

Rapid testing to be piloted at Manchester court

- rapid testing pilot trial to run for four weeks at Manchester court
- supports national testing programme run by Department of Health and Social Care
- results will determine how rapid testing could be rolled out to courts and tribunals nationally

From today and for the next four weeks, lateral flow tests will be offered to all people attending a case at Manchester CJC who are not showing any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). The test will also be offered to all staff, judiciary, contractors and legal professionals who visit the site. It will not be a public testing facility.

The tests are voluntary and will be carried out through lateral flow devices, which detect the presence or absence of coronavirus by applying a swab or saliva sample to the device's absorbent pad. The sample runs along the surface of the pad, showing at the end a visual positive or negative result dependent on the presence of the virus.

The pilot will support the Department of Health and Social Care's (DHSC) national testing programme by providing information on how rapid testing works in different public sector settings. HMCTS will use findings to decide how rapid testing could be rolled out nationally to other courts and tribunals across the country.

Kevin Sadler, Acting CEO of HMCTS, said:

We are pleased to be supporting DHSC in their national testing programme by running this pilot trial for lateral flow testing. The results will help develop and improve the national testing programme and inform how we could roll out rapid testing nationally to other courts and tribunals.

We've ensured that all our courts and tribunal buildings are safe and secure against COVID-19. This additional measure will provide further reassurance to those visiting our buildings.

All Manchester CJC court users will be given the opportunity to book a test slot. Users will be asked to register their details, and the test carried out using a lateral flow device testing kit. Specially trained staff who manage the testing site will supervise the test and process the results.

Once the test has been taken, NHS Test & Trace will send results by text or email in 30 minutes. If the test comes out negative, this indicates that the person is not infectious and the person will be permitted to remain in the

building. If the test gives a positive result, the court user will be required to leave the court, return home quickly and directly, and follow NHS advice.

HMCTS continues to work with DHSC to explore regular nation-wide testing for staff, judiciary and professionals. There are practical issues to resolve before any wider roll out – not least space, staffing and supply of equipment. We will provide updates as soon as our plans evolve.

Every building we operate – including [our Nightingale courts](#) – meet the government's Covid-secure guidelines, and public health experts have confirmed our arrangements remain sufficient to deal with the new strain of the virus.