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| **Legal Update**Brought to you by: Katz/Pierz |  |

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| Agencies Issue Guidance on Coverage of OTC COVID-19 Tests  |  |

 On Jan. 10, 2022, the Depts. of Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Treasury issued [FAQ guidance](https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/EBSA/about-ebsa/our-activities/resource-center/faqs/aca-part-51.pdf) regarding the requirements for group health plans and health insurance issuers to cover over-the-counter (OTC) COVID-19 diagnostic tests. **Legal Requirements** Plans and issuers must cover the costs of COVID-19 tests during the COVID-19 public health emergency without imposing any cost-sharing requirements, prior authorization, or other medical management requirements. Under guidance issued in June 2020, at-home COVID-19 tests had to be covered only if they were ordered by a health care provider who determined that the test was medically appropriate for the individual. At that time, the FDA had not yet authorized any at-home COVID-19 diagnostic tests. Since then, several types of OTC at-home tests have been approved. As of Jan. 15, 2022, the cost of these tests must be covered, even if they are obtained without the involvement of a health care provider. However, the FAQs do not require tests to be covered if they are not for individualized diagnosis (such as tests for employment purposes). **Plan Options** Plans and insurance issuers may place some limits on coverage, such as: * Requiring individuals to purchase a test and submit a claim for reimbursement, rather than providing direct coverage to sellers.
* Providing direct coverage though pharmacy networks or direct-to-consumer shipping programs and limiting reimbursements to other sources (the actual cost of the test, or $12, whichever is lower).
* Setting limits on the number or frequency of OTC COVID-19 tests that are covered (no less than 8 tests per month or 30-day period).
* Taking steps to prevent, detect and address fraud and abuse.

  |   |   Important Dates **Dec. 2, 2021** President Biden announced that guidance would be issued clarifying coverage of OTC COVID-19 tests. **Jan. 10, 2022** Federal agencies issued the guidance implementing the requirements for coverage of OTC COVID-19 tests. **Jan. 15, 2022** Deadline for plans and issuers to provide coverage for OTC COVID-19 tests available without a health care provider order or assessment.   **At-home COVID-19 tests must be covered even if they are obtained without the involvement of a health care provider.**    |

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