



**Public Health**  
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**Montgomery County**  
Public Health District

Date: 9/18/2020

## **MONTGOMERY COUNTY TO START INCLUDING ANTIGEN POSITIVE CASES IN DAILY REPORTS**

MONTGOMERY COUNTY – Montgomery County Public Health District, in conjunction with the Montgomery County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, can announce a change in the reporting of COVID-19 data for Montgomery County. In response to steadily increasing availability and use of rapid antigen testing for COVID-19, we are now reporting positive antigen results in addition to PCR positive results that we have been reporting since March.

MCPHD believes over time, the addition of antigen positive results will provide a more accurate depiction of COVID-19's impact on residents in Montgomery County. Antigen testing is a newer type of COVID-19 testing that identifies an ACTIVE infection. It detects proteins on the surface of the virus and generates faster results than a PCR test, which detects a virus' genetic material. PCR tests are considered the "gold standard" for testing, but on August 16, the CDC issued interim guidance for antigen testing including regulatory requirements, collection and handling of specimens, and evaluation of results. Now that more is known about antigen testing and its effectiveness, positive results will be counted and included in the total and active number of cases in Montgomery County.

MCPHD keeps antigen and PCR positive records separately, but the daily COVID-19 report will include them in overall numbers. The public will be able to differentiate antigen vs. PCR cases if they so choose, by accessing the case-by-case list found here: <https://mcphd-tx.org/coronavirus-covid-19/confirmed-cases> and clicking on "case updates". Case numbers that begin with "A" are antigen-positive cases. This link will be updated later today in conjunction with the daily COVID-19 update.

Public Health has been conducting cases investigations and contact tracing on both PCR and antigen tests. All individuals who receive a positive result are directed to isolate for 10 days from the start of symptoms. Isolation may be discontinued when **all** of the following criteria are met: 10 days after onset of symptoms, resolution of fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement of other symptoms. Individuals who are asymptomatic should isolate for 10 days from the test date to avoid infecting others.

MCPHD will continue to adjust reporting as the COVID-19 response evolves and new technologies and/or test types become available and are proven effective.

**Montgomery County Public Health District's** mission is promoting a healthy, resilient community through health education, disease prevention, clinical services, and emergency preparedness. For more information about the Montgomery County Public Health District please go to [www.mcphd-tx.org](http://www.mcphd-tx.org).