



Pesticide Applicator Test Session Procedures during COVID-19

Primary Requirements

To become and remain certified to apply 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 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.



Testing room capacity will vary depending on which phase of the state's recovery plan applies in that location. Along with meeting physical distancing requirements, limits on room occupancy must be met for each phase.

Phase 1: Occupancy in each meeting room/area is limited to 25 percent capacity or 100 people, whichever is fewer (excluding staff).

Phase 2: Occupancy in each room/area is limited to 25 percent capacity or 200 people, whichever is fewer (excluding staff).

Phase 3: Occupancy will be allowed up to 50 percent or 400 people, whichever is fewer for indoor spaces.



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 least 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 that face coverings must be worn over the mouth and nose and stay on during every exam session and when entering and leaving the testing venue. Post signage about this requirement at the room's entry and exit doors.
- Expect testers to provide their own personal face covering before entering the venue and use during the testing session. If a tester arrives without a face covering, WSDA will offer them for individual use. If no face coverings are available to WSDA, testers must reschedule their exam for another date.
- 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, who will travel to the facility in separate vehicles.
- Screen all WSDA staff and exam proctors for symptoms of COVID-19 before arriving at the testing venue. Those with any COVID-19 symptoms not attributed to an existing health condition will not participate in testing activities.
- During every exam session, additional measures protect the safety of testers and staff.

Session Start

- Testers must wear a face covering during exam sessions, including upon entering and leaving the testing venue. We will post signage about this requirement at all the room's entry and exit doors. (See [Order of the Secretary of Health 20-03.1](#) and [Governor's Proclamation 20-25.12.](#))
- 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.
- Testers will use a touchless procedure to check in before entering the testing room. 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 must sanitize their hands before entering the testing room and handling testing paperwork and supplies.
- 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 testers and exam proctors must wear a face covering during exam sessions, including upon entering and exiting the testing venue.
- Testers are seated a minimum of 6 feet apart in all directions.
- One exam requires viewing samples. Before handling, samples are disinfected according to disinfectant label and federal specifications. Additional PPE, including gloves, may be offered to testers, if supplies are available. A maximum of two testers per session are allowed for this exam to allow time to properly disinfect samples.
- Testers may use the restroom only one at a time to maintain physical distancing. Testers must sanitize hands before re-entering the room. They should not congregate in common areas outside the testing room. Posted signage reminds testers of sanitization and physical distancing requirements.
- 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 at least 6 feet from exam proctor as they explain the checkout process.
- Tester will be told to place photo identification, testing paperwork and supplies, and payment on the table in front of proctor, and return to a designated area or to their seat.
- Proctors will use hand sanitizer between handling each tester's paperwork.
- After a tester checks out, the proctor will disinfect the table and pens, and check endorsement stamp before the next tester can check out.
- 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:

- Disinfect with wipes or spray all tables, chairs, doorknobs, etc.
- Collect, disinfect, 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](#).
- Disinfect and store exam samples separately from other supplies.
- 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.

