



TOMÁS J. ARAGÓN, M.D., Dr.P.H.
Director and State Public Health Officer

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency California Department of Public Health



GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor

Health Update on Federal Test-to-Treat Program in California

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Introduction

The United States government has [announced](#) a Test to Treat initiative to facilitate rapid access to free treatment for COVID-19. Beginning March 7, 2022, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) began distributing the oral antivirals Paxlovid and molnupiravir directly to federally qualified health centers, pharmacy-based clinics, and long-term care facilities.

This new initiative will not replace or impact the existing direct allocation system of therapeutics to California or the development of other Test to Treat strategies within the state or in jurisdictions. HHS will continue to [distribute](#) COVID-19 treatments, including oral antivirals, to California for distribution to jurisdictions. All qualified healthcare providers can prescribe these therapeutics to patients who are at increased risk for developing severe COVID-19.

Locating Test to Treat Sites

HHS plans to create a webpage for patients to locate Test to Treat facilities, with plans to launch later this month. Until that time, a list of federal Test-to-Treat locations in California can be found at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Test-to-treat-locations.aspx>.

Adding Additional Test to Treat Sites

At this time, the federally managed Test to Treat program will focus on Federal Retail Pharmacy Therapeutic Program (FRPTP) partners, Long Term Care Pharmacy partners, and associated sites.

Facilities not participating in the federal program which are able to offer Test to Treat services can be added to the new upcoming HHS Test to Treat locator. Any added Test to Treat site that is not in the federal program will receive product through the state and territorial distributions, so allocations to these added sites will come from the total product allocated to the jurisdiction by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

Local health jurisdictions will be responsible for vetting additional Test to Treat facilities in their jurisdictions. Once vetted and identified, Test to Treat facilities can be labeled and uploaded to the Health Partner Ordering Portal (HPOP) and will appear on the HHS Test to Treat locator. Local jurisdictions can email CDPHTherapeutics@cdph.ca.gov to get local Test to Treat sites added to the HHS Test to Treat locator.

Suggested Characteristics of Test to Treat Sites

CDPH suggests that all Test to Treat sites have the following characteristics:

- Offer services to all individuals, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay.
- Have hours of operation and language translation services that accommodate the needs of local communities.
- Be able to provide comprehensive end-to-end test and treat services to support a seamless patient experience.
- Either be able to conduct rapid COVID-19 testing (result available at time of visit) on-site or provide an evaluation of at-home testing results.
- Have health care providers available to provide timely and thorough assessment and discussion relevant to treatment option(s), consistent with FDA requirements regarding these therapeutic options.
- Have a co-located pharmacy able to readily dispense oral medications to eligible patients.
- Have a plan to refer patients to a provider able to offer infusion services should oral medications be contraindicated and the patient needs to receive either an anti-SARS-CoV-2 monoclonal antibody (for example, sotrovimab) or IV remdesivir.

Additional Resources

Clinical guidance on outpatient treatment can be found on in the [NIH COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines](#). The [CDPH therapeutics webpage](#) provides general information for the public and providers regarding outpatient therapeutic options for COVID-19.