

Protocol for Testing of People for COVID-19 Medical Certification and Travel



Ministry of Health

2nd July 2020

2nd Edition

Protocol for Testing of People for COVID-19 Medical Certification and Travel

1. Rationale

With the reopening of many countries, Bhutanese and non-Bhutanese living in Bhutan will begin to travel out of the country. Many countries of destination or transit may require these travelers to produce COVID-19 test certificates. Such requirements will cause inconveniences to them if the Ministry of Health (MoH) do not provide the required testing and certificate. On the other hand, it will also have administrative and cost implications to the MoH to provide this service. Thus, this protocol is being developed to facilitate the travel of those who wishes to travel abroad.

2. Test method

- There are currently three methods of testing in use in Bhutan;
 - i. RT-PCR
 - ii. Rapid antigen test
 - iii. Rapid antibody test
- For individuals requiring medical certification with COVID-19 testing, any **ONE** of the three tests may be provided as specified by the requirement of the country of destination. For example, as of now, India requires only rapid antibody tests.
- Most countries may require either a COVID-19 test certificate **OR** a symptom free and fit to travel certificate (not requiring the test).
- The MoH will issue a uniform **COVID-19 test certificate with fit to travel** certificate as per the format developed (attached) that can be issued by the medical doctor from any hospital.
- If no test is required and the individual need a fit to travel certificate, the normal existing procedures should be followed

3. Testing procedure

Concerned individual requiring the certificate will follow the following procedures to obtain the certificate:

- The individual should confirm that the country of destination needs a COVID-19 test.
- Individual should visit the nearest hospital to consult a doctor and request for COVID-19 testing. The applicant should undergo all necessary procedures including the payment for the test.
- Testing should be carried out within 72 hours of the planned departure. Testing too early many not be accepted by the receiving country and testing too late may cause delays in issuing the certificate.
- If RT-PCR test is required, suitable sample (throat and nasal swab or Nasopharyngeal swab) should be collected and sent to COVID-19 Testing Laboratory for RT-PCR.

- RT-PCR results will be available within 24 hours of sample collection and during the wait, the individual ***need not be kept*** at the holding area since they are not symptomatic or suspects for COVID-19.
- If required, the test result should be shared by the laboratory staff with the concerned clinician in the format developed (as below).
- The Clinician should declare test result to the individual and issue certificate in the format
- Clinician should write his/her name and Bhutan Health and Medical Council registration number and sign in the space provided.

4. Test cost

The cost for the various test methods shall be as follows:

<i>Sl. no</i>	<i>Test type</i>	<i>Cost</i>
1	RT-PCR	Nu. 3000
2	Rapid antigen test	Nu. 1000
3	Rapid antibody test	Nu. 1000

5. Test report format

The testing laboratory will issue a test report as per the following format:

Health Center:		Test Date:		Test Method:	
Sample Number	Name	Age/Sex	CID/Passport	Test result	

Test Performed by:

Name: _____ **BMHC no.** _____

Signature _____

6. COVID-19 certificate

After the test is performed, if the result is negative, the examining Physician shall provide a COVID-19 certificate and a fit to travel. This certificate will be uniform throughout the country and signed by the medical doctors of the respective hospitals.