



Monday, 13 December 2021

Saliva Surveillance Testing for the Screen Industry – December 2021 Update

Surveillance testing is likely to become widely used in our industry over the next year. While vaccinations offer a good level of protection, other measures like physical distancing, use of face coverings and surveillance testing are good tools in stopping the spread of COVID-19.

Production companies should note that testing is time consuming and labour intense. A testing coordinator or team may be required to work alongside the testing company's staff. And currently there is no funding available for testing, so clients or production companies must be prepared to cover the cost of testing. But the overall health & safety benefits to the production, workers and their families is hard to argue with.

This document does not have all the information about surveillance testing, but it should hopefully give you a starting point.

Saliva Surveillance Testing

Surveillance testing is generally saliva testing. While it's possible that Rapid Antigen Testing (usually nose swabs) will become available through 2022, currently there is neither the supply nor processes in place to roll this out for our industry. So for the sake of this document we will only talk about saliva testing.

The How

- Test kits can be dropped off to your house. Or you can pick up from a selection of testing centres around the country.
- You will then spit into the vial (note: spit, not phlegm, is required or the test will come back inconclusive).
- The vial then needs to be dropped to a drop-off centre. This can be the production office or one of many drop off sites around the country.
- There is no need to self-isolate for surveillance testing.
- Some of the testing providers have an app that helps you do the testing and that keeps track of your tests and results.

The Time

- For short term productions you are likely to be tested once or twice. The first one around 2-3 days before the tech recce, costume fitting or shoot day.
- Testing before travel to other regions is also recommended, and will be required by AirNZ if you are not fully vaccinated. A follow up test upon arrival in the other region should also be considered.
- For long term productions, expect saliva testing at least twice a week, but this will vary with the tolerance of the production.
- Before proceeding with surveillance testing, productions need to allow time to set up an account with their chosen supplier. And the lab will also need a few days to set up everyone that needs to be tested in their system. They will need contact details and personal information like NHI number and Date of Birth for everyone that is to be tested.

The Cost

- Please check cost with your preferred supplier. Regular mass testing is obviously more cost effective than one-off testing for a small production.
- Note that the quote will most likely be per test (and every person is likely to need 2-3 tests over a week).
- Additional resources to manage the testing will be required by both production and/or the safety department.

The Where

The below list may not be all the currently available suppliers, so feel free to do your own research or talk to your regular H&S officer about their preferred supplier.

Auckland:

- Rako Science / www.rakoscience.com / leon.grice@rakoscience.com
- Gila Factory / Robert Gibson / covid-testing@gilafactory.com
- Central Safety / Paul Andreassend / salivatesting@centralsafety.co.nz
- All Clear NZ: www.allclear.nz / brendan@allclear.nz

Wellington:

- Rako Science / www.rakoscience.com / leon.grice@rakoscience.com
- Central Safety / Paul Andreassend / salivatesting@centralsafety.co.nz

South Island:

Central Safety / Paul Andreassend / salivatesting@centralsafety.co.nz

Even if you are not working on a production that is doing surveillance testing, you can still contact the above suppliers to organise your own regular testing regime.

Please note: Productions are responsible for the cost of surveillance testing and must not ask workers to use Public COVID-19 community testing facilities for surveillance testing. These testing centres are for symptomatic people only.

Privacy

- Only the provider and the lab will receive your test result, although you may be asked to sign a consent form allowing your doctor and/or the production to be notified as well.
- Testing Surveillance data may be made available to production to evaluate the test results within a Production.
- You will get an SMS message for a negative result. Or you can check your testing app.
- If the test is inconclusive (i.e. if there's contaminated or too little saliva to process), you may be required to do another test.
- All positive cases are reported by the consulting pathologist to the Regional Medical Officer of Health, the saliva testing vendor. Regional Public Health will directly call the person who tested positive to ensure rapid contact tracing and isolation of impacted persons. The H&S officer of the production should make contact with the positive case to support and assist wellbeing.

Symptomatic Testing

Testing of persons with COVID-19 symptoms can only be undertaken by authorised medical practitioners. This includes community testing centres and drive-through testing stations, medical centres and most GP practices. To find your nearest testing centre go to <https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/covid-19/>.

Rapid Testing

Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT) testing will most likely be available for our industry in 2022, but as of today, there is neither the supply nor workplace training and processes to roll this out.

You can read some official information about it [HERE](#).

Sincerely,
The ScreenSafe COVID-19 Group