

New 'We Offer Testing to our Staff' scheme launched

- New sticker scheme launched allowing UK businesses to display their offer of free testing for staff alongside materials promoting use of the NHS COVID-19 app to check in customers and visitors
- Alongside the vaccine rollout and checking in with the NHS COVID-19 app, regular testing is at the heart of plans to reopen society and the economy, helping to prevent the spread of variants

A new scheme for businesses offering workplace testing for staff through NHS Test and Trace has been launched across the UK. It will show customers, employees and the wider public the businesses that are going the extra mile to keep their staff and the public safe.

In addition to workplace testing, business owners and staff should all follow essential behaviours such as 'Hands, Face, Space, Fresh Air' and, where applicable, checking customers and visitors in using the [NHS COVID-19 app](#).

Businesses that offer rapid workplace testing to staff, either through on-site testing or workplace test collection, will be able to download posters and stickers to demonstrate their offer for free, regular testing to their employees keeping people safe.

More than 122,000 businesses have signed up for free workplace testing already, using free government-supplied rapid test kits from NHS Test and Trace. All organisations that registered before 12 April and self-declared their involvement are eligible for the scheme.

Participating firms will be able to access digital assets including stickers and posters from Tuesday 11 May, and can be accessed by participating firms online via the online ordering platform.

Health Minister Lord Bethell said:

Through this new scheme participating businesses can proudly display their contribution to our national recovery and their support to public health, while also reassuring staff and customers in the process. Around 1 in 3 people with coronavirus do not show any symptoms so every day rapid testing is helping us find cases of COVID-19 we wouldn't otherwise know about, breaking chains of transmission and saving lives.

Regaining our lost freedoms depends on all of us getting tested regularly. There are more ways for people to access free rapid tests than ever before, and I'm grateful to all the businesses for their contribution to this scheme and to our national recovery effort.

Business Minister Paul Scully said:

Businesses across the UK have been hard at work ensuring they are reopening safely, in line with public health guidance, and more than 120,000 firms have gone even further by answering our call to sign up for free workplace testing.

Today's announcement means people can work and shop with the peace of mind that more rapid tests are being taken, more cases are being detected, and more lives are being saved.

Jenny Harries, CEO of the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), said:

Businesses participating in the workplace testing scheme can now demonstrate that the health of their staff, customers and the communities they serve is a key priority by prominently displaying these stickers.

Alongside 'Hands, Face, Space, Fresh Air' and, where applicable, checking customers and visitors into their premises, workplace testing has a crucial role to play in safely taking the next step out of lockdown.

By prominently displaying the stickers on their websites or on their premises, alongside existing materials which promote checking customers and visitors in, businesses will be able to demonstrate to their customers that the health of staff, customers and their local communities is a key priority.

Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 do not experience any symptoms and may be spreading the virus unwittingly. Rapid testing detects cases quickly, meaning positive cases can isolate immediately. [Since rapid testing was introduced, over 152,000 positive LFD results](#) have been returned, detecting asymptomatic cases of COVID-19 that may not otherwise have been found and potentially saving lives. By making rapid tests available to everyone, more cases will be detected, helping to break chains of transmission and save lives.

Alongside the rollout of the vaccine, regular testing is likely to be an essential part of the easing of restrictions as it will help quickly find cases and suppress the spread of variants. Through associated new testing technology, positive cases of variants of concern are being detected faster than ever before. Greater volumes of testing make it easier to identify and control variants.

Getting a rapid test

Getting a rapid test is quick and convenient. In addition to the free workplace testing offer, anyone in England can now access free, twice-weekly rapid testing through the following channels:

- a home ordering service, which allows people to [order lateral flow tests online](#) to be delivered to their home
- community testing, offered by all local authorities
- collection at local PCR testing sites during specific test collection time windows
- testing on-site at schools, colleges and other educational settings
- a new 'Pharmacy Collect' service, where people aged over 18 without symptoms will be able to visit a participating local pharmacy and collect a box of 7 rapid tests to use twice a week at home

If testing at home, individuals will need to [register their results online](#) or by calling 119. They should self-isolate if positive and order a confirmatory PCR test.

Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should book a test online or by calling 119.

Background information

NHS Test and Trace is part of the UKHSA.

[Read the guidance on 'We Offer Testing to our Staff'](#).

Health is a devolved matter and eligibility to access these 2 different types of asymptomatic testing differs across the 4 nations. Please check and follow your nation's guidelines.