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In the Loop

The OSHA Vaccine Mandate Was Blocked — What Now?

Near the end of 2021, workplaces were poised to implement COVID-19 testing or vaccination requirements in their organizations. The requirements were drafted by the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) and would apply to certain organizations across the country. In January 2022, the OSHA rule was halted by the Supreme Court of the United States. In effect, this means workplaces are no longer required to implement COVID-19 testing or vaccination mandates. However, that doesn't mean this is the last time you'll hear about COVID-19 workplace policies.

Health experts agree that implementing COVID-19 precautions in the workplace is critical for limiting infections. Therefore, employees shouldn't be surprised if their employer adopts or expands COVID-19

prevention measures even after the OSHA rule has been halted. Employers may still choose to take steps to reduce potential COVID-19 exposures within their organizations through mask-wearing protocols, regular testing, vaccination requirements or other measures.

If you have any questions about your workplace's COVID-19 prevention strategy, please speak with your manager.

How to Get Your Free At-home COVID-19 Tests

Did you know you're eligible to receive free, at-home COVID-19 tests? If you participate in a health plan, your COVID-19 tests will be paid for directly by insurance, or you will be reimbursed later for the cost. You can also order free tests directly from the government by going to covidtests.gov.

Below are the answers to some questions you may have.

Up to what price is covered?

In many instances, insurance companies are only required to reimburse up to \$12 per individual test (or the cost of the test if it's less than \$12). This is typically the case when your insurance company has specific locations they want you to get your test from.

However, if your insurance company doesn't specify where you may get a COVID-19 test, you may be able to be reimbursed for your full test cost even if it exceeds \$12. In all cases, keep your receipts!

Do I need to purchase the test at a certain location for it to be free?

Your workplace may have specific locations (e.g., pharmacies) where you can pick up a free test that is paid for directly by your insurance. Your



manager will be able to tell you. Otherwise, if you can wait a week or two for delivery, you can order tests at covidtests.gov.

How will I be reimbursed for my test?

If you need to be reimbursed for a COVID-19 test (i.e., it was not free at the point of sale), keep your receipts. Then, reach out to your manager—they will be able to tell you how to submit the receipt for reimbursement from your insurance company.

Can I be reimbursed for past COVID-19 tests I purchased?

Insurance companies are only obligated to reimburse you for COVID-19 tests purchased on or after Jan. 15, 2022. Any tests bought before then are generally not covered.

Is there a limit on the number of tests I can be reimbursed for?

Your plan is required to provide reimbursement for eight tests per month, regardless of whether the tests are bought all at once or at separate times throughout the month.

Where can I learn more?

If you have any questions about the information in this article, reach out to your manager.