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! Coronavirus (COVID-19): what you need to know

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PUBLICATION - ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Coronavirus (COVID-19): getting tested in Scotland

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Part of: [Coronavirus in Scotland](#)



Guidance on coronavirus testing, including who is eligible for a test, how to get tested and the different types of test available.

This document is part of a collection



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Who can be tested

The following who are self isolating because they are symptomatic or have household members who are symptomatic:

- all symptomatic key workers and symptomatic members of their household over 5 years of age
- all symptomatic other workers who cannot work from home and symptomatic members of their household over 5 years of age
- all symptomatic over 65s and symptomatic members of their household over 5 years of age

The drive through testing centres are only for people within a 90 minute drive of the location. You must be able to maintain strict isolation measures during this commute.

More detail about who is a key worker is set out in the [prioritisation matrix for key workers](#). **Please note the list is not exhaustive but intended to provide an indication of the type of worker within each group.**

Key workers include:

- **Priority Group 1A: 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 and social work staff who work 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
- **Priority Group 1B: Staff with face-to-face roles in residential institutions with people in the care of the state and those who are working essential services with niche roles, where service resilience is at risk** including operational staff in prisons, all other carers working with looked

responsible to others, including operational staff in prisons, and other carers working with looked after children (not included in 1A), 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

- **Priority Group 2: Essential workers in critical national infrastructure fundamental for safety and security, and life-line services.** This includes police, fire and rescue, local authority staff, 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 in medicines and pharmaceutical supply, chemicals supply, energy and water supply and telecomms
- **Priority Group 3: Staff directly involved in delivering other essential services.** This includes staff providing child care or education for key workers, public transport workers, postal services, financial services, food retailers, construction and maintenance of essential public services, court and Crown Office staff, civil servants, politicians, consular corps, journalists and broadcasters
- **Priority Group 4: Staff and volunteers in third or public sector organisations, and staff in nationally or locally significant industry important to economic sustainability and growth**

NHS Scotland testing

Those who are in Priority Groups 1A and 1B should continue to access testing through the NHS in Scotland. We are keeping this under review as additional capacity becomes available through the UK Government testing route.

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 self-referral 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.

Over 65s and other workers

If you are **over 65** and have symptoms, you can now also access testing, as can a member of your household if they have symptoms.

Other workers, who are not key workers can now also access testing where they have to leave home to go to work and where they or a member of their household has symptoms.

People who do not have symptoms

The test is only reliable for those who have symptoms.

Read more: [guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#)

When to get tested

You should get tested in the first 3 days of coronavirus symptoms appearing, although testing is considered effective up until day 5.

No testing should be undertaken after day 5, 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, if they are aged 5 and above.

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

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