

Employee Weekly Testing FAQ

STATE REQUIREMENT FOR PROOF OF VACCINE OR WEEKLY TESTING

On August 11, 2021, Governor Walz announced that, effective Sept. 8, 2021, all state agency employees, including employees of Southwest Minnesota State University, who are assigned to work at the workplace or otherwise provide agency services outside their home are required to either show proof of full COVID-19 vaccination or be tested at least weekly. Teleworkers who need to access the workplace for more than 10 minutes or provide agency services outside their home will be required to show proof of full COVID-19 vaccination or engage in weekly testing before being allowed to do so.

Who is included in weekly surveillance testing?

Any employee, including student employees, who has NOT provided proof of full COVID-19 vaccination and assigned to work at the workplace or otherwise provide Southwest Minnesota State University, services outside their home is required to participate in weekly surveillance testing.

What if I am experiencing COVID symptoms or quarantining on the day I am scheduled to test on campus?

Do not come to be tested at the campus testing center if you are symptomatic or self-quarantining per Minnesota Department of Health guidance or known exposure. Refer to [Minnesota Department of Health website to find an alternate testing location](#) if you are experiencing symptoms.

What is the test the University will be using?

Southwest Minnesota State University has secured individual saliva-based PCR tests from Hennepin Healthcare Clinical Laboratory.

When and where will the weekly surveillance testing be available?

The University plans to provide a testing clinic in SS 143. The testing clinic will take place from 11:00 am to 3:45 pm on Monday's and Tuesday's.

Testing will occur during work hours and be considered work time. Once you have tested, you are permitted to come to work while you are waiting for your results. Some tests can take up to 72 hours to receive results.

What will happen at the weekly surveillance testing site?

1. In preparation for the test:
 - a. No water should be consumed for **at least 10** minutes prior to collection.
 - b. Other drinks, food, smoking, nasal sprays, teeth cleaning and chewing gum should be avoided for at **least 30** minutes before sample collection.
 - c. Coughing or sniffing immediately prior to sample collection must be avoided.
2. Employees will be given a test kit and directed to a table to follow the directions which includes spitting into a vial, placing a top on the vial, and shaking the vial.
3. At the completion of the test, the employee will place the test vial into a provided biohazard bag.
4. Test results will be sent directly to the University.

Do I have to use the university provided surveillance testing site for my weekly testing?

Employees have a choice regarding the location of their weekly COVID surveillance testing. The University is funding this campus-based testing option at no cost to employees. There are other testing options locally, but any cost associated with those testing options will be borne by the employee.

When will I know my results?

Employees who participate in the University-funded weekly surveillance testing will receive notice from the University only if their test results are positive. Results are typically back within 48-72 hours of the test. Your work status will not change from the previous week as you wait for the results.

If you are positive, you should follow MDH guidelines and report your absence to your supervisor.

How long will the campus surveillance testing site be available?

We will continue to provide a surveillance testing option for employees as long as the State policy is in place. The University might not use the same testing services throughout the year but will provide a no cost testing option for employees.