

# DRUG TESTING AND TELEHEALTH COLLECTIONS

AN  
INTERVIEW  
WITH

**KIRK CIZERLE  
OF RECOVERYTREK**



Telehealth collections were already on the rise, but the COVID-19 pandemic has catapulted telehealth to new heights. What's the Buzz recently met with Kirk Cizerle, CEO of RecoveryTrek, a national company that helps track treatment programs and administer drug and alcohol testing programs. Additionally, RecoveryTrek recently launched PROOF®, a telehealth drug test collection app.

**WTB: What is a telehealth collection?**

**KC:** A telehealth collection is typically performed in a remote location and the donor is also the collector. Using a video app like PROOF, the donor is guided through the collection process by the technology or application. It takes the person through all the required steps in a specific order. If any step requires a timer, for instance, the app provides that functionality and when complete the donor is prompted to move to the next step.

Telehealth collections make it possible to perform a collection at the location where it is most convenient, safe, and secure for the donor. Those words—convenient, safe, and secure—can mean different things depending on the circumstance, but in a pandemic, telehealth collections keep the donor out of harm's way because the collection is performed in a secure place where the donor feels safe and is able to practice social distancing. Also, depending on the circumstances, a telehealth collection allows anonymity for the donor by not having to visit a collection facility, which can be important depending on the testing purpose.

With telehealth collections it doesn't matter when or where the collection takes place. It doesn't matter where the donor lives or when the donor is available. Telehealth collections eliminate scheduling concerns because not all facilities are open and available to collect 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Telehealth collections are truly 24/7, 365 days a year. Workday, weekend, holiday, or middle of the night, there are no restrictions.

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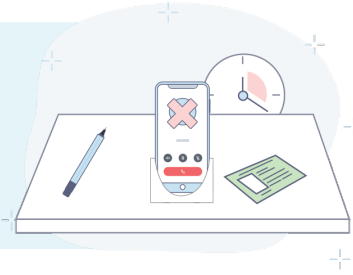
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# THE TELEHEALTH COLLECTION WORKFLOW

1

After you have received the collection kit and instructions from the drug test provider, you can begin your collection. Be sure to have a flat surface accessible and a photo ID on hand.



2

Prepare to start your collection. Open the app or start the videoconference to begin.



3

Access test instructions. Start the test by clicking "begin" in the app or turn on your videoconference to begin the collection.

4

Provide a photo of your valid ID or show your valid ID to the collector via videoconference.

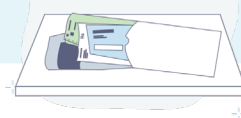


5

Ensure that your collection device matches up with the device in the instructions.

6

Once prompted, open your device package and begin your collection.



7

Follow the instructions to ensure the collection is completed properly.



8

Swab, snap, and seal.



9

Place your device in the provided package and seal it. Follow the instructions to mail your sample to your testing facility.



**WTB: How does a typical telehealth collection work with PROOF?**

KC: Initially, an employer or organization orders collection supplies to be shipped to the donor's preferred location, donors are notified electronically that an order has been placed on their behalf and that the supplies are en route and provided with instructions for what to do when the supplies arrive.

Once the supplies have arrived, the donor will be guided through each step of the collection process, including their login credentials, the basics on how the collection is going to work so they know what to expect, and how to perform the collection as quickly as possible and in a way that is convenient to them.

The donor will typically start with our two-minute tutorial. When they complete the tutorial, the donor can either start the collection immediately or when it's more convenient. When they click go, the platform will begin the process of walking them through each step of the collection process. For an oral fluid collection, the donor will be instructed to open the package containing all the supplies that they will need. PROOF even instructs them when to remove the collection device from its separately sealed package, how to remove it properly, how to insert it in their mouth, and for how long to leave it there. The built-in timer will notify them when it is done and ready to package in a sealed vial, how to put it in a lab specimen bag, and how to complete and attach chain of custody paperwork.

PROOF then walks the donor through the process of packaging everything in a shipping package, which is provided. Finally, a summary is shown confirming that all of these steps have been completed properly. Of course, the very last step is the lab analysis and the reporting of an accurate result.

**WTB: Can Chain of Custody (COC) forms still be used?**

KC: Yes, COC forms can be used with a telehealth collection and with PROOF specifically. In most drug testing instances, proper chain of custody is still required, including that the specimen vial was properly sealed. The collection vial that contains the donor's saliva must be sealed, the seal must include the date and donor's initials, and the seal must be placed over top of the vial cap to validate that the vial was not opened or manipulated in any way.

**WTB: Can you use oral fluid testing with telehealth collections?**

KC: Absolutely. In fact, oral fluid is probably the best testing method to use with telehealth collections. There may be other options, but oral fluid is absolutely at the top of the list due to the collection process. An oral fluid collection is easily witnessed, can be appropriately witnessed remotely via audio / video recording, and is easily performed with minimal guidance and oversight. Most people are very successful doing an oral fluid collection through a telehealth platform even if it's their first time due to their innate simplicity.

Additionally, the necessary oral fluid collection devices have been in existence for years, are time-tested to be accurate, and the overall quality assurance is there. It is also affordable, especially compared to collections at a brick-and-mortar facility.

**WTB: Are telehealth collections for workplace drug testing legal in every state?**

KC: We encourage all of our clients to comply with all applicable state laws and we can help them find that type of information. So far, we have not run into conflicts with any state laws. We do not anticipate issues in the future. It is important to know that telehealth medical services have been in use for many years, but unlike those services, telehealth sample collections are not delivering any type of care or medical diagnoses. What we are confirming is that each step in the collection process was followed, that the collection was completed properly, and therefore quality drug test results can be expected.

**WTB: What is the difference between PROOF and other video platforms like Zoom?**

KC: For one thing, PROOF was specifically designed for sample collections whereas other video app platforms were designed for meetings. PROOF, for example, does not require any scheduling by the donor, it can take place at any time that is convenient for the donor. With other video platforms you're back to arranging everyone's schedules (collector and donor), which means you lose the convenience factor that PROOF offers. The only schedule we worry about with PROOF is that of the donor who going to do his or her own collection.

Another huge difference is scalability. What I mean by that is the number of collections that can be performed simultaneously. With PROOF there is zero limit to the number of collections that take place at the same time. With other video platforms, you have to schedule two people's time and that means you need to staff your 'collector team' with as many people as you need to have performing collections. Also, there is no built-in guidance system to walk the donor through the process step by step, which means there could be a lot of stopping and starting over as the collector takes time to explain things, which wastes time. From our research, Zoom-based telehealth collections are usually about two per hour because it is limited by the number of collectors who are available. A PROOF collection takes 15 minutes or less (with many as fast as 10 minutes), but we can run unlimited number of collections at the same time.

**WTB: How do telehealth collections affect drug test cheating efforts?**

KC: I always say, "where there's a will, there's a way," so you can never say any collection method is 100% fool proof, but telehealth collections combined with oral fluid are very difficult to successfully cheat. There are just more checks and balances in place compared to any other collection methods. With oral fluid and telehealth collection the donor really does not have much opportunity to cheat because they are prompted at every step in the process while being recorded (audio and video). With limited time to complete the collection, it becomes almost impossible to manipulate the collection process without it being detected.

I would be silly to say the combination of oral fluid and telehealth collections are 100% safe from cheating, but the likelihood is much less. However, without a professional collector involved there are no collusion opportunities between collectors and donors to implement some type of financial incentives to perform a collection in a way that falsely benefits the donor.

**WTB: What are the advantages of a telehealth collection?**

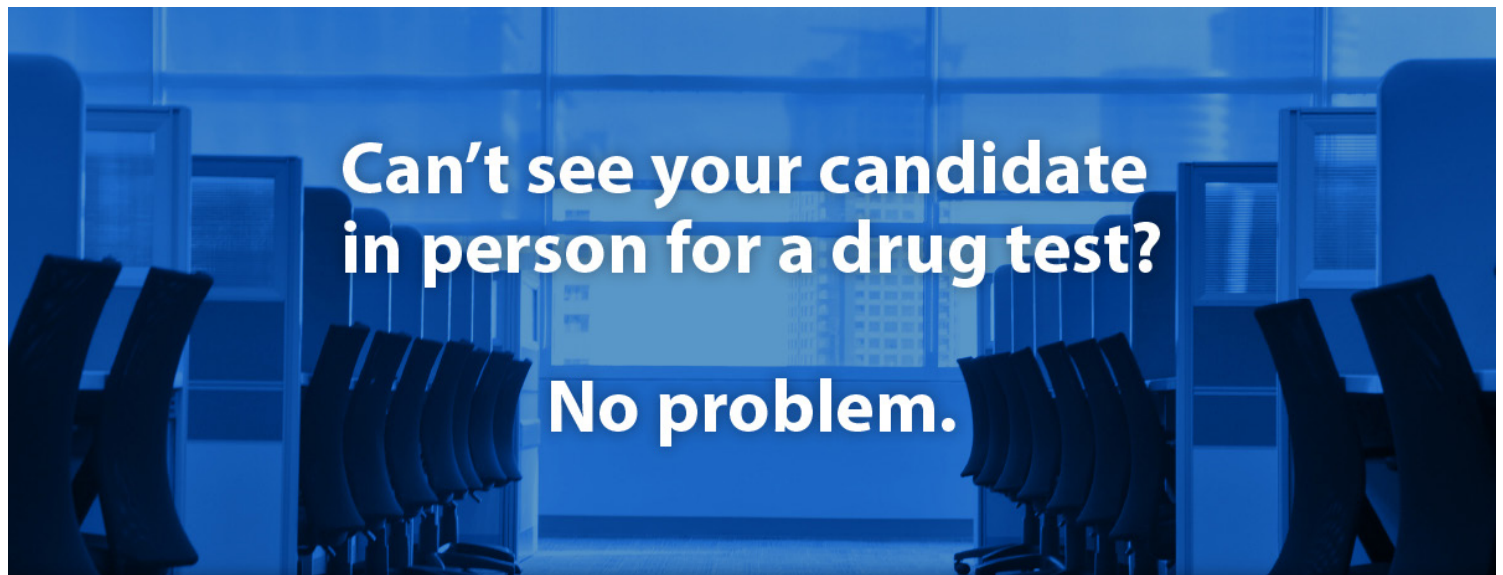
KC: The primary advantages are convenience, safety, and security. During the pandemic, the priority has been to be safe and secure and social distance from others to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19. If you're at home and you have been quarantined, you are as safe and secure as possible when performing a telehealth collection.

Also, telehealth collections are on a level of convenience second to none because they make it possible for donors to perform a collection on their schedule.

On the employer or organization side, the biggest advantage is a collection can be done more easily and quickly, with more information more readily available. Employers can track the process more accurately compared to traditional methods of collections. They can easily confirm the donor has received all necessary supplies and has completed the actual collection correctly. PROOF walks the donor through the process step-by-step, requires the donor to confirm their identification, and records every step of the process. If you do not know that a collection was done properly and the donor's identification was confirmed, the test result is meaningless. With traditional "brick-and-mortar" facilities you're trusting that all was done properly, but with a telehealth collection app like PROOF, you are witnessing and recording the entire process.



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