

# SHIELD Testing FAQ

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## General Information

### **Is SHIELD testing mandatory?**

Testing is voluntary. Parents must sign a consent form for their children to be tested.

### **What type of test is the SHIELD test?**

The SHIELD test is a highly sensitive molecular RT-PCR saliva-based test. PCR (polymerase chain reaction) creates a chain reaction that replicates viral genetic material, allowing detection of even low viral loads. covidSHIELD detects three genes of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, unlike most PCR tests, which only detect 1 gene.

### **Why did the district partner with SHIELD for testing?**

IDPH entered a partnership with SHIELD Illinois to provide weekly testing to participating schools utilizing the SHIELD Illinois saliva-based RT-PCR testing. Screening tests for SARS-CoV-2 are intended to identify infected persons who are asymptomatic and without known or suspected exposure to SARS-CoV-2. Screening tests are performed to identify persons who may be contagious so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission. Screening tests can be an effective mitigation strategy, especially in areas with high-to-moderate community transmission.

### **What does it mean to be operating under Emergency Use Authorization (EUA)?**

The test has gone through the rigorous review process of the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) against an extensive set of well-established requirements/parameters. Authorization means that the SHIELD saliva test fulfilled all the requirements of the FDA before being authorized for use in CLIA Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act certified laboratories for COVID testing, specifically during public health emergencies such as the current COVID-19 pandemic.

**What types of testing will be offered?**

**District 202 will start with SHIELD screening testing only.** Once screening testing is running smoothly, we will investigate other testing options including a “Test to Stay” program and symptomatic testing. “Test to Stay” allows individuals in close contact to participate in SHIELD testing on days 1, 3, 5, 7. If test results are negative, the individual is not required to quarantine. The additional testing options will be available ONLY to students who are signed up for the weekly screening testing.

**Is SHIELD testing only for unvaccinated staff/students?**

SHIELD testing is highly recommended for unvaccinated staff and students. Vaccinated staff and students may participate in SHIELD testing if they would like to.

**What is the timeline for starting SHIELD testing?**

- Consent forms will be available online starting Sept. 6<sup>th</sup> until September 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Current target start date for testing is the week of September 27<sup>th</sup> or later.
- Additional students and staff may consent for the program after the initial roll out, however, any new enrollees will take at least 1 week to be added to the program.

### Privacy and HIPAA

**Is it HIPAA compliant?**

Yes. Shield Illinois supports a secure HIPAA-compliant information management system for tracking and reporting results.

**Who will receive my child’s test results?**

In addition to you receiving your child’s test results, the Plainfield School District 202, the Illinois Department of Public Health (“IDPH”), and Will or Kendall County Health Department will also receive your child’s test results, consistent with IDPH guidance and the Illinois Control of Communicable Disease Code.

**What other information is being shared with Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)?**

Address, phone number, and demographic information are also shared with IDPH. If that person does not have a phone or email, SHIELD will share the sponsor organization’s information.

### Testing Process

**How often will your child be tested?**

In accordance with current Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations as adopted by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), testing will be conducted at least one time per week.

**Will the testing take place in my building?**

Testing samples will be collected in all schools throughout the district. The actual testing of the samples will take place at a laboratory at another location.

**Will I be able to test on certain days or will it be available every day?**

Testing will be offered one day a week at each school. The day and time at each building will be determined at a later date. Buildings will test on different days during different time frames. There will not be a “testing day” for the entire district.

**Should my child get tested if they are vaccinated?**

SHIELD testing is recommended for non-vaccinated students and staff. Students and staff who are vaccinated may participate in SHIELD testing.

**How does the testing process work?**

Students whose parents OPT-IN to SHIELD testing will check-in weekly with collection staff, receive a small vial, then "drool" a small amount of saliva into the vial. The collection staff will then scan the student's QR code and link it with the saliva provided. The vial with the sample is placed in a container which will be transported to the lab and the student returns to class. Watch this video for more information: [SHIELD Information Video](#)

**How much saliva is needed for a SHIELD test?**

Vials are marked to indicate the 1.5 mL needed. The collection staff will support the student during the process.

**How long does it take to go through the testing process?**

The collection process is completed within a few minutes.

**Are there any rules to follow prior to being tested?**

Students should not eat, drink, or put anything in their mouth one hour prior to taking the SHIELD test. This includes drinking, chewing gum, using mouthwash, etc. Saliva collected must be clear and free of other substances. Schools will schedule the collection of samples to meet this requirement with as little disruption to the student's day.

**Where will the testing take place?**

The location for testing will vary. The student will be out of the classroom for approximately 5-10 minutes.

**What type of lab is used for testing? Are the people conducting the test trained?**

Please review the [Laboratory Testing Process video](#) for more information about the testing process.

## Test Results

**How will I know if my child's test results?**

You must create an account on the [SHIELD IL portal](#) to view test results. Please use the **SHIELD Community Agency Code** that you were sent to create your portal. If you are the parent or guardian of a minor(s) and wish to see their results, please first create a portal for yourself then add your minor(s) as dependents to your account.

When adding a rostered student as a dependent, the unique email or mobile phone entered must match the patient roster (Use the primary contact email or phone number that you entered during online SHIELD registration to attempt to match the value in the portal). Once a match is found, parents will be able to access their student's test results. Please click [here](#) for directions for establishing a Family Portal Account to access test results.

Plainfield School District 202 will also receive results of your child's test and may/will notify you separately of any positive result. All results are confidential and protected under HIPAA and FERPA.

**What should I do when I receive my child's test results?**

If your child's test results are positive, please contact your child's doctor immediately to review the test results and discuss next steps. Complete the [Student Contact Tracing Form](#). You may not send your child back to school without a note from your child's doctor that indicates your child is no longer positive for the COVID-19 virus.

If your child's test results are negative, this means that the COVID-19 virus was not detected in your child's saliva (spit). Your child may continue to attend school.

Tests sometimes produce incorrect negative results called "false negatives" in people who have COVID-19. If your child tests negative but has symptoms of COVID-19, or if you have concerns about your child's exposure to COVID-19, you should call your child's doctor and isolate consistent with the guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health.

**Who will receive my child's test results?**

In addition to you receiving your child's test results, the Plainfield School District 202, the Illinois Department of Public Health ("IDPH"), and Will or Kendall County Health Department will also receive your child's test results, consistent with IDPH guidance and the Illinois Control of Communicable Disease Code.

**When will results be given back to the contact tracers/parents? Test given on Tuesday, when will we have results?**

Results will be sent to the school district and IDPH through a HIPPA compliant health results portal within 24 hours of samples reaching the lab. Parents will also have access to this portal. Reporting results depends on the time it takes to get the samples to the lab. We anticipate that results will be sent within 24-48 hours of testing.

**How accurate are the test results?**

Based on clinical trials, SHIELD testing has a high accuracy rate. covidSHIELD's sensitivity (false negatives) was 96.8% and specificity (false positives) was 98.9%. covidSHIELD detects three genes of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, unlike most PCR tests, which only detect 1 gene.

- This allows the test to identify pre-symptomatic and asymptomatic cases, as two of the three genes must be present to label a sample as "positive." This makes it extremely accurate in detecting positive and negative results.
- As the virus mutates, SHIELD's test may have superior detection abilities compared to a one-gene approach and can screen for variants of concern.

**What if I don't agree with the test results, can my child take another COVID test?**

Follow-up testing is not needed. The covidSHIELD saliva-based test is a definitive rtPCR diagnostic test authorized by the FDA. Retesting is not required or recommended. The covidShield saliva test has a specificity of 98.9% and sensitivity of 96.8%. The test targets three highly conserved regions of the viral genome for detection. High specificity offered by three-target detection, combined with frequent testing makes the SHIELD saliva-based test extremely accurate.

Repeat testing after the initial positive test is neither required nor recommended. Patients should rely on the initial positive covidSHIELD test as definitive. They should take appropriate action to isolate and consult their healthcare provider as applicable with any questions or concerns.

**What if I don't agree with the results, does my child still have to quarantine?**

Yes, individuals with a positive SHIELD test will need to quarantine.

**What is being tested?**

**Is there anything else being tested for? Drugs, alcohol, etc.?**

No. The COVID SHIELD test only targets specific COVID-19 markers and is not able to test for other communicable diseases, substances, or DNA. Once testing is completed, test specimens are safely and permanently destroyed by being placed in biohazard containers, securely stored, and incinerated by hazardous materials personnel.

**Are the SHIELD tests able to detect variants?** Yes, though it is not able to identify particular variants. Only genetic sequencing can identify specific virus variants.

**Consent**

**How do I consent for SHIELD testing?**

Parents/Guardians must complete the [SHIELD COVID Testing Consent Form](#) for each child they would like to participate in the weekly testing. Parents/Guardians must choose – or “Opt In” -- to give consent for their child(ren) to be tested.

**How do I sign up multiple children?**

Each child must be individually registered on the site. Parents must log in with each child's school ID/school email address and password.

**Do I have to sign up for SHIELD testing right now?**

Additional students and staff may consent for the program after the initial roll out, however, any new enrollees will take at least 1 week to be added to the program.

**If I sign my child up for the weekly testing, can my child refuse to test on the day of? Or Can I opt in now, but then have my kids NOT get tested during a particular week?**

The school will offer testing to students who have consent for testing. If the students do not want to test, the school and the testing company will not make them test.

**Can I opt my child in for weekly testing, just so they can participate in test to stay if they are directly exposed?**

Yes. Students must be part of the weekly testing component to be eligible for Test to Stay.

**Can I sign up my child for weekly testing at any time? Can I sign up for my child to test when the transmission rate is high and then withdraw my consent?**

Yes. Parents can consent to SHIELD testing at any time, it will take at least 7 days after a parent consents for the student to be able to begin testing weekly. Parents can also withdraw their consent at any time if they follow the procedures as listed above.

## **What if I completed the consent form for my child and now I want to withdraw my consent? Updated**

**Parents/Guardians** who no longer want their child to participate in SHIELD testing, must complete a [SHIELD Revoke Student Consent form](#). It can take up to a week to process your revocation of consent. Parents/Guardians will receive a confirmation email once their revocation has been processed. The confirmation email will be sent to the email address used to complete the SHIELD Revoke Student Consent form.

### Test to Stay

**Will the SHIELD Testing be used for “Test to stay” and, if so, how will that work with the results not coming back for 24-48 hours and only having the 3rd party in to test once per week?**

The district is starting with weekly testing. Once weekly testing is running smoothly, we will begin Test to Stay. More information about this program will be available when it begins.

**Can a staff member or parent take their child to their own doctor and have them tested on day 1, 3, 5, and 7 (not participating in SHIELD) and be able to Stay in School?**

No. Students and Staff are only eligible for Test to Stay if they participate in school SHIELD testing. They may not go to their own providers for this option.

**Can I opt my child in for weekly testing, just so they can participate in test to stay if they are directly exposed?**

Yes. Students must be part of the weekly testing component to be eligible for Test to Stay.

### Other Questions

**Is SHIELD testing only for unvaccinated staff/students?**

SHIELD testing is highly recommended for unvaccinated staff and students. Vaccinated staff and students may participate in SHIELD testing if they would like to.

**If a parent opts in for this testing, can they opt in for just the spit test only and not the nasal swab?**

Currently, the district is only using the SHIELD based saliva test. If the district implements the BINAX Now nasal test in the future, families will be contacted prior to testing.

**How much does the test cost?**

**Is the district getting paid to conduct testing?**

**Are my fees going towards SHIELD testing?**

**Is the district paying the 3rd party operations partner to handle collections and transportation to the lab?**

SHIELD testing is being conducted at no cost to you or Plainfield School District 202.

The district is not paying for any portion of testing including testing, collections, transportation to the lab or reporting of results. The district is also not being compensated to host testing.