

Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing for personal assistants working in social care in Northern Ireland.

All personal assistants working in NI, who are not part of a regular testing regime at work, can access twice-weekly Lateral Flow Devices for COVID-19 testing.

Why testing is important

Testing:

- identifies if you currently have COVID-19 so you are able to self-isolate if positive
- protects those receiving care from infection passed to them by those who are confirmed positive
- prevents and controls the spread of the virus by identifying asymptomatic cases

Eligibility

You're eligible if you:

- work in as a personal assistant in Northern Ireland in adult social care and are not part of regular testing at work

If you believe you match this criteria, follow the guidance below on [ordering test kits](#), join one of the Q+A echo sessions hosted by PHA. Please do not access tests through this route if you are already part of a regular testing regime at work, such as a supported living organisation.

Rapid Lateral Flow Test Kits

- Completed and registered twice per week
- Rapid results provided within 30 minutes
- Test samples do not need to be sent to a lab to be processed
- All lateral flow test results must be registered at <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>

- High sensitivity for infectious individuals; lower sensitivity than PCR, but faster and more frequent – helping us identify the most infectious cases quickly

Summary of testing

- You should order a box of 7 lateral flow tests (LFTs) every 21 days for yourself
- 7 tests will be delivered to your selected delivery address for a 21-day testing cycle
- You should take a test twice a week, 3-4 days apart, and register them online.

All results must be registered whether negative, positive or void

- You will receive your results within 30 minutes of conducting the test
- If you receive a positive lateral flow test result you should order and conduct a confirmatory PCR (polymerase chain reaction test) immediately, isolate until you receive a result, and notify your employer.
- Confirmatory PCRs can be booked at any of NI test sites at <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

For a full list of all NI test sites please see Public Health Agency website:

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19/testing-covid-19>

If you have any queries please call the national coronavirus contact centre on Freephone 119.

Your involvement

When accessing testing, your key responsibilities are to:

- Order 1 box of 7 lateral flow test kits for yourself every 21 days
- Conduct 2 lateral flow tests each week, 3 to 4 days apart
- Register your tests as soon as you have completed them each week
- If you receive a positive lateral flow test result:
 - immediately order and conduct a confirmatory PCR test

Guidance (Source: DHSC website information: last updated 18 June 2021)

- isolate until you receive your PCR result
- If your PCR result is positive:
 - Continue to isolate following government guidance
 - Notify your employer and provide contacts to Contact Tracing Team / Digital Self Trace
 - After your isolation period, you do not take a lateral flow test or PCR test again for 90 days unless you become symptomatic
 - Regardless of your result, continue following all infection prevention and control (IPC) measures such as wearing personal protective equipment (PPE), washing your hands and socially distancing where possible, even if you or the people you care for have had the vaccine

End-to-end process

Ordering test kits

You must order 1 box of 7 lateral flow test kits.

You must decide the address your test kits are delivered to will enable boxes of 7 LFT kits to fit through your letterbox. Test kits are typically delivered within 48 hours.

Once you have placed an order, you'll receive a confirmatory email from the following email address: organisation.coronavirus.testing@notifications.service.gov.uk

If you have any issues with any of the steps test kits, please call the national coronavirus contact centre on 119.

Preparing and undertaking the test

You will conduct a combined throat and nose self-swab for the test. Before testing be sure to:

- read guidance included with your test kit watch the video on how to do a COVID-19 self-test

[How to do a coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rapid lateral flow test at home - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/how-to-do-a-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-test-at-home)

If possible, please continue testing even if you are off work for a period of time.

Reading your result

- If you receive a negative result with a lateral flow test result and remain without symptoms, you can continue working. All staff members must continue following all IPC measures such as wearing PPE, washing your hands and socially distancing where possible.
- If you test positive, you will need to [order a confirmatory PCR test](#) and immediately self-isolate until you receive your PCR result.
- If the confirmatory PCR comes back as negative you do not need to keep self-isolating as long as you do not have symptoms.
- If the confirmatory PCR comes back as invalid or void, you should immediately order another PCR test.
- If the confirmatory PCR comes back as positive, you will need to continue self-isolating, and your household and contacts will need to isolate too in line with current guidance.

If you have tested positive with a PCR test, you do not need to take any more rapid lateral flow tests and PCR tests for 90 days, unless you become symptomatic.

Registering test kits

All test results must be registered online whether they are positive, negative or void. You need to use this service every time you complete a self-test as soon as possible after you get the result.

You cannot report a result after more than 24 hours.

You can only report one result at a time.

To register a test kit:

1. Go to [Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result](#).
2. Select who you are reporting the result for, either 'Myself' or 'Someone else'.
3. Create an account (you will only have to do this once and it will remember your personal details for when you have to register test results each time).
4. Select 'It's for a social care service' when asked who was the test for.
5. Select 'I work in a social care but did not receive my tests from my organisation'

6. Select the date you'll take the coronavirus test. If you've already taken the coronavirus test, tell us the data and time you took it.
7. Enter or scan your test ID number. You will find the ID number under the QR code on the test strip (the part of the kit that shows your result)
8. Enter personal details:
 1. name
 2. date of birth
9. Enter your contact details:
 1. email address
 2. mobile number (so we can text you to confirm we've got your result)
10. Select the result of the test ('positive', 'negative' or 'invalid').
11. Check your answers.
12. Receive confirmation of registration via email.

If you cannot register test kits online, you can either:

- call 119 and select option 1
- have someone else register on your behalf (provided they have written consent to do so and can obtain personal details required to complete the form)

How NHS uses your data

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19/privacy-information>

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