



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Personal Assistant (PA) Weekly Asymptomatic Testing

User Guide and FAQs

12 February 2021

Personal Assistant Testing - Summary

Important Steps:

1. Go to <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>
2. Refer to the following pages to order **4 home test kits** by entering **the PA's details 4 times**. Do not enter the details of anyone else you live with.
3. You'll receive your test kits within 2 days of ordering.
4. Open 1 of the test kits and follow its instructions to register it online. After completing the test put it in a **priority postbox** to return it.
5. Your results will be sent to you by text and email within 3 days.
6. You need to **use 1 test kit each week** (on the same day each week) **for 28 days** until you have completed all 4 tests.
7. Repeat this process by ordering 4 more test kits using the web address in step 1.

Useful information

- If no home test kits are available, please try again at **8am or 12pm** the next day. This is when most test kits are available.
- Call **119** (free) between 7am and 11pm if you need assistance and say that you're a **personal assistant (PA)**.
- PAs can follow the Non-Digital Assisted Journey for 'Home Assisted Ordering' and 'Home Registration process for digitally excluded users' if they do not have an email address. Ordering and registering digitally is the quickest way to receive test results.



How to order your 4 home test kits

Pages 4-8 guide you through the key steps in the ordering process.

Note: They do not cover every step.



1

Go to <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>



Home > Coronavirus (COVID-19) > Test for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Get a free NHS test today to check if you have coronavirus

You can have a swab test to check if you have coronavirus (COVID-19) now. You can choose to take the test:

- at a test site near you today and get your result tomorrow
- with a home test kit

There is another test, the [antibody test to check if you've had coronavirus](#). This is not widely available yet.

Who can get a test

You can get a test:

- for yourself, if you have coronavirus symptoms now (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste)
- for someone you live with, if they have symptoms
- if you live in England and have been told to have a test before you go into hospital, for example, for surgery
- if you live, work or study in these local councils - Leicester, Luton, Pendle, or Blackburn with Darwen
- if your local council asks you to get a test

This service is for people of all ages in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

When to get a test

If you have coronavirus symptoms, you need to get a test done as soon as possible. You need to get the test done in the first 5 days of having symptoms.

Book a visit to a test site to have the test today. Or order a home test kit if you cannot get to a test site.

On days 1 to 4, you can get tested at a site or at home. If you're ordering a home test kit on day 4, do so by 3pm.

On day 5, you need to go to a test site. It's too late to order a home test kit.

Get help applying

If you have problems using the online service, call:

- 119 if you're in England, Wales or Northern Ireland
- 0300 303 2713 if you're in Scotland

For more information, see [our website](#).

[Start now >](#)

2

Click 'Start now'



< Back

Is the person who needs a test an essential worker?

Essential workers include NHS staff, teachers and transport staff. Check the [full list of essential workers on GOV.UK](#).

Yes

No

I do not know

Continue

3

Select 'Yes' and continue to answer additional questions until you arrive at step 4

GOV.UK

Get a coronavirus test

ALPHA This is a new service – your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

< Back

Does the person who needs a test have coronavirus symptoms?

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a high temperature
- new, continuous cough
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms.

Yes, at least one of these symptoms

No, none of these symptoms

Continue

4

Select 'No' or 'Yes' depending if asymptomatic



< Back

Has the person been asked to get a follow-up test?

For example, their first test was unclear or they need to confirm a possible positive result.

Yes
 No

Continue

5

Answer 'No'

5

< Back

Is the person who needs a test part of a trial or government pilot project?

For example, they:

- are taking part in community testing
- have been invited to take part in the Contact Testing Study
- were told to get a test by the COVID Symptom Study app (by ZOE)

Yes
 No

Continue

6

Answer 'No'

5

< Back

Why are you asking for a test?

I've been told to get another coronavirus test

I'm ordering for someone I live with who has coronavirus symptoms

My local council or health protection team has asked me (or someone I live with) to get a test, even though I do not have symptoms

I'm part of the National Tactical Response Group (NTRG), or someone I live with is

I'm in Scotland or Wales and I work in health or social care, education or in an emergency or prison service

I'm a personal assistant in England employed by an individual to provide home-based adult care and support

7

Select: 'I'm a personal assistant in England employed by an individual to provide home-based adult care and support'

8

Answer a few more questions. When asked if you have a car or small van select 'No'

ALPHA This is a new service – your feedback will help us to improve it.

< Back

How do you want to get the coronavirus test?

Based on your answers, these testing services are available to you.

At a drive-through test site

- you need to book your test as soon as possible
- you or someone you live with must drive to the test site by car or small van
- site staff will tell you if an assistant does the swab test for you or if you do it yourself

Your nearest drive-through test site is Wandsworth RM Reserve Centre - Mobile Un (2.2 miles away)

4 slots available in the next 5 days.

Home testing

- you can get a test kit for yourself and up to 3 other people you live with
- it is posted to your home and should arrive the day after you order it
- it's important that you return your test as soon as possible after doing it

Continue

9

Select 'Home Testing'.
If this option is not available, try again at 8am or 12pm (midday)

10

You will be asked to enter some details such as your date of birth and gender

ALPHA This is a new service – your feedback will help us to improve it.

< Back

Does the person travel to nursery, work or a place of education?

This will help us understand more about the spread of the virus.

- Yes - they travel to a workplace
- Yes - they go to nursery, school, college or university
- No
- or
- Prefer not to say/not applicable

Continue

11

Select 'Yes – they travel to a workplace'

12

Enter 'Care worker or home carer'

ALPHA This is a new service – your feedback will help us to improve it.

< Back

What's the occupation of the person needing a test?

This helps us track which occupations are more at risk from coronavirus.

Start entering an occupation below and then choose from the options provided.

If you cannot see the occupation try typing a different keyword or use a more general description.

If you still cannot see the occupation select 'I cannot find the correct occupation'.

Occupation

- Care Work
- Care worker or home carer
- Senior care worker
- I cannot find the correct occupation

Continue



ALPHA This is a new service – your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

< Back

Enter the employer of the person who needs a test

This helps us trace work colleagues of anyone who tests positive.

Employer name

PA

Continue

13

For the name of your employer, enter: **PA**

It is important you do this

ALPHA This is a new service – your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

< Back

Confirm people for testing

You can add up to 3 people you live with for testing.

Once you've confirmed who needs testing, you can continue.

Tom Smith tomsmith857@hotmail.com [Edit details](#)
+447585274584

Save and continue

Add person you live with

14

Click 'Add person you live with'

You'll then need to enter **your own details again** to order your **second test kit**

ALPHA This is a new service – your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

< Back

What's the name of the person you live with?

First name

Tom

Last name

Smith

Continue

15

Do not enter the name of someone you live with. **Enter your own name again**

ALPHA This is a new service – your feedback will help us to improve it.

< Back

What's Tom Smith's date of birth?

For example, 31 3 1980

Day Month Year

Continue

16 Enter **your** date of birth again
Enter **your information again** for the questions that follow

ALPHA This is a new service – your feedback will help us to improve it.

< Back

Confirm people for testing

You can add up to 3 people you live with for testing.
Once you've confirmed who needs testing, you can continue.

Tom Smith	tomsmith857@hotmail.com +447585274584	Edit details
Tom Smith	tomsmith857@hotmail.com +447585274584	Edit details Remove

Save and continue Add person you live with

17

Click 'Add person you live with' and put in your own details again to order your **third** test kit
Repeat steps 10-12

ALPHA This is a new service – your feedback will help us to improve it.

< Back

Confirm people for testing

You can add up to 3 people you live with for testing.
Once you've confirmed who needs testing, you can continue.

Tom Smith	tomsmith857@hotmail.com +447585274584	Edit details
Tom Smith	tomsmith857@hotmail.com +447585274584	Edit details Remove
Tom Smith	tomsmith857@hotmail.com +447585274584	Edit details Remove
Tom Smith	tomsmith857@hotmail.com +447585274584	Edit details Remove

You have added the maximum number of household members.

Save and continue

18

Repeat this process until you have entered **your details 4 times** for your **4** test kits

19

You'll need to answer a few more questions for your 4 test kits to be delivered

[Back](#)

Is your delivery address the same as your home address?

Your delivery address is where your home test kit should be sent.

- Yes, my delivery address is the same as my home address
- No, my delivery address is different to my home address

[Continue >](#)

20

You'll be asked if your delivery address is the same as your home address.

You may want to use a different address if you're unlikely to be home when the delivery arrives (within 2 days)

21

You'll see this when you finish the order process.

You'll receive an email to confirm your order

We've received your order

You'll receive an email soon to confirm if your order was successfully processed

What happens next

If your order was successful, we'll send your coronavirus home test kit to you.

The test kit contains a swab, instructions on how to use it, and return packaging.

It should arrive at the address you gave us in the next 48 hours.

You'll receive email updates on the delivery status of your home test kit.

If your order was not successful, we'll send you an email with what to do next.

Once you get your test kit

Follow the instructions in your test kit when it arrives.

The instructions will tell you:

- how to do the swab test
- when to do the swab test
- how to return your swab sample

What happens after you've ordered 4 test kits?

1. You will receive 4 confirmatory emails – each email will contain the same Order ID. This is correct and can be used to register each weekly test
2. Your 4 test kits will be delivered to the address you provided within 2 days
3. Open 1 test kit and read the instructions to find your nearest Royal Mail priority postbox and check collection times
4. Continue to follow the instructions to register your test kit online before taking the test
5. Complete the test and put it in a Royal Mail priority postbox, 1 hour before the last collection time of the day
6. You should receive your results within 3 days
7. Complete the steps above on the same day the following week (if possible)



Personal Assistant Testing - Test Results Guidance

What happens if I get a positive result?

- If you get a positive result, this means the test found that you have coronavirus.
- If you receive a positive test result while at work, you must put on a face mask immediately, inform your employer and return home (Avoiding public transport where possible). You will need to adhere to the [self-isolation guidance](#).
- Your employer will not automatically be informed of your positive test result. **You should inform your employer of a positive result** immediately so that they can protect anyone you are working with or have come into contact with at work. You should also take part in contact tracing as part of the national Test and Trace programme. You should always be wearing appropriate PPE at work and where this is the case, the person you care for will not be counted as a 'contact' and will not need to self-isolate. This only applies when at work.
- The individual employer or somebody on their behalf should try to organise different arrangements. For example, it may be that a family member or another PA is willing and able to take on further work to provide the individual with the care and support they need. In cases where arrangements cannot be put in place to provide individuals with the care and support they need, employees or somebody on their behalf should contact the Local Authority or Clinical Commissioning Group immediately. They will support them in developing a temporary plan to ensure individuals' needs are met, while PAs are self isolating.



Personal Assistant Testing - Test Results Guidance

What happens if I get a negative result?

- A negative result means coronavirus was not detected at the time of testing.
- A one-off negative test result cannot guarantee that you do not have coronavirus. It is important to continue the proper Infection Prevention and Control measures including wearing the correct PPE and hand washing.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



Personal Assistant Testing – FAQs (1/7)

1. Who is eligible for testing?

- NHS Test and Trace is making weekly testing available to personal assistants in **England**.
- Personal assistants are considered to be **Key Workers**.
- Various channels have been utilised for outreach to personal assistants and their Employers with details of how to apply for test kits and their eligibility.
- **For testing purposes**, we have defined a personal assistant as someone who is directly employed by an individual (or self-employed) to provide care and support to enable them to live as independently as possible. This care could include support in the home, or to go out into the community. All personal assistants who provide care that requires them to come within 2 metres of the person they support and who support adults over the age of 18 are eligible for testing.

2. Who is responsible for ordering test kits?

- The personal assistant or their individual employer is responsible for ordering test kits for their homecare workers.
- The personal assistant or employer will be responsible for accepting the delivery and storing the test kits. The Employer will inform the personal assistant that the test kits have arrived if they have placed the order.

3. How often can test kits be ordered?

- Test kits will need to be ordered 4 at a time on a monthly basis; This is important as an individual is only permitted to place an order once per 14 days.

Personal Assistant Testing – FAQs (2/7)

4. The website isn't working / there are no home test kits available?

- If the portal states no home test kits are available, please try again as soon as possible after **8am or 12pm** when test kit allocations are refreshed.
- If you're having difficulties, call **119** between 7am and 11pm for assistance and say you're a personal assistant (PA).

5. Why do I need to be tested when I don't have symptoms?

- Testing is an important way to stop the spread of coronavirus and saves lives. Up to 1 in 3 people have coronavirus but do not have symptoms, so may transmit it to others without realising. We know that some people are particularly at risk if they get coronavirus.
- Regular testing will help to limit the spread of the virus and protect people.

6. I've already had a test for coronavirus. Why do I need testing again?

- COVID-19 swab tests show if you have coronavirus at the time that you take the test. It does not tell you if you have had coronavirus before or stop you from getting the virus after testing. This is why being tested regularly helps to manage and prevent the spread of the virus.
- If you have taken an antibody test, you should still self-test even if the test found that you have previously had coronavirus. This is because you could become infected again.

Personal Assistant Testing – FAQs (3/7)

7. I've had coronavirus before, should I still test?

- If you have been diagnosed with coronavirus in the last 90 days, you should not test unless you develop symptoms. This is because for 90 days after developing symptoms (or 90 days after a positive test result if you were asymptomatic at the time of the test), although you would no longer be infectious, you may continue to test positive as “broken” or inactive bits of the virus might be detected by the test.
- If you were diagnosed with coronavirus 90 days ago or more, then you should test. Even though you have had coronavirus before, it is possible that you could become infected again and therefore you should still be tested weekly as long as your diagnosis was longer than 90 days ago.

8. I and/or people I care for have had a Covid-19 vaccination, should I still test?

- Testing is a crucial part of the government’s strategy against COVID-19 and should continue as per current guidance until further notice, even if PAs and/ or their individual employers have received the vaccine.
- Proper Infection Prevention and Control measures - such as handwashing and correct use of PPE - are still vital for stopping the spread of coronavirus.

9. How will I be informed of the result?

- You’ll receive a text message and an email to the mobile phone number and email address that you provided.

10. I have not been informed of my test result – what should I do?

- You should receive your result within 3 days after returning your test kit. If you have not received your result after 3 days, call 119.



Personal Assistant Testing – FAQs (4/7)

11. What do my results mean?

- This [NHS webpage](#) provides further information on what your test results mean and what you need to do next. A summary is included below but you should continue to check the NHS link for the latest guidance.

12. Will my employer find out my result? When do I tell my employer about my test results?

- Your result is only communicated to you. If you test positive, you should inform your employer of your test result immediately so that they can protect anyone you are working with or have come into contact with at work so that they can begin self-isolating.
- You should also take part in contact tracing as part of the national [Test and Trace](#) programme. Information on how personal data is managed is available here: [Privacy Information](#). Your employer may also ask you to inform them when you receive a negative or void result.



Personal Assistant Testing – FAQs (5/7)

13. What happens if I test positive?

- A positive result means you had coronavirus when the test was done. If your test is positive, you must self-isolate for 10 days and follow the [national guidance](#).
- If you test positive but did not have symptoms at the time of the test, you must self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the test. If you do not develop symptoms during self-isolation, you can return to work on day 11 if you are well enough to do so.
- If you develop symptoms during this isolation period, you must re-start your 10-day isolation from the day you develop symptoms.
- Anyone you live with, and anyone in your support bubble, must self-isolate for 10 days from when you start self-isolating.
- If you receive your positive test result while at work, you must put on a face mask immediately, inform your employer and return home. If positive, you will be sent an email or text with an online form to complete to initiate contact tracing. You should complete this form **as soon as possible** so contact tracing can begin.
- The individual employer or somebody on their behalf should try to organise different arrangements. For example, it may be that a family member or another PA is willing and able to take on further work to provide the individual with the care and support they need. In cases where arrangements cannot be put in place to provide individuals' with the care and support they need, employees or somebody on their behalf should contact the Local Authority or Clinical Commission Group immediately. They will support the individual employer in developing a temporary plan to ensure individuals' needs are met, while PA's are self isolating.
- You should not be re-tested for at least 90 days from your positive test result or onset of symptoms (unless you develop a new onset of symptoms in which case you should re-test immediately). You can restart weekly self-testing after 90 days since testing positive.



Personal Assistant Testing – FAQs (6/7)

14. What happens to my income if I need to self-isolate?

- Whether you are employed or self-employed, you may be entitled to a [payment of £500](#) if you're unable to work from home and will lose income as a result of self-isolating. There are eligibility criteria and the payments are made by your Local Authority.
- If you are directly employed, you may be eligible for [Statutory Sick Pay](#) (SSP) whilst you are self-isolating.

15. What happens if I test negative?

- A negative result means the test did not find coronavirus. You can remain at work as long as you do not develop symptoms and as long as you have not been identified as a close contact of a confirmed case and no one in your household/bubble has symptoms and is awaiting a test result.
- A negative result cannot guarantee that you do not have coronavirus. It is possible that you may have been infected with coronavirus at the time of your test, for example if the level of the infection in your body at that time was not yet enough to be detected by the test or you may have become infected since the swab was taken. Proper Infection Prevention and Control measures - such as handwashing and correct use of PPE - are still vital for stopping the spread of coronavirus.
- If you develop symptoms after testing negative, you should self-isolate and take another test.

16. What happens if my result is unclear/void?

- If your result is unclear/void, you can continue working and do not need to isolate unless you are symptomatic. You should take a further test as soon as possible, using one of your test kits or order a further test kit if needed.

17. I am not working this week; do I still have to take a test?

- Continue to complete a test every week even if you will not visit the person you care for or your individual employer on a particular week. If you think you no longer qualify as personal assistant, discuss this with your employer.



Personal Assistant Testing – FAQs (7/)

18. What details do I need to enter in the Get a Coronavirus Test portal?

- You will need to enter basic personal information and contact details in order to send your test kit and results to you.

19. My occupation isn't listed on the Get a Coronavirus Test portal

- The occupation that should be selected is '**Care worker or home carer**'.

20. Will my delivery of 4 test kits fit through the letterbox?

- The delivery box is unlikely to fit through you're a letterbox. If you're not going to be at home then enter a different delivery address.

21. My test kits have not arrived, what should I do?

- You will receive a confirmation email with tracking details after ordering your test kits. If you've not received your test kits within 48 hours of ordering, call 119.

22. Which day should I complete my test on?

- You should complete your test on the same day every week if possible.

23. Where can I find a Royal Mail Priority Postbox?

- You can find your nearest priority postbox on [Services Near You](#) or on the [Royal Mail app](#). To find your nearest priority postbox, click the 'Show my nearest priority postboxes' tickbox, then enter your postcode and select your address.

