AGRICULTURAL SEASONAL WORKER COVID-19 TESTING INITIATIVE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How do farms participate in this initiative?

A. Farm operators who employ temporary workers from outside of New York State and that are located in Clinton, Genesee, Orleans, Ulster and/or Wayne Counties can participate in the COVID-19 testing initiative.

Q: How do farm operators know if their farm is one of those farms?

A. A representative from your local health department or the Departments of Health, Agriculture and Markets, or Labor or will contact you directly.

Q: How much does the test cost?

A. The COVID-19 test is free.

Q: What do farm operators need to do to have employees participate in this initiative?

A. Farm operators should register to participate in a testing event by clicking on this link: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/78fd67f98e104d1c95f533cb8ac9c200

Once registered, a representative from the mobile testing team will contact you directly to see what dates/times/locations work best for your operation and employees.

Q: What information do employees need to provide to participate in the event?

A. Employees will be required to provide their name, date of birth, contact phone number, and employer name at the time of testing.

Q: How do employees get test results?

A. Everyone tested will be provided specific instructions on how to obtain their test results.

Q: What should farm operators do if workers test positive for COVID-19?

A. Farm operators should work closely with their local health department on the screening, isolation and quarantine process, and housing needs of their workers.

Q. Who is responsible for providing quarantine housing, medication, food, laundry, and medical care for employees that are sick?

A. Employers are responsible for providing appropriate housing and medical care including food, medication, and laundry for workers who are sick. Employers need to work with the State/local county health department to ensure that isolation housing is available and acceptable, and that each employee's medical needs are met.

Q. Can an employer require that employees keep working while COVID-19 positive?

A. No. Isolated workers may not report to work until at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND at least 3 days (72 hours) have passed without a fever and without the use of fever reducing medications, AND respiratory symptoms including cough and shortness of breath improve.

Q. Who determines when an employee can go back to work?

A. The State/local county health department, along with a medical provider, will determine when an employee may return to work.

Q. What must an employer provide to employees that test COVID-19 positive?

A. Under the Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act, employees are entitled to up to two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at the employee's regular rate of pay where the employee is unable to work because the employee is quarantined (pursuant to Federal, State, or local government order or advice of a health care provider), and/or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis.

Q. What happens if an employee is still sick after having received the 80 hours of federal COVID-19 pay?

A. The employer should exhaust any additional benefits the employee may have (sick time, vacation time, etc.) and file a Workers Compensation claim on behalf of the employee. You can also file a Workers Compensation claim by completing the paperwork: http://www.wcb.ny.gov/content/main/forms/Forms_CLAIMANT.jsp

Additional Resources:

https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/05/sars-cov-2_diagnostictesting_051520-2.pdf

https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/05/13112_covid19_testingnextsteps_052120.pdf

https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/05/13135_en_nys_contacttracing_flyer_052120.pdf

https://agriculture.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/05/agm-doh_covid19_cleaningfarm.pdf