

82 testing providers to be issued warnings over misleading prices

- 82 companies – which make up around 18% listed as offering day 2 and day 8 tests – face being removed from the GOV.UK list if they advertise misleading prices
- GOV.UK to be updated to reflect true cost of travel tests this week
- 57 companies to be removed as they no longer exist or do not provide a relevant testing service
- Regular spot checks will be introduced to ensure prices are accurate and providers are legitimate

More than 80 private travel testing companies will be issued a 2-strike warning and could be removed from GOV.UK for misleading prices, the Health and Social Care Secretary has announced today (Monday 23 August).

Following a rapid review of the pricing and service standards of day 2 and day 8 testing providers listed on GOV.UK, 82 providers – making up around 18% listed – have been identified as displaying lower prices on GOV.UK than are available on their website at the point of checkout.

GOV.UK will be updated to reflect the true cost of the tests and companies will be warned this week that they will be removed if they advertise misleading prices again.

A total of 57 companies will be removed from the GOV.UK list today as they no longer exist or don't provide day 2 and day 8 testing.

As part of the ongoing review, regular spot checks will be introduced from this week to make sure companies are complying with the rules to ensure prices displayed are accurate, providers are legitimate and companies have not changed their name to get back on the list.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said

It is absolutely unacceptable for any private testing company to be taking advantage of holidaymakers and today's action clamps down on this cowboy behaviour.

57 firms will be removed from the GOV.UK list and a further 82 will be given a 2-strike warning – if they advertise misleading prices ever again, they're off.

We are also introducing regular spot checks this week to make sure all private providers follow the rules and meet our high standards of transparency.

Companies will be removed from the GOV.UK list if they fail to take action within 3 days of strike 1 as part of the new 2-strike policy.

The findings of the review will be shared with the Competition and Markets Authority to support their own review of the market and align recommendations and actions.

The action will help ensure consumers can trust the testing providers listed on GOV.UK and only the most reliable companies are available.

Tests booked for travel with companies not listed can still be used for travel, providing those companies meet legal requirements.

Since the review began, the department has analysed and improved processes for managing the private provider list on GOV.UK, including introducing more stringent checks on pricing.

Guidelines will be published in due course to the market addressing pricing and service standards.

Earlier this month it was confirmed that UK holidaymakers will benefit from cheaper travel testing packages. As of 13 August, the cost of NHS Test and Trace tests for international arrivals were reduced from £88 to £68 for green or fully vaccinated amber arrivals, and from £170 to £136 for 2 tests for amber arrivals who are not fully vaccinated.