INTRODUCTORY NOTE
EXPANSION OF COVID-19 TESTING

The Scottish Government is committed to Coronavirus testing for key workers or their family members to allow them to get back to work as soon as it is safe to do so. We are working with UK Government to extend testing to a wide range of key workers and are writing to inform you of an expansion of the UK Government Testing Programme for priority key workers in Scotland.

This programme operates separately from the existing NHS testing programme in Scotland, which supports testing for clinical purposes and priority staff in the NHS and social care sector.

The Scottish Government has now issued a prioritisation matrix which explains which key workers should be able to access testing through the UK Government Testing Programme. This guidance provides more information on who those key workers are and how you can assist them in accessing testing.

In summary, a new online portal has been established where employers can register and refer self-isolating staff or members of their household. The aim is to make the process of getting an appointment as simple as possible. In addition to this employer led testing, it is also possible for individuals to book tests online themselves.

As this is a UK Government run programme if you need technical assistance please contact DHSC at opshub@dhsc.gov.uk. Employees who have been referred for a test can seek assistance from the Coronavirus Testing Helpdesk on 0300 303 2713 for any technical issues related to their booking.

As you will be aware from media reporting these services are experiencing very high levels of demand, which is being carefully monitored by DHSC.

We are working closely with the UK Government to respond to the Coronavirus outbreak and testing is an important part of that. We are grateful for the assistance of businesses in helping ensure that key workers are able to access testing.

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT
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GUIDANCE ON THE UK GOVERNMENT TESTING PROGRAMME IN SCOTLAND

Overview

The UK Government Testing Programme is establishing a range of additional testing capacity, including through a number of drive thru testing centres in Scotland. This capacity will continue to expand to provide additional options for testing, including through home delivery.

To date tests have primarily been available to health and social care workers and emergency services. The UK Government has already announced a significant expansion of the categories of key worker eligible for testing in England and the Scottish Government has now reviewed arrangements and determined the further priority key workers who may now access testing through this UK programme.

Key workers in the NHS and care sector will remain the top priority for testing in Scotland. They will continue to primarily access tests through existing NHS testing capacity.

This guidance sets out who can access the UK Government Testing Programme in Scotland and how they can do so.

Who can access testing?

The Scottish Government has set out a prioritisation matrix for identifying which key workers should be able to access testing in Scotland. This divides key workers into four groups.

- **Priority Group 1**: Health and social care workers; staff working in residential institutions and essential roles where service resilience is at risk.
- **Priority Group 2**: Essential workers in critical national infrastructure fundamental for safety and security, and life-line services.
- **Priority Group 3**: Staff directly involved in delivering other essential services.
- **Priority Group 4**: Staff involved in volunteering, or in nationally or locally significant industry important to economic sustainability and growth.
In the Annex to this guidance is more detail on these Priority Groups along with examples of relevant key worker populations within each category. Please note the list is not exhaustive but intended to provide an indication of the type of worker within each Group.

Testing continues to be prioritised for Health and Social Care workers with the aim of ensuring these critical staff can return to work as soon as it is safe to do so.

- The UK Government drive thru testing facilities are for key workers who are self-isolating because they are symptomatic, or household members over 5 years of age who are symptomatic.

- The UK Government drive thru testing is only for people within a 90 minute drive of the location. Workers will also have to be able to maintain strict isolation measures during this commute.

Additional testing capacity will also be put in place in the period ahead, including through a number of mobile testing sites and home delivery.

**NHS Scotland Testing**

Those who are in Priority Group 1 should continue to access testing through the NHS in Scotland. The only exceptions to this are health and social care workers who are self employed – such as personal care assistants. These workers should access testing through the UK Testing Programme employee portal route described below.

Where those in the other Priority Groups are able to access NHS testing already they should continue to do so. However, if there are times when NHS testing capacity is at its maximum, then full use should be made of the testing opportunities offered by the UK Government Programme.

UK Testing Programme

At present drive thru testing is available at: Glasgow Airport, Edinburgh Airport, Aberdeen Airport and Inverness Highland and Islands University Campus. In addition there is some capacity to allow individual key workers to order a home-test kit. In addition, new testing routes are being developed, and this is likely to include a number of smaller sites and mobile testing units.

How do you access the UK Testing Programme?

There are 2 routes for accessing the UK Testing Programme:

(i) the employer portal – this is for employers who wish to assist their employees with registration.

(ii) the employee portal – this allows individual key workers to book a test directly themselves.

These portals are experiencing very high volumes of demand and you may experience delays in being able to access them at peak periods of demand. Demand is being monitored very closely and technical difficulties being addressed as quickly as possible.

(i) the employer portal

For employers wishing to assist their employees with registration, the first step is to email portalservicedesk@dhsc.gov.uk for access to the portal. Please include your organisation name and sector, as well as the name and email address of up to two people who will use the portal. Further guidance is available from the UK Government at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested#arrange-a-test

(ii) the employee portal

Employees wishing to book a test directly should go to https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/ You can get an appointment at one of the drive thru testing centres if you are a key worker and you or a member of your family is symptomatic.
You may be able to request a home testing kit. This service is experiencing very high demand and there may be temporary limitations on the number of testing kits available on a daily basis. The home test kits will be delivered by Amazon and sent directly to your home so you can perform the test yourself. The test will then be collected by Royal Mail couriers.
Annex

Scottish Government’s Prioritisation Matrix

**PRIORITY MATRIX FOR KEY WORKERS TO BE TESTED DURING LOCKDOWN PHASE OF COVID 19 RESPONSE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority number</th>
<th>Rationale for prioritisation</th>
<th>Relevant keyworker populations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priority Group 1: Health and social care workers; and staff working in residential institutions and essential roles where service resilience is at risk.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1A | 1. Staff delivering NHS services.  
2. Staff providing social care to protect and care for the most vulnerable.  
*Currently routed through Health Boards* | • All NHS staff and independent contractors working for the NHS, including community pharmacy and emergency dental care.  
• All social care and social work staff working with vulnerable people and the social care system, including care homes, care at home and children’s services (including residential and secure care for children), and social care personal assistants  
*Note* key workers in these groups who are not employed through an organisation will access testing, where this can support a return to work, through the UK Government schemes |
| 1B | 1. Staff with face-to-face roles in residential institutions with people in the care of the state.  
2. Staff are working essential services with niche roles, where service resilience is at risk. | • Operational staff in prisons  
• All other carers working with looked after children not already included in 1A  
• Staff working on critical national infrastructure (e.g. energy supply) with niche skills essential to maintain services safely  
• Defence staff living in Scotland who fall within the MOD’s very highest priority category for testing |
| **Priority Group 2: Essential workers in critical national infrastructure fundamental for safety and security, and life-line services.** |
| 2 | 1. Staff directly involved in maintaining public safety and security. | • Police  
• Scottish Fire and Rescue Service  
• Local authorities staff working public safety, security or law and order |
2. Staff essential to the delivery of critical services to the public including supply chains.

- Front-line Home Office Staff, including: a) those running immigration detention centres, b) Maritime Border Force, c) frontline immigration and customs officers
- Essential defence personnel
- Essential environmental protection
- Essential animal health and welfare
- Funeral industry
- Staff working for third sector organisations supporting people and children who are vulnerable, including grant aided schools

- Essential roles within food supply chain and food processing.
- Essential roles within medicines and pharmaceutical supply.
- Essential roles in chemicals supply chains
- Essential roles in energy and water supply

**Priority Group 3: Staff directly involved in delivering other essential services.**

3. Staff delivering essential services.

- Staff providing child care/education in schools for key workers
- Public transport workers
- Postal services
- Financial services
- Supermarket workers
- Construction and maintenance of essential public services
- Court and Crown Office staff
- Civil Servants, parliament staff and other critical decision makers in public sector working on the central response to covid-19
- Journalists

**Priority Group 4: Staff involved in volunteering, or in nationally or locally significant industry important to economic sustainability and growth**

4. Staff involved in volunteering to provide support to vulnerable people and communities; and staff involved in national or local industry important to economic sustainability and growth.
Coronavirus (COVID-19): testing for key workers in Scotland

Summary: Guidance on expanding access to testing for symptomatic key workers.

Testing of key workers

The UK government has established a new network of Covid testing facilities for key workers. This programme runs alongside the existing programme of testing in the NHS for clinical purposes and testing of key workers in Health and Social Care.

Testing will allow symptomatic key workers and their household members to know whether or not they have the virus. This will in turn keep essential services running.

What the changes mean for keyworkers in Scotland

Access to Covid testing in Scotland has been widened and will now be determined via a prioritisation matrix for key workers that includes a broader range of private sector workers and essential services.

Priority for health and social care workers

Health and social care workers will continue to be primarily routed through NHS testing at local NHS facilities.

The UK Government programme in Scotland is additional capacity to supplement NHS testing.

Current testing of key workers

Health and social care workers in Scotland already access testing to enable them to return to work. Additional sectors who are currently able to access testing, including through the UK programme, include health and social care staff, police officers, prison officers, fire service, ambulance service, and NHS 24 staff.

Who can be now be tested

We need to ensure those critical to the sustained functioning of the economy and public services have access to testing that enables them to continue their vital work.

All symptomatic people categorised as key workers and members of their household can be tested.

The list of workers able to access testing comprises:

- **Staff delivering NHS services, providing social care to protect and care for the most vulnerable**, all NHS staff and independent contractors working for the NHS, including community pharmacy and emergency dental care, and all social care staff work with vulnerable people and the social care system, including care homes, care at home and children’s services.
- **Staff with face-to-face roles in residential institutions with people in the care of the state**, those who are working essential services with niche roles, where service resilience is at risk, including operational staff in prisons, staff working with looked after children, those working on critical national infrastructure (e.g. energy supply) with niche skills essential to maintain services safely, and defence staff living in Scotland who fall within the MOD’s very highest priority category for testing.

- **Essential workers in critical national infrastructure fundamental for safety and security, and life-line services.** This includes defence personnel, environmental protection, animal health and welfare, funeral industry and staff working for third sector organisations supporting people and children who are vulnerable, including grant aided schools, food supply chain and food processing workers, and workers on medicines and pharmaceutical supply, chemicals supply, energy and water supply.

- **Staff directly involved in delivering other essential services.** This includes staff providing child care for key workers, public transport workers, postal services, financial services, supermarket workers, construction and essential public services, court and Crown Office staff.

- **Staff involved in volunteering**, or in nationally or locally significant industry important to economic sustainability and growth.

### Key workers who do not have symptoms

The test is only guaranteed to be accurate if someone is symptomatic.

Testing is still targeted at those key workers who are self-isolating because they are symptomatic, or have household members who are symptomatic, to help enable critical workers to return to work as soon as safely possible.

More detailed UK government guidance on the circumstances where a test is appropriate can be found here.

### When to get tested

You should get tested in the first three days of coronavirus symptoms appearing, although testing is considered effective up until day five.

No testing should be undertaken after day five, unless it’s for a specific reason which will be agreed on a case by case basis by local microbiologists.

If you are self-isolating because a person you live with has symptoms, you can refer them for testing.

By testing the household member(s), we can be much more certain that you should either be self-isolating or can return to work.

### Negative tests and returning to work

Even if a key worker has had a negative result, it’s important to still apply caution. If everyone with symptoms who was tested in their household receive a negative
result, the employee can return to work if their work cannot be done from home, providing they are well enough, and have not had a fever for 48 hours.

If, after returning to work, they develop symptoms they should follow the NHS Inform guidance and self-isolate. Employees should discuss their return to work with their employing organisation.

**Test results and staying safe**

The test will confirm if an individual who is showing symptoms of the virus actually has it. It will not confirm whether they have had it and have now recovered.

It is vital those who test negative continue to follow Scottish Government guidance including precautions related to social distancing and handwashing.

**What happens to the test results**

Results under the UK testing programme are communicated to individuals directly by text message and are intended to be fed back into public health records in due course.

**Arranging a test if you are a key worker**

Eligible key workers will be notified of where to go to get their test through the booking arrangements described below.

Testing under the UK programme in Scotland is currently conducted in drive-through sites operating at:

- Glasgow Airport
- Edinburgh Airport
- Aberdeen Airport
- University of the Highlands and Islands campus in Inverness

These facilities are run by private sector organisations on behalf of the UK Government. This guidance will be updated as additional testing capacity is deployed on Scotland.

A limited number of home test kits are also available.

**Employer portal**

A new website has been established to improve the process of booking tests. This website is experiencing high volumes of demand and access is being carefully regulated to ensure the systems can continue to function effectively.

Eligible employers can register and refer staff for appointments or eligible key workers will be able to book a test directly for themselves or members of their household.
After they have entered their details on the portal, individuals will receive a text or email the same day inviting them to either book an appointment, or offering a home self-testing kit.

Those using self-referral can indicate their preference prior to registering details.

The UK programme currently covers up to 50 drive-through testing sites across the country and is expected to include an option for booking a home-test to be delivered where attendance at a drive through centre is not practicable.

There are currently four drive-through testing centres in Scotland. The target for sending results is by text within 48hrs. A call centre is available by phone, to help people with the process and deal with test result queries.

Obtain a login for the employer referral portal

In order to obtain a login, employers of key workers should email portalservicedesk@dhsc.gov.uk with two email addresses that will primarily be used to load key worker contact details. Once employer details have been verified, two login credentials will be issued for the employer referral portal.

Employers should then login at https://coronavirus-invite-testing.service.gov.uk/DaraTestDemand/Login to make referrals.

Self-referral portal

Go to https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/ to sign up if you are a key worker and you or a member of your family is symptomatic.

Any questions from employers or key workers about accessing testing, the website, or results should be made through opshub@dhsc.gov.uk.

Home tests

Home test kits are an option where key workers are unable to attend a drive-through centre, subject to availability. This option is covered in the booking process.

Essential workers who have completed a self-referral may have the option, depending on available capacity, to book a home-test kit.

How home testing works

After you complete a self-referral and order a home-test kit, the test would then be delivered the next day, and the essential worker or household member would self-administer the swab, packing it up as per the included instructions.

A Royal Mail courier will arrive the day after to collect it and take it to the lab. The aim is that results will then be received via text within 48 hours.

Reliability of home testing
Evidence suggests that those with no clinical background or training should be completely able to secure an effective sample.

International peer-reviewed evidence suggests that self-swabbing is just as effective at securing a valid sample as clinician-administered testing.

Each kit comes with comprehensive instructions to guide you through how to administer the swab yourself. Test kits come with further instructions and a short video to take you through the process step by step.

**Protection of personal data**

Amazon and Royal Mail are the commercial partners who are using their world class logistics systems to deliver Home Testing nationwide. They do not have access to the results or any health data.