COVID-19

LONDON
GROWTH HUB

NHS Test and Trace – Advice for Employers

What is NHS Test and Trace?

NHS Test and Trace is a new service to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

The NHS Test and Trace service will text, email or call everyone who tests positive for COVID-19 to ask for details about the people they have recently been in close contact with. The service will then text, email or phone those people who are contacts to alert them to self-isolate. Personal details will not be shared with other agencies. The NHS Test and Trace service does not tell contacts the identity of the positive case.

The NHS Test and Trace service will play a vital role in giving us an early warning if the virus is increasing again, locally or nationally. For more information about how the NHS Test and Trace Service works: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works.

We also have a number of FAQs, including on what action you should take if you are contacted by NHS Test and Trace, on our coronavirus hub here: https://www.london.gov.uk/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-faqs.

For information about how the Test and Trace Service is performing: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/nhs-test-and-trace-statistics-england-weekly-reports#latest-report.

Who can get tested and how?

Anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can request a free test by calling 119 or visiting https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test. If your employees display symptoms of COVID-19 please encourage and support them to stay at home and request a test.

There is a separate process for essential workers and testing in care homes. For more information on employee referral and essential workers please visit https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested.

What is your responsibility as a business to support NHS Test and Trace?

Businesses will play a vital role in supporting NHS Test and Trace and helping stop a resurgence of the virus as London reopens. The service is vital to identifying local outbreaks and containing them early, which will be crucial to avoiding a reintroduction of lockdown measures.

Businesses in certain sectors are being asked to collect details and maintain temporary records of staff, customers and visitors on their premises. You should make this information available to NHS Test and Trace if they request it. This will help NHS Test and Trace identify people who may have been exposed to the virus.

Further information on collecting and handling temporary records can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace.

Collecting contact details is only one of a range of measures you should take to keep everyone safe. This includes ensuring that everyone on your premises, including staff, continue to practice social distancing and good hand hygiene.

Further sector-specific guidance and detail about the actions you should take to make your business safe and COVID-secure can be found in the guides listed here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19.

Further information about the action you should take as an employer is covered in more detail elsewhere in these FAQs.

If you run/own a care home, you will be aware of the specific guidance for care homes and adult social care. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-social-care-guidance.

How should I handle the data I collect?

The Government has published guidance on how you should maintain temporary records of staff, customers and visitors to your premises: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace.

This includes a full list of the specific information you should collect from both staff, customers and visitors.

Many organisations that routinely take bookings – like restaurants, hotels and hairdressers - already have systems for recording this information. These booking systems can serve as the source of the information that you need to collect.

You should collect this information in a way that is manageable for your organisation. All collected data must comply with GDPR, and further details are in the link above. It should be recorded digitally if possible, but a paper record is acceptable too. If you do not already have a system, think about how you build a process either at the point a visitor enters the premises or at the point of service.

Records should be held for 21 days. After this time information kept for this purpose should be securely disposed of or deleted. If you are contacted by the NHS Test and Trace Service, they will work with you to ensure that the information is shared in a safe and secure way. From 4 July, two households will be able to meet up in any setting. Social distancing should be followed when in contact with people from outside your support bubble or household.

What happens if someone who has visited my business tests positive for COVID-19?

If someone feels unwell with symptoms of coronavirus after visiting your premises they should request a test by calling the coronavirus testing contact centre on 119 or visiting https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test. If they test positive, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace to discuss who they have recently been in contact with. They should give the name of your business as somewhere they have visited.

If your business is then contacted by NHS Test and Trace, the service will work with you to discuss what action you need to take and to request the contact information of those who might have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive. NHS Test and Trace will not automatically ask everyone who attended the same venue as the person who tested positive to self-isolate. NHS Test and Trace will perform a risk assessment and work with you to determine the appropriate measures to take.

To help reduce the risk of the virus spreading it is vital that all staff and customers follow the guidance on how to stay safe. This means ensuring everyone on your premises socially distances (stays 2 metres apart, or 1 metre apart with mitigations) and regularly washes their hands and that surfaces are cleaned regularly.

If someone tests positive will everyone who visited the premises need to self-isolate?

No. Just because a person was in the same indoor space as someone who tests positive, it does not mean they will automatically be asked to self-isolate. People who have kept at least 2 metres distance from the positive case will not be asked to self-isolate. NHS Test and Trace will perform a risk assessment and work with you to determine the appropriate measures to take.

To help reduce the risk of the virus spreading it is vital that all staff and customers follow the guidance on how to stay safe. This means ensuring everyone on your premises socially distances (stays 2 metres apart, or 1 metre apart with mitigations) and regularly washes their hands and that surfaces are cleaned regularly.

It is vital that anyone who is contacted by NHS Test and Trace (because they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19) and is asked to self-isolate does so for the full 14 days from their last contact with the person who tested positive. Even if you do not feel unwell, you could become infectious to others at any

point up to 14 days. If you do develop symptoms you should request a test by calling 119 or visiting https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test.

Will my business have to close if someone who visits tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)?

If you receive a request for information from NHS Test and Trace, it is unlikely that your establishment will need to close. NHS Test and Trace will, if necessary, undertake a risk assessment and work with you to understand what action needs to be taken.

Depending on the circumstances and timing, this could include arranging for people to be tested, taking extra care with social distancing, and/or – in some circumstances - asking visitors or staff to self-isolate.

NHS Test and Trace will give all the necessary public health guidance and will include your staff in any risk assessment.

If there is more than one case of COVID-19 linked with your premises you should contact your local health protection team to report this.

How do I know the number of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in an area?

There are a number of places where you can see the data on cases of coronavirus. If there is a concern about the volume of cases in a particular area, workplace or premises, then Public Health England's local health protection team will work closely with the local authority and key stakeholders, including relevant businesses in the local area.

- The weekly case rates per 100,000 population are published in Public Health England's National COVID-19 surveillance report.
- Regional R number - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-r-number-in-the-uk This is not available by local authority area and should be understood in the context of the absolute number of cases.

How is the situation in London being monitored and how will local lockdowns be decided?

Public Health England, in partnership with local authorities, monitors the data and number of cases on a daily basis, including by location, as part of the NHS Test and Trace service.

PHE's health protection teams in London are experienced in working with local authorities, individuals and organisations to manage clusters of cases and local outbreaks of a wide variety of infections, including COVID-19. PHE will work with businesses to conduct a risk assessment and provide appropriate infection control advice to manage clusters of cases. Measures may include asking staff or customers to self-isolate, enhanced cleaning of premises, and if necessary temporary closure of the premises.

PHE will work closely with local authorities and the Joint Biosecurity Centre to monitor data and agree any further measures that may need to be taken in the event that the number of cases increases further. Local lockdowns don't necessarily mean action across a whole borough or city - they can be on a much smaller scale and involve closing a number of workplaces or settings.

It is vital that we all keep following the health guidelines, including social distancing, keeping hands and surfaces clean, getting tested if you have symptoms and working with the NHS Test and Trace service. This is how we will successfully work together to keep the infection rate low.

How many mobile testing units are there in London?

There are 15 mobile testing units in London which are allocated to conduct operations across the city. Two of the units can be deployed to respond rapidly to local outbreaks, including to provide testing in workplaces if needed.

Resources for employers

What is your responsibility as an employer to support NHS Test and Trace?

As with visitors or customers, you should be keeping a record of members of staff on your premises. You should make this information available to NHS Test and Trace if they request it. This will help NHS Test and Trace identify people who may have been exposed to the virus.

Collecting contact details is only one of a range of measures you should take to keep everyone safe. Every employer must take steps to ensure that their workplace is COVID-secure and this includes carrying out a specific COVID-secure risk assessment.

Further guidance and detail about the actions you need to take to make your business safe and COVID-secure in your specific sector can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19

Please continue to remind staff to follow the health guidelines, including the importance of social distancing, i.e. keeping 2 metres apart from their colleagues as much as possible, and a minimum of at least 1 metre at all times.

What must an employer do if a member of staff tests positive for COVID-19?

The member of staff who tests positive must self-isolate at home for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms. If they still have symptoms after 7 days they should check the NHS website to check whether they need to keep self-isolating: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/how-long-to-self-isolate/ The stay at home guidance provides advice for the people they live with.

The employer should:

- ask the member of staff to follow instructions from NHS Test and Trace to share the details of people with whom they have had close, recent contact with, and

- support any other staff who have had close contact with the positive case to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of contact.

If there is more than one case of COVID-19 associated with a workplace, employers should contact their local health protection team to report the suspected outbreak.

Find your local health protection team.

Where cases emerge in workplaces, colleagues will not be required to self-isolate if social distancing of 2 metres is in place. If social distancing is not possible, PHE will undertake a risk assessment of the workplace and, as necessary, provide advice on any actions required to protect your staff and prevent further transmission.

What should an employee do if they feel unwell?

If anyone feels unwell with the symptoms of coronavirus, they should not leave their home (unless they are attending a testing site) and they should self-isolate for 7 days. Everyone else in their household should also self-isolate for 14 days.   The person with coronavirus symptoms should order a test by calling 119 or visiting https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test .

If their symptoms get worse it is important to get medical help. https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/what-to-do-if-symptoms-get-worse/

If an employee feels unwell in the workplace, they should return home to self-isolate as soon as this can be done safely.   They should avoid public transport and contact with others while travelling.

- The areas of the workplace that they have occupied, for example, desk and bathroom should be cleaned using standard cleaning products before being used by other people. Cleaning the affected area with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.
- Staff who have aided a suspected COVID-19 case, should wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. Any staff who have assisted a suspected COVID-19 case may remain at work. If they develop symptoms they must also self-isolate.
- In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.
- Contact tracing will not be carried out for possible or suspected cases of COVID-19.
- Workplace contacts do not need to be excluded unless there is a confirmed case with a positive test for COVID-19.

How should an employer support workers who need to self-isolate?

Employers should support workers who need to self-isolate and must not ask them to attend the workplace.

They should continue to communicate with workers in self-isolation and provide support. This includes allowing people to work from home if they remain well and if it is practicable to do so. It might include finding alternative work that can be completed at home during the period of self-isolation.

If people can't work from home, employers must ensure any self-isolating employee is receiving sick pay and give them the option to use their paid leave days if they prefer.

Employees in self-isolation are entitled to Statutory Sick Pay for every day they are in isolation, as long as they meet the eligibility conditions. [Information for employers on reclaiming Statutory Sick Pay.](#)

The NHS test and trace service will provide a notification that can be used as evidence that someone has been told to self-isolate.

Further guidance is available on what employees should do if they cannot work.
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-what-to-do-if-youre-employed-and-cannot-work

Workers will be told to isolate because they:

- have coronavirus symptoms and are awaiting a test result
- have tested positive for coronavirus
- are a member of the same household as someone who has symptoms or has tested positive for coronavirus
- have been in close recent contact with someone who has tested positive and received a notification to self-isolate from NHS test and trace.

Should Londoners still be working from home?

Instead of Government telling people to work from home, it has stated it is going to give employers more discretion, and ask them to make decisions about how their staff can work safely. From 1 August, the Government will update its advice on going to work.

The Mayor's message is to only return to workplaces if it is safe to do so, on foot or by bike if at all possible, and avoid public transport at peak times if you can't. Working from home has minimised transmission and relieves pressure on London's public transport network. Social distancing on public transport is not possible unless we radically reduce the overall number of people travelling.

If you must use public transport, or taxi and private hire services, please travel outside of peak times and use a non-medical face covering for the entirety of your journey. Carry a hand sanitiser and wash your hands before and after you travel.

What should I do if one of my customers phones to say they have tested positive after visiting my premises?

Any action required would depend on many factors including the amount of contact that the customer had with other persons on your premises. If the guidelines on social distancing are being followed the risk to others is small. It would be helpful to confirm with your customer the date and times that they visited your premises so you may assess if they had contact with others on your site. Check that they have shared this information with NHS Test and Trace or encourage them to do so.

It is key that the customer informs NHS Test and Trace that they attended your premises as this allows the public health authorities to take action. If you have concerns, please contact your local health protection team to ask for advice.

Further helpful information

Borough outbreak plans

Borough	Link to Outbreak Plan
Barking & Dagenham	https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/LBBD-COVID-19-Local-Outbreak-management-plan-01-07-20.pdf
Barnet	https://www.barnet.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-latest-information-and-advice/barnet-local-covid-19-outbreak-control-plan
Bexley	https://www.bexley.gov.uk/sites/bexley-cms/files/2020-07/Draft-Bexley-LOCP-V3-01-07-2020.pdf
Brent	http://democracy.brent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=365&MId=6141&Ver=4
Bromley	https://www.bromley.gov.uk/downloads/download/1071/bromley_covid-19_outbreak_control_plan
Camden	https://news.camden.gov.uk/camden-publishes-outbreak-plan-to-support-its-communities-as-coronavirus-lockdown-eases/
City of London	https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/health-and-wellbeing/Documents/local-outbreak-control-plan.pdf
Croydon	https://www.croydon.gov.uk/democracy/dande/policies/health/covid-19-outbreak-control-plan
Ealing	Ealing Local Outbreak Plan
Enfield	https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/community-safety/emergency-planning/#4
Greenwich	https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/coronavirusplan
Hackney	https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/health-and-wellbeing/Documents/local-outbreak-control-plan.pdf
Hammersmith & Fulham	https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/sites/default/files/section_attachments/hammersmith_fulham_council_local_outbreak_control_plan.pdf
Haringey	https://www.haringey.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/covid-19-local-outbreak-management-plan
Harrow	https://www.harrow.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/support-residents?documentId=13133&categoryId=210288

Havering	https://www.havering.gov.uk/downloads/download/848/havering_coronavirus_out break_control_plan
Hillingdon	https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/5178/Local-outbreak-control-plan
Hounslow	https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/downloads/download/642/the_councils_outbreak_co ntrol_plan
Islington	https://www.islington.gov.uk/-/media/sharepoint-lists/public-records/publichealth/information/adviceandinformation/20202021/20200630summ arydocumentoutbreakcontrol.pdf
Kensington & Chelsea	https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/council-services-and-disruption-updates/covid-19-testing-and-tracing
Kingston	https://www.kingston.gov.uk/downloads/download/1208/local_outbreak_control_pl an
Lambeth	https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/LambethC-19_OPCP.pdf
Lewisham	https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/coronavirus-covid-19/health/the-lewisham-covid19-outbreak-prevention-and-control-plan
Merton	Merton Local Outbreak Plan
Newham	https://www.newham.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-management-plan/1
Redbridge	https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/media/8207/local_outbreak_plan.pdf
Richmond	https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/wellbeing_and_lifestyle/health_protection_in formation/coronavirus_information/local_outbreak_plan
Southwark	https://www.southwark.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/southwark-outbreak-prevention-and-control-plan-opcp
Sutton	https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200588/health_and_wellbeing/2142/covid-19_nhs_test_and_trace/3
Tower Hamlets	https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Coronavirus/Outbreak_plan/Tower_ Hamlets_OCP.pdf
Waltham Forest	https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/covid-19-local-outbreak-control-plan-0
Wandsworth	https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/public-health/coronavirus/local-outbreak-plan/
Westminster	https://www.westminster.gov.uk/sites/default/files/wcc_outbreak_control_plan_publ ic_edition_v1.1.pdf

Sample COVID-19 OUTBREAK ACTION CARD - WORKPLACES
https://www.barnet.gov.uk/sites/default/files/slide_11_workplaces_action_card.pdf

CIPD: *Test and trace FAQs: Answers to frequently asked questions about managing employees who are contacted by the test and trace service*

https://www.cipd.co.uk/news-views/coronavirus/faqs/test-and-trace

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