

High School Equivalency and Proficiency Test Center Guidance and Procedures During the COVID-19 Pandemic



A Reference Guide from the California Department of Education

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These are challenging times, and it's critical that we all do the best we can to stay safe and healthy and to protect those around us during the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The following material outlines the health and safety procedures and best practices we are following in California Department of Education (CDE) test centers.

For the most up-to-date information about CDE's practices, visit the CDE COVID-19 Response and School Reopening web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/coronavirus.asp>. While the information provided on this web page and in the document below are our recommended procedures we encourage you to implement them to the best of your ability. These "best practices" are not mandated by the CDE. Your testing center is responsible for the associated costs of these measures.

Please follow your local and state government guidelines for operating safely. Per standard process, please follow the site closure process if you must close your test center and if you are unavailable for test appointments.

Facility Measures

Enhanced General Cleaning

- Increase the frequency of general cleaning to cover every day the test center is operational.
- Ensure adequate supplies of essential cleaning, hygiene, and protective items.

Cleaning High Touch Points

- Ensure that high touch points in communal areas, such as door handles, door plates, and lockers set are cleaned at least hourly.

Cleaning Workstations

- Clean every testing workstation, keyboard, mouse, touchscreen, headphone set, exhibit, note board/note booklet, and pen after use by a candidate.
- Clean the admissions devices and signature pad after each use by a candidate.
- Clean the admissions and proctor workstations, keyboard, mouse, desk, and chair arms regularly during shifts and between each shift change.

Provision of Essential Items

- Ensure that tissues/Kleenex, soap, hand sanitizer, and paper towels are readily available for staff and candidates to use.

Entry Signage

- Place signs outside the test center to advise candidates of safety and social distancing requirements both outside and inside the test center. Please refer to the sample signage at the end of this document. You can also reference the World Health Organization and other appropriate health organizations for samples.

Distancing: Waiting Area

- Require a minimum of six feet (in all directions) between candidates.
- Use tape or signage to denote the specific seats in the waiting area that can be used.
- In smaller test centers, distancing may mean permitting only a certain number of candidates in the waiting room at any one time.

Distancing: Admin Area

- State that candidates must be as far away as possible from the test administrator without impacting the test administrator's ability to perform adequate checks.
- Denote with tape or signage the point at which candidates should stand in proximity to the admin desk.
- Give candidates a printed (not laminated) copy of the rules agreement to read and advise them to dispose of it in the bin provided afterward.
- Ask candidates to hold their identification at arm's length so the test administrator can review it without touching it.
- Position devices such as signature pads, UV lamps, passport readers, etc., further away but still within the line of sight of the test administrator.
- Ask candidates to hold their identification under the UV lamp or passport readers without the test administrator having to touch it.
- Have candidates sign the digital signature pad; the pad must be wiped down after each use.
- If you are allowing or requiring face masks in the testing room, have candidates briefly remove the face mask for inspection, which can be done during the check-in photo process.

Distancing: Proctor/Invigilation Area

- State that candidates must be as far away as possible from the test administrator without impacting the test administrator's ability to perform adequate checks.
- Denote with tape or signage the point at which candidates should stand in proximity to the proctor.
- Instead of handing out exhibits as per usual process, place the necessary exhibits at the assigned workstation prior to the candidate entering the testing room.
- Ask the candidate to leave the exhibits at the workstation at the end of the test.
- Clean and collect all exhibits after the test.

Distancing: Testing Room

- Require a minimum of six feet (in all directions) between candidates.
- Adjust testing capacity to allow for proper social distancing.
- Seat candidates at a maximum possible distance away from each other using every second or third workstation as necessary.
- Consider dividing candidates into separate rooms should the test center layout allow.
- Ensure that no more than the maximum permitted number of candidates are in the room as per local government mandates.

Additional Signage

- For additional signage, please visit the Centers for Disease Control's Printed Resources web page at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html>.

Candidate Measures

Observation of Notices

- Advise all candidates that they must observe the guidance detailed on the signs and notices located throughout the test center.

Self Turn-Away

- Candidates are advised via the sign on the test center door not to enter the test center if they have potentially been exposed or are exhibiting symptoms.

Declaration of Wellness

- Candidates must be advised that, by signing the declaration of wellness, they are confirming that within the past 14 days, they have not exhibited COVID-19 symptoms and have not been in close proximity to anyone who was either diagnosed with COVID-19 or who was exhibiting symptoms.

Reschedule/Cancellation

- If a candidate is positive for COVID-19, the test center must notify the CDE so we can communicate with the test sponsor.

Face Masks

- If masks are required, candidates must be notified in the confirmation email as well as on the door sign before entering the test center. A candidate's mask must be inspected before the candidate enters the testing room.
- Test centers may provide masks, but they must be single-use masks in unopened packaging.

Gloves

- A candidate may wear disposable gloves throughout the test but must demonstrate to the test administrator that nothing is hidden in the gloves.
- Gloves will not be provided by the test center.

Hand Sanitizer

- Place the bottles of hand sanitizer in the admission and proctor stations for both candidates and staff to use. Remind candidates to use hand sanitizer before the admission process and before going to the test lab.

Hand Washing

- The test center will require candidates to wash their hands before entering the testing room.

Tissues/Kleenex

- Offer tissues/Kleenex to every candidate as needed.

Staff Measures

Self-Isolation If Exposed

- If a member of the test center staff has been potentially exposed due to travel or contact with an infected person, the staff member must notify their manager immediately and self-isolate at home for 14 days.

Self-Isolation If Diagnosed

- If a member of test center staff has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the staff member must notify their manager immediately and self-isolate at home for 14 days (minimum) or until well.

Do Not Work If High Risk

- If a member of test center staff falls into a high-risk category due to age or an underlying health condition, it is strongly recommended that the staff member does not work.

Assign a Person in Charge

- Designate one member of the test center staff to be the person in charge of COVID-19 prevention measures.
 - This person ensures that all required measures have been fully implemented.
 - This person provides feedback to manager should measures not be effective.

Complete an Emergency Response Plan

- Create a plan to notify the relevant health authority if a candidate or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19.

Temperature Checking

- Consult with your HR staff to determine whether checking the temperature of test center staff upon entering the building is appropriate.
- Temperature must be taken using a digital thermometer that does not require contact (e.g., laser).
- Staff with a temperature above 100°F or 37.7°C must not work and must return home and monitor their symptoms.

Face Masks

- Test center staff must wear face masks.
- Face masks should be provided to test center employees by the test center.

Gloves

- Test center staff may wear disposable gloves.
- Disposable gloves should be provided to staff by the test center.

Scheduling

- Test center should staff only two or three employees at a time in the test center.

The following page contains sample signage to be printed and posted at test center entrances.

Attention Testing Candidates: Important Test Center Procedures Regarding Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

By appearing to test, you certify that:

- You have not been diagnosed with COVID-19 or been in close personal contact with someone who has a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis.
- You have had no flu-like symptoms in the last 14 days, such as fever or chills and a cough, sore throat, or shortness of breath.
- You have not traveled internationally within the last 14 days or been in close personal contact with someone who has traveled internationally within the last 14 days.

If you meet the above requirements and enter the test center, please follow the guidelines below and be aware of the practices in place in order to protect yourself and other candidates.

Test center requirements and guidelines:

- Wash your hands in the restroom upon arrival at the test center.
- Use hand sanitizer upon guidance from test center staff before the admissions process and before entering the testing room.
- Use the tissue provided to cover your nose and mouth in case of sneezing or coughing.
- You may bring and wear a medical or nonmedical face mask. The mask will be inspected prior to entering the test room.
- If the use of a face mask is required by local authorities or the test center, you may not enter this facility without a face mask.

Our test center staff is following strict cleaning regimens after each admission session and exam session, including disinfecting all items that candidates come into contact with.

Adhering to the above measures, we can work together to ensure a clean and hygienic testing environment. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.