

Ichor Blood Services and StageZero Life Sciences Launch Virtual COVID-19 PCR Testing Program for Canadians Returning Home from the US

written by Raj Shah | January 13, 2021

January 13, 2021 ([Source](#)) – Testing program allows Canadians to take a lab quality COVID-19 test kit with them to the United States and complete their witnessed test remotely prior to returning home.

Ichor Blood Services, a private lab specimen collection company based in Calgary, and StageZero Life Sciences, a CLIA certified high complexity lab located in Richmond, VA, have launched a COVID-19 virtual PCR testing program that allows travellers to complete a 99.99% accurate RT-PCR test from anywhere in the world that FedEx Express operates. The program will initially be available for Canadians returning home from US destinations, with future plans to expand to other international destinations.

“The Virtual COVID-19 PCR Testing Program solves a problem that was introduced with the 72-hour testing requirement for entry into Canada,” said Mike Kuzmickas, CEO of Ichor. “Travel to Canada requires the accuracy and confidence that you get with a certified lab run RT-PCR test, which is what our program provides. This is the same test used for international travel to countries that don’t specifically require nasalpharangeal swabs, and is also an approved test for Air Canada’s Hawaii Travel program.”

Ichor has been conducting virtual PCR testing since September 2020, and has recently made improvements to its logistics operations, which has allowed the company to scale up and launch the program to a larger service area. The cost of the program is \$225 per person, plus a \$30 shipping fee per order, which is waived for 3 or 4 person kit orders.

Online sales start January 13th, and customers will also have the ability to purchase kits at select DrugSmart Pharmacy locations and Ichor Blood Services office locations beginning February 15th. DrugSmart Pharmacy has a location in Pearson International Airport to service outbound passengers, and is working with Ichor to get vending machines set up at other airports around the country.

How the Virtual COVID-19 PCR Testing Program Works

Before leaving Canada, travellers can purchase 1 to 4 person test kits at remotecovidtesting.ca _ Purchased kits are mailed to the customer and brought with them with them to their US destination. Each kit contains the number of saliva collection devices purchased and instructions on how to register and schedule a video witnessing appointment. Shipping instructions and pre-paid return shipping labels addressed to Stage Zero are also included. Travellers are encouraged to purchase their kits well in advance of their trip.

Returning to Canada

To return to Canada, travelers need to provide a saliva sample 72 hours prior to their departure. To meet this requirement, travellers will be required to participate in an online video meeting with mobile phlebotomists/nurses to complete their test. Once competed and witnessed, travelers will need to package their sample(s) and drop them off at an authorized FedEx location. To prevent unauthorized, unwitnessed shipments,

participants will be given a randomized 3 letter code that changes daily to write on their specimen label as a way of letting the lab know the sample has been verified.

Results will be emailed directly to travelers via encrypted email in 24-60 hours, at which point they will be able to board their flight home.

More information about the program can be found at <https://remotecovidtesting.ca>

About Ichor Blood Services

Ichor is an Alberta based, private lab specimen collection company that provides private asymptomatic Covid-19 testing in Alberta, Ontario, and New Brunswick, offers embassy approved tests for travel to China, and is also a referred test provider for Air Canada's Hawaii travel program. The company's corporate client base also continues to grow as the need for Covid-19 testing is anticipated to extend well into 2021.