

# **New York State Statewide COVID-19 Testing OVERVIEW**

**Office of Public Health  
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**Health Data NY**

## **General Description:**

SARS-CoV2, a novel coronavirus, was first identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in 2019. There are many coronaviruses, all of which typically cause respiratory disease in humans. The World Health Organization (WHO) named the disease caused by SARS-CoV2 “COVID-19.” In March 2020, WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic due to the number of countries affected by its rapid spread.

This dataset is composed of information on all of the tests of individuals for COVID-19 infection performed in New York State beginning March 1, 2020, when the first case of COVID-19 was identified in the state. The data is collected and maintained by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and includes the date each individual was tested and the county associated with the tested individual (see the Data Methodology section below for more information about how county is assigned). The primary goal of publishing this dataset is to provide users timely information about local disease spread and reporting of positive cases. As of the publication of this document, the data is updated daily, covering all tests completed before 12:00am the day of the update (i.e., all tests completed by the end of the day on the day before the update, for example, the update for April 3, 2020, will reflect all tests completed by the end of the day on April 2, 2020).

The data captures all individuals tested for SARS-CoV2 virus reported to NYSDOH since March 1, 2020 that meet set laboratory result criteria (see Data Methodology). The data do not represent persons with COVID-19 clinical diagnoses by a provider without laboratory confirmation.

As of 4/4/22, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) no longer requires entities conducting COVID testing to report negative or indeterminate antigen test results. This may impact the number and interpretation of total test results reported to the state and also impacts calculation of test percent positivity. Because of this, as of 4/5/22, test percent positivity is calculated using PCR tests only. Reporting of total new daily cases (positive results) will continue to include PCR and antigen tests.

Additional information on COVID-19 can be found here:

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

## **Data Methodology:**

Reporting of SARS-CoV2 laboratory testing results is mandated under Part 2 of the New York State Sanitary Code. Clinical laboratories, as defined in Public Health Law (PHL) § 571 electronically report test results to the NYSDOH via the Electronic Clinical Laboratory Reporting



System (ECLRS). The NYSDOH Division of Epidemiology's Bureau of Surveillance and Data System (BSDS) monitors the reporting and ensures that all positives and negatives are accurately counted. Test counts reflect those completed on an individual each day. A person may have multiple specimens tested on one day, these would be counted one time — i.e., if two specimens are collected from an individual at the same time and then evaluated, the outcome

of the evaluation of those two samples to diagnose the individual is counted as a single test of one person, even though the specimens may be tested separately. Conversely, if an individual is tested on more than one day, the data will show two tests of an individual, one for each date the person was tested.

Test counts are assigned to a county based on this order of preference: 1) the patient's address, 2) the ordering healthcare provider's address, or 3) the ordering facility's address.

### **Limitations of Use:**

The SARS-CoV2 laboratory test result data on this site reflects the best information available to NYSDOH at the time the data is posted.

The total number of tests of individuals performed include all positive, negative, and inconclusive results. Despite the relatively small proportion of inconclusive results, it is not appropriate to subtract the number of individuals tested positive from the total number of individuals tested to calculate the total individuals tested negative.