Recommendations are based on the CDC guidance, VDH Guidance, and Infectious Diseases Society of America Guidelines on the Diagnosis of COVID-19. Molecular testing is still considered the gold standard of SARS-CoV-2 diagnostic testing.

* Asymptomatic individuals who have recovered from COVID-19 or been fully vaccinated for COVID-19 may not need to be tested. See here for more information.

† If there is a known exposure, test immediately if the person is not fully vaccinated. If negative, repeat 5-7 days after last exposure or immediately if symptoms develop. Testing is not recommended for diagnosing current COVID-19 infection or making decisions about returning to work. All COVID-19 test results (positive and negative) must be reported to VDH within 24 hours.

‡ For known specimen collection locations in Virginia, see here. Serology testing can be used for public health surveillance or research purposes, but is not recommended for diagnosing current COVID-19 infection. See specific setting guidance (e.g., nursing home, assisted living facility, correctional facility).

§ If any of these describe the patient:
- Pregnant and presenting in labor
- Neonates born to women with confirmed or suspected COVID-19
- Undergoing aerosol-generating procedures with limited PPE at the facility (if testing, test within 48 hours of procedure)
- Undergoing major time-sensitive surgeries (if testing, test within 48 hours of surgery)
- Immunocompromised person being admitted to the hospital
- Undergoing immunosuppressive procedures

# A negative molecular test result for SARS-CoV-2 means that at the time of collection, RNA from this virus was not present in the specimen above the limit of detection.