at public libraries as new school year begins.

City health and emergency management officials are coordinating with the city's public libraries to distribute free, at-home COVID-19 test kits, available until supplies last.

The free distribution coincides with the start of the school year and the approach of potential increases in COVID-19 cases in the fall. Test kits are available at New Bedford public libraries, in the City's third round of free test distribution over the past year.

In December 2021, the City distributed nearly 38,000 kits (each containing two tests) through community partners. The City distributed thousands more tests in April 2022.

Parents with vulnerable children are encouraged to obtain kits even if there is no immediate exposure risk or active case in their household. Likewise, even as overall COVID-19 transmission levels remain modest, small business owners (provided they are residents) may wish to consider obtaining kits to help protect vulnerable employees in the event of a future workplace exposure.

LIBRARY HOURS

Free COVID-19 at-home test kits are available at all public library branches. Locations and hours are as follows:

- **Main Library**
613 Pleasant St.

(508) 991-6275

Monday – Thursday: 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Friday & Saturday: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

• **Casa Da Saudade Branch**

58 Crapo St.

(508) 991-6218

Tuesday – Thursday: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

• **Wilks Branch**

1911 Acushnet Ave.

(508) 991-6214

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, & Saturday: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Tuesday & Thursday: 12 p.m. – 8 p.m.

• **Lawler Branch**

745 Rockdale Ave.

(508) 991-6216

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, & Saturday: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Tuesday & Thursday: 12 p.m. – 8 p.m.

• **Howland-Green Branch**

3 Rodney French Blvd.

(508) 991-6212

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, & Saturday: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Tuesday & Thursday: 12 p.m. – 8 p.m.

BACKGROUND ON TEST KITS

Residents use the tests at home. Test results are available in minutes and samples do not need to go to a laboratory. People do not need a cell phone or computer for any part of the test. The tests are effective for all individuals 2 years of age and up, regardless of vaccination status or whether they have symptoms.

Residents are advised to take note of expiration date information on test kit boxes. Each test kit box has a sticker on the front with a Quick Response (QR) Code that can be scanned to view the tests' expiration date online. Earlier this summer, the FDA extended the shelf life of all iHealth tests by 3 months. Learn more: <https://ihealthlabs.com/pages/news>

If you test negative, continue to monitor yourself for indications of infection. If you develop symptoms or existing symptoms worsen, take another home test or seek a PCR test at a testing location: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/find-a-covid-19-test>

If you test positive, consider confirming your result with a PCR test at a testing location (see link above), isolate consistent with CDC guidelines, and notify any close contacts who may have been exposed to COVID-19. Learn more: mass.gov/COVIDtreatment

For more information on at-home tests, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/self-testing.html/>

View COVID-19 information and indicators on the City's website:

www.newbedford-ma.gov/health-department/coronavirus/