

Regional Staff Testing in Mid and South Essex (Updated 1 May 2020)

Frequently Asked Questions – Staff

What happens if I, or a member of my household, develops symptoms of Covid-19?

Contact your line manager to report your absence as usual. If you work in an essential role your line manager will be able to offer a Covid-19 test to you and any symptomatic household contact

How will I/my household contact(s) access the test?

Your line manager will direct you to a closed weblink that will enable you to register for yourself and/or your symptomatic household contacts for a testing slot at one of three centres in Mid & South Essex (see below). You/your household contact(s) will only be able to access a testing slot through the link provided. Following the registration process, you will be given information on what to expect.

What happens at the test centre?

Once you have registered for an appointment, you will receive detailed advice on the time, place and process for the test. All tests will be “drive in” and you can stay in your car. Tests will involve a nasal and/or throat swab.

What happens once the test has been completed?

You will be contacted with the result within a maximum of 48 hours and offered appropriate advice.

You are then expected to speak with your line manager to discuss the result of your/your household member’s test and agree the best course of action.

It is, of course, our utmost concern to ensure your safety along with that of your family and the people you care for. The test result will enable you to discuss with your line manager a suitable date for returning to work, taking into account the environment in which you work.

Must I/my household contact take a test?

Neither you nor your household member(s) are compelled to take a test, and neither are you under any obligation to discuss the test results with your line manager. This service has been put in place to support those of you in front line roles who have been frustrated by having to stay off work without knowing whether you have Covid-19.

Where will the test centres be located?

There will be three drive-in swabbing centres (appointment only) across Mid & South Essex as follows:

Phoenix House, Christopher Martin Road, Basildon, SS14 3HG

Southend Leisure Centre, Garon Park, Eastern Avenue, Southend on Sea SS2 4FA

Wren House, Hedgerows Business Park, Colchester Road, Chelmsford CM2 5PF

The hours of operation for each site will vary (the weblink will direct users to an appropriate time slot).

Where can I get further information?

If you have any queries please contact Mse.stafftesting@nhs.net

Can I just turn up?

No, you must book an appointment by speaking with your line manager who will direct you to a closed weblink to access a test appointment,

Can I walk to the test centre?

No, the test centres are drive-through only. This is to protect both you/your household contact(s) and the staff taking the swab.

Do you offer repeated tests?

No, tests will only be offered to people who have symptoms of Covid-19. The best time to take the test is within 3 days of the start of the symptoms, although testing is considered effective up until day five.

If you have tested positive, you will receive advice about next steps.

If you have tested negative, but still have symptoms, you are advised to speak with your line manager and seek medical advice.

Can I/my household contact be tested if we have no symptoms?

No, the test is currently only offered to people who have symptoms.

Will children be tested?

Children can be swabbed for Covid-19 only if accompanied by an adult who is not symptomatic. The swabbing process is uncomfortable for children, so if there are symptomatic adults in the household the parent should review whether the child needs to go through the process. Also, swabbing centre staff could refuse to swab a child if to do so is considered to pose risk to the swabbing centre staff and the parents are not able to keep the child comfortable during the swabbing process. This is to minimise risk to children parents and staff.

I meet the eligibility criteria and need a test but I don't have a car. How can I get tested?

Home test kits are now available via the gov.uk website. We currently only offer drive through testing.

If you previously tested positive for coronavirus and have another episode of symptoms, do you need to self-isolate again?

If you are usually healthy and your first illness was so severe you were prioritised for a coronavirus test and the result was positive, you will probably have developed some short-term immunity to coronavirus. Your new symptoms are very unlikely to be due to coronavirus in the current outbreak and therefore you and your household do not need to isolate.

However, if another person in your household develops symptoms and they have not previously tested positive for coronavirus, then they need to isolate along with all other members of the household except for you (as you have already tested positive).

If you are concerned about your new possible coronavirus symptoms (a new, continuous cough or a high temperature), use the 111-coronavirus service <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/> or call NHS 111.

For up to the minute information for households with possible coronavirus, please refer to the national guidance.