

Survey to Chief APOs

Issue: Drug Testing Protocol During COVID-19

Question (from Lancaster County)

Has anyone developed specific drug testing protocol pursuant to the COVID-19 situation? If so, would you be willing to share it with me?

Allegheny County

Although we started to return to work this week, Allegheny remains under a judicial emergency per our PJ, until 8/31/20. We have limited the number of visitors to our offices and are conducting drug tests only when necessary.

Chester County

We use Averhealth as well. They have done a really good job. I've copied their protocol from an email they sent out. Mostly common-sense things. One thing they do that seems to help cut down on people waiting in the waiting room is have the person text them when they get there and when ready the person is told to come into the office.

Given the importance of limiting the spread of COVID-19 and keeping our staff and clients safe, we have implemented numerous efforts, including CDC recommendations, that enable us to continue to safely care for clients. We have:

- Ensured proper use of personal protective equipment for technicians (e.g., mask, gloves);
- Patients must also wear masks and get their temperature checked to enter the Patient Care Centers
- Required proper technician hand washing as well as temperature and symptom checks;
- Increased Patient Care Center cleaning and sanitation;
- Ceased conducting breath alcohol testing; and
- Promoted social distancing via scheduling management, encouraging clients to visit during slow times, and limiting waiting rooms to 10 or less people.

In addition, we will implement an additional enhancement at our Patient Care Centers to further enhance social distancing. As clients arrive at our Patient Care Centers, there will be a sign on the door requesting they text on their arrival and ask that they wait in their car until we are ready to complete the collection process. Once the patient care center is empty and ready to have the client provide a specimen we will text them to enter the facility to conduct the collection. This will ensure minimal people are inside our patient care center at any time.

Columbia County

Columbia County has been utilizing drug patches throughout the pandemic but now are slowly conducting urine screens in our courthouse. We are limited to remaining on the first floor with Officers wearing masks and gloves. Defendants are wearing masks as well and being escorted

inside the courthouse directly to the bathroom. The test results are read and defendants escorted directly back outside. We are still using patches as well.

Dauphin County

Dauphin has an onsite lab for testing. However, during this pandemic, the GEO Group has been doing all of our testing. We are resuming in house testing starting June 15th. That said, our lab technicians will be required to wear a mask, face shield and gloves. The probationer/parolee will be required to wear a mask as well. We will be staggering appointment times for testing in an effort to maintain social distancing.

Erie County

In Erie the agency which conducts our random urine testing program has agreed to conduct one time urines for offenders for a fee to be paid by our local office of Drug and Alcohol. They have agreed to handle this for 2 months so that officers do not have to deal with close contact in a confined area. This helps as we adapt to all of the changes implemented related to COVID-19 including a reduction of the number offenders reporting in person due to social distancing in our waiting rooms. In August we will re-evaluate but it solves a problem temporarily.

Fayette County

Same as Snyder County starting next week.

Franklin County

Current drug testing protocols require an infrared temperature screening of the individual and they must be wearing a mask. Officers must wear eye protection, mask, and gloves. We did have portable toilets rented to do these tests outside, but have recently returned them since restrictions have been eased. All drug court, DAPP program, and enhanced individuals are on a regular drug testing schedule, the other majority is at the PO's discretion.

Greene County

So in Greene County we went full hillbilly Lazy Susan. There was a very small bathroom beside a door that exits to the street. I had our maintenance department build a window with a Lazy Susan that can accommodate a urine specimen cup. We installed the window in the bathroom. Client enters from the street and directly into the bathroom. Officer can observe the collection of the specimen without being in the bathroom. They place the cup in the Lazy Susan, spin it, the officer reads cup, spins the cup back, and the person either dumps the cup or puts in bag to send for conformation. Mask and gloves for officer still required, and mask for the client. Works great. I attached photos for your viewing pleasure.

Lehigh County

Any drug testing done by Officers (on an extremely limited basis) are in the field and they must wear gloves, masks (defendant's too) and we ordered goggles for officers.

Lycoming County

Lycoming Co. will be transitioning to Oral testing during these times. The defendant will "swab" his/her mouth, place it back into the test container and PO's will read the results. I use Premier for my testing.

Philadelphia County

We here in Philadelphia County have not be opened yet but this now is because of the rioting that has been going on and the unrest here in Philadelphia. We hope to get back to work maybe by Monday and when we do we have decreased the reporting requirements for our client base population only those who are delinquent or in need of services or require a face-to-face because of personal challenges that they are dealing with are required to come. We will still conduct urinalysis as our lab technicians are going to be on the premise but we're practicing social distancing and we're only taking them if mandated by the court or if there is a suspicion of usage.

Snyder County

While we are fortunate to be in the green phase our office has returned to "normal" operations. Therefore, urine screenings are being completed as they were pre-covid, however our officers are wearing masks and gloves while collecting specimens. We just returned to full staff this past Monday and we monitor all scheduled office appointments to keep the volume down and to comply with social distancing recommendations.

Warren County

Same as Fayette, Snyder

Westmoreland County

Same as Snyder starting mid June

York County

York County's vendor, Averhealth, has remained open and is drug testing our defendants.