

## **Reporting and Testing**

The Massachusetts COVID-19 report has included the "Probable Case" data for the past few weeks. The "Probable Cases" are the individuals that have completed serology (serum) testing to test for antibodies. Our Board of Health is required to trace these "probable cases" the same as a "confirmed" or "recovered case." Our Board of Health recommends individuals undergoing serology also take a PCR test also to make sure the individual is currently not infectious.

**PCR testing** is the most sensitive and specific form of testing available (read: accurate), and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health qualifies PCR testing as the **ONLY** way to confirm a Covid diagnosis. Yes, PCR testing is the test that “tickles your brain”, but it is also available in easy nose swabs and in some (few) locations as a saliva test. This is the preferred form of testing for the most accurate results.

**Antigen testing** is much less accurate and has been notorious for many false negatives and some false positives. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health qualifies a positive antigen result as “probable”, and we encourage you to avoid this form of testing.