Pesticide Applicator Test Session
Procedures during COVID-19

Primary Requirements

To become and remain certified to apply, distribute, or consult on the use of pesticides in Washington State, applicants must pass competency exams, which test their knowledge of safe and responsible pesticide application, as well as state and federal laws specific to their work.

The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) is federally authorized to administer these exams that certify pesticide applicators, dealers, consultants, and structural pest inspectors.

WSDA continues to administer pesticide exams that comply with current understanding of state and federal health requirements and the most recent version of the Healthy Washington: Roadmap to Recovery.

This document describes how we keep the testing process safe during COVID-19. WSDA aims to provide required testing services that allow essential industries to continue supporting the critical needs of the state, while protecting the health and safety of people and the environment.

Testing Sessions Overview

Our ability to offer exam sessions virtually is limited by needs such as frequent testing, monitoring sessions, state regulations, and the industry’s regional locations.

To meet industry’s needs, WSDA must administer exams weekly in Olympia and Yakima, monthly in Spokane and Moses Lake, and bimonthly in East Wenatchee. Exam sessions last three and a half hours. Tester capacity depends on the size of the testing facility, staff resources, and local COVID-19 restrictions.

We choose testing venues that can comply with local public health guidance for COVID-19. For instance, we use large meeting rooms where facility managers can properly clean and disinfect before and after exam sessions.

WSDA will not use a venue unless it can meet and maintain general requirements for all phases and local public health guidelines.
SAFETY PLAN

Before Exam Sessions

To prepare for every exam session, WSDA takes the following steps.

- Make sure the testing facility has enough space to allow at 3 to 6 feet of space around each tester and proctor (test monitor), including check-out and testing supply tables.
- Prefer testing rooms that have multiple entry and exit doors to allow one-way foot traffic flow into and out of the room. If that's not possible, staff will monitor passage through a single door to maintain physical distancing requirements.
- Designate at least one staff person to be responsible for ensuring COVID-19 prevention practices at each testing session.
- Provide sufficient personal protection supplies at each session.
- Confirm that the venue cleans, sanitizes, and ventilates, following current COVID-19 guidance – including the testing room, common areas, restrooms, or any other areas occupied by testers or proctors. This includes facilities that WSDA manages, leases, or owns.
- Properly sanitize and store testing paperwork and supplies.
- Inform testers of proper entry and exit procedures, which may vary depending on the testing location and facility requirements.
- Assign at least two WSDA exam proctors to each testing session.
- Screen all WSDA staff and exam proctors for symptoms of COVID-19 before arriving at testing venue. Those with any COVID-19 symptoms not attributed to an existing health condition will not participate in testing activities.

Session Start

- WSDA staff proctors wear face coverings during the testing session, including upon entering and leaving the testing venue.
- Testers will be directed to designated entry and exit points. If the testing facility does not accommodate one-way foot traffic flow into and out of the room, staff will monitor passage through a single door to maintain physical distancing.
- No “walk-ins” or unregistered testers will be permitted. Staff will ensure that physical distancing is maintained during the check-in process.
- Before entering the testing room, all testers will answer questions to screen for symptoms of COVID-19. Screening procedures may vary, depending on the venue. Staff will ensure that physical distancing is maintained during the screening process. WSDA will maintain contact information for registered testers.
- All testers will be asked to sanitize their hands before entering the testing room and handling testing paperwork and supplies. Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol will be provided.
- WSDA staff or proctor will give each tester a test packet and supplies, and direct tester to a seat. This process may vary depending on venue and facility set up.
- Staff will inform tester of federal and state recommendations and other testing protocols at the start of every session.
- WSDA will post signage illustrating state and federal safety protocols at entry points.
- Testers may bring their own hand sanitizer, pens, pencils, and a non-alcoholic drink.
During Testing

- All exam proctors must wear a face covering during exam sessions, including upon entering and exiting the testing venue.
- Testers are seated 3 to 6 feet apart.
- One exam requires viewing samples. Gloves or sanitizer may be offered to testers taking this exam. A maximum of two testers per session are allowed for this exam to facilitate physical distancing.
- Testers will be advised to wash or sanitize hands before re-entering the room after using the restroom. Posted signage reminds testers of sanitization and physical distancing guidelines.
- Hand sanitizing stations are provided to testers.
- Staff will wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds regularly, or after blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water is not available, they will use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Staff and proctors who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms during a testing session will be sent home immediately. Testers who exhibit symptoms during testing will be asked to leave immediately and reschedule their exams for another date.

At Checkout

- Exam proctors always wear face coverings throughout the exam sessions. Gloves may be used if supplies are available.
- Testers will remain seated until the check-out table is free.
- During checkout, testers will be told to stay 3 to 6 feet from exam proctor as they explain the checkout process.
- Staff will wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds regularly, or after blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water is not available, they will use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

After the Session

Staff will:

- Collect and store in a sanitary manner all testing supplies before the next session.
- Handle all paper exams and forms of payment to comply with current federal and state requirements.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds regularly, or after blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water is not available, they will use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.