



# Care Home COVID-19 PCR Testing Guidance

For testing of staff

This guidance should be used for regular staff testing using PCR tests.

#### Before you do any testing

- Read this guidance in its entirety
- Make sure you have booked a courier collection by 7pm the day before you start PCR testing. This can be arranged at <u>https://test-kit-collection.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/</u>

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### Introduction

Providing testing within all adult care homes will help you protect your residents and staff, and is an important part of the national effort to tackle coronavirus. Thank you for everything you are doing to help the country beat the virus at this hugely challenging time.

Based on current prevalence and the transmissibility of the current variant, this is the current policy for regular and outbreak testing in care homes. The aim of this policy is to enable positive cases to be identified quickly, enabling action to stop the spread. We will keep this policy under review as the situation changes.

#### All CIW registered care homes can apply for regular re-testing at:

https://request-testing.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk

#### Prepare your care home for testing

This will help to ensure you are ready to test staff on a regular basis.

To prepare your care home, make sure you:

- familiarise yourself with the PCR testing guidance and instructions
- discuss the testing approach with your staff
- obtain written consent
- review your personal protective equipment (PPE) supply and ensure you have the correct PPE to carry out testing.
- ensure a proper workstation is available for preparing and packing the tests.
- look out for the delivery confirmation email letting you know when tests will be delivered.
- have a workflow to allow tests to be easily recorded, conducted and registered as swiftly as possible it is
  recommended to have two staff members; one to conduct the test and the other to record the relevant
  information needed for registration.
- have booked a courier collection for PCR tests by 7pm the day before you start testing. This can be arranged at <u>https://test-kit-collection.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/</u>
- If you have received a handheld scanner for easier registration: make sure you have set it up and familiarised your staff with how to use it. For a quick start guide on how to use the scanning device, turn to page 19.

## Testing process overview

	What to expect:	What to do :								
Initial Order	You will receive an email confirming your successful order of PCR tests from: care.home.portal.for.coronavirus.test. kits@notifications.service.gov.uk	<ul> <li>Start planning in advance so that you are ready to begin testing when the test kits are delivered to you:</li> <li>Read the instructions and watch the instruction video(s)</li> <li>Prepare a workflow and allocated work stations for testing</li> <li>Ensure you have enough of the appropriate PPE</li> </ul>								
		our order and confirming your delivery as we me to prepare your care home for testing.								
Delivery Confirmation	You will receive a second email confirming the test kits are scheduled for delivery. Take this time to start preparing.	<ul> <li>Make sure you:</li> <li>Communicate the testing plan to all staff</li> <li>Obtain agreement from staff to be tested, and schedule testing of staff taking into account shift patterns</li> </ul>								
Receive test kits	You will receive your delivery of test kits via courier after 10am. Ensure that all test kits are stored safely at an ambient temperature. Do not refrigerate or leave in direct sunlight.	<ul> <li>Start preparing for testing</li> <li>Re-familiarise yourself and staff with the test instructions to prepare, collect and package the sample for each person being tested</li> <li>Prepare your record keeping spreadsheet and workstations for an easy testing and registration workflow</li> </ul>								
Before testing	Book a courier collection for PCR tests at least a day before testing (by no later than 7pm)	You can book all your courier collections at once or you can book ad hoc courier collections as and when you plan to test. <b>Make</b> <b>sure that you have a confirmed courier collection for the</b> <b>day that you are due to start PCR testing.</b>								
Testing days	Testing days, on day(s) of your choice: Stop PCR testing at 3pm to allow time for packaging before courier collection. Courier collection for PCR test kits will take place between 4pm and 10pm on each day you have a booked collection.	<ul> <li>For EACH day of testing:</li> <li>Take time to prepare your staff and testing space</li> <li>Follow the test instructions to prepare, collect and package the sample for each staff member between 6am and 3pm</li> <li>Note the barcode number and time of each test against the name of the person tested</li> <li>Register the completed test online as close as possible to the time of the swab</li> <li>Courier collects completed test samples between 4pm and 10pm</li> </ul>								
l Results	You will recieve and the PCR test results by email or text within 72 hours of test	<ul><li>Notify the staff member of the result</li><li>Take appropriate actions if the test result is positive or inconclusive</li></ul>								

#### Staff without symptoms

All care home staff (including agency workers) without symptoms should be PCR tested weekly.

Those who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 should not undertake testing for 90 days unless they become symptomatic. After 90 days, staff should continue testing with PCR tests.

## Staff with symptoms should NOT be tested in the care home

Staff with symptoms should instead be referred for testing at a regional / local test centre or in their own home. Please visit <u>www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test</u> to arrange a test as an essential worker.

#### **Registration of staff tests**

Staff members should register PCR tests themselves to receive the test results directly, or may give consent to the care home to register and receive their test results as well. This consent should be given in writing. As test results are personal information no staff member should be compelled to provide consent.

**COVID-19 Symptoms** 

Please refer to the latest guidance online for up to date **guidance on symptoms**.

#### The 90-day window after a positive test

Following a substantial clinical review of the latest evidence and testing data, we are now changing the advice for retesting within 90 days of a positive.

From now on, if someone tests positive with a PCR test, they should not be tested using PCR or Rapid lateral flow for 90 days, unless they develop new symptoms during this time, in which case they should be retested immediately using PCR. This 90 day period is from the initial onset of symptoms or, if asymptomatic when tested, their positive test result.

The policy also applies to professionals visiting a care home who have received a positive PCR result in the last 90 days.

#### **Testing and vaccinations**

Whilst vaccination offers vital protection, no vaccine is 100% effective, and importantly we do not yet know if being vaccinated prevents transmission of the disease. In order to identify positive cases, and continue to monitor the effects and transmission of coronavirus, we must continue to operate a thorough and meaningful testing programme, even in settings where vaccines have been administered. Vaccination is just one tool in our collective response and recovery from the effects of coronavirus, and so testing and other infection control measures including appropriate PPE will continue to be the necessary and proportionate approach to help keep care home residents and staff safe.

# PCR Testing Process for staff

Book your courier collection for PCR tests

Please read the below instructions that describe how to arrange a courier collection before you start testing

#### Please book your courier collection at

https://test-kit-collection.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/

#### Arranging your test kit courier collection:



for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/ You will need your **unique** organisation number and postcode to register. You must book for next day before 7pm. You can book up to 6 days in advance. You can book ad hoc

courier collections through this portal

Once you have planned for when to

do testing book your courier collection at https://test-kit-collection.test-

Receive your courier collection confirmation email

Conduct testing between 6am and 3pm on the day your courier has been arranged (see page 14 for more information about testing)

Package your test kits up before 4pm using one of the empty boxes you will have received with your test kit delivery and add the UN3373 label to the box

The courier will collect completed kits from you between 4pm and 10pm on the day you have selected

## Tests must be picked up on the same day they are taken

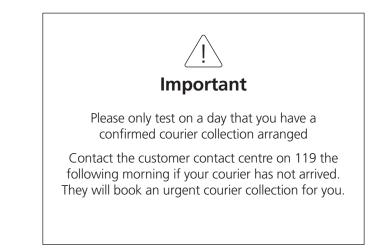
#### Why courier timing is important:

There is a 48 hour window to get a swab sample to the laboratory for processing. If this window is missed, there is a high chance that the individual may not get their results and a retest may be required at a later time.

You will be able to book multiple collections, but please make sure that you only test on a day where you have a confirmed courier scheduled to collect your test kits that same day between 4pm and 10pm.

If you have received test kits for testing in your care home from any other source (for example directly from Public Health Wales or your local health board), please keep these tests separate and do not return these tests with the same courier.

Note: Do not send any personal information along with the completed test kits, in the form of a record keeping spreadsheet or otherwise.





#### Learn how to conduct the test

To ensure that tests are carried out safely, you must ensure that suitably competent staff conduct the tests. Every person involved in conducting the test in your care home **MUST read the detailed instructions provided** and watch the instructional videos.

If a test isn't correctly undertaken it may lead to inaccurate test results.



Self-swabbing instruction video <a href="https://youtu.be/zCqo7MhQT6U">https://youtu.be/zCqo7MhQT6U</a>

#### **PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)**

We recommend that you share with your staff, and follow, the current guidance from Public Health Wales on use of <u>PPE in care homes</u> and this short video guide on <u>putting on and removing PPE</u>. You should not conduct any tests if you don't have the correct PPE.

PPE is not needed for people who are self-swabbing.

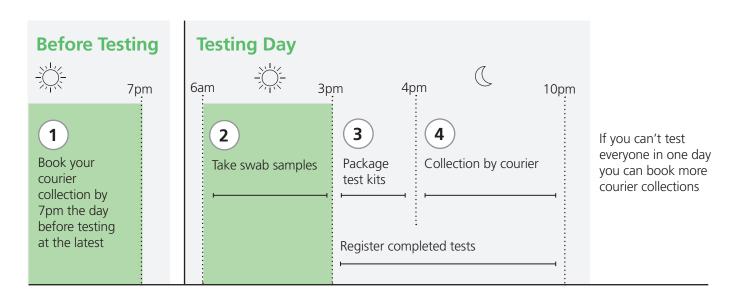
#### **Obtaining Consent**

Obtain written agreement for all staff to be tested and how the results will be shared. For example, directly with the staff member or to the care home directly via the care home manager.



## Swabs should be taken between 6am and 3pm for collection by courier between 4pm and 10pm the same day

This ensures that night shift staff can be tested at the end of their shift, and ensures tests are delivered to the laboratory within 48 hours of collecting each sample.

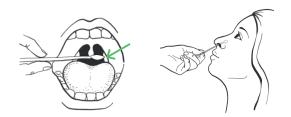


#### Have a clean workstation for test preparation.

#### **Preparing for testing**

Gently blow your nose and cough into a tissue to dispose of any excess mucus, and dispose of the tissue immediately in a bin.

#### Combined nose and throat swabbing



#### Where possible a combined nose and throat swab should be taken.

Taking a throat swab is more invasive than taking a nose swab and can be uncomfortable.

Where a combined nose and throat swab is not possible, a nose swab from both nostrils should be taken, if this is feasible. The swab does not need to be pushed far into the nostril. Extra care is needed when interpreting the results from a nasal swab compared to a full throat and nose swab. If the result is negative but the resident has persistent symptoms, a clinical assessment should be made to determine whether a repeat test is required. Isolation should continue until symptoms reside.

#### Unused test kits and further testing

Any residual test kits not used should be retained by the care home for future ad hoc tests if required. Please do not return unused test kits with the courier even if they insist. Store test kits in a safe place with an ambient temperature of between 5 and 22 degrees Celsius.

Care homes should follow a regular retesting cycle by:

• retesting staff with PCR swabs on the same day every week

## Testing for coronavirus (COVID-19)

#### Before you test:

- Make sure you have booked an end-of-day couriercollection before you start testing. (See guidance)
- Read the online guidance, watch the instructional video and complete a competency assessment before carrying out swabbing at <u>gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-</u> <u>19-getting-tested</u>
- Make sure you have consent from the person you are testing.

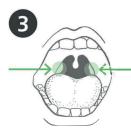


Wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds, using soap and warm water.

Make sure you wear your mask, visor, gloves, and apron when testing. **Change your apron and gloves each time** you do a test. Throw them away in a closed bin when you're done.



Clean and dry a surface and place the test kit contents on it. Check if anything's broken or missing.



Look inside the mouth and find the tonsils (or the area where they would be if you do not have them) at the back of the throat. This is where you'll take the swab sample.

**If you cannot swab tonsils:** swab both nostrils instead, 10 times in each nostril. *The result may be less accurate.* 



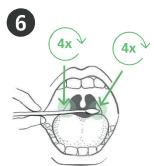
Gently blow the nose into a tissue so excess mucus does not spoil the test.

Throw the tissue away in a closed bin.



Open the package and gently take out the swab. You'll use this for both tonsils and nose.

**Important:** The fabric tip of the swab must not touch anything apart from the tonsils, back of throat and nose. If it touches anything else, use a new swab



Holding the swab in your hand, open the mouth wide and gently roll the swab's fabric tip **4 times over both tonsils** (or where they would've been).

When the swab touches the tonsils, it may cause some gagging or brief discomfort, but it should not hurt.



Put the same end of the same swab gently into the nostril about 2.5cm (1 inch) or until you feel some resistance.

Roll the swab firmly around the inside of the nostril, making **10 complete circles.** 

If you/they have a piercing, use the other nostril.

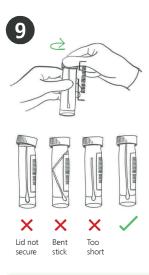
**Important:** This may feel uncomfortable. Do not insert the swab any deeper if there's a feeling of strong resistance or pain.

If you cannot swab tonsils: swab both nostrils instead, 10 times in each nostril. The result may be less accurate and this method should only be used as a last resort.



Place swab into plastic vial

Make sure the fabric tip is facing down as you place it into the vial. Snap off the stick end, so that it fits inside the vial without bending.



Securely fasten the lid

The lid should screw on and fit securely.

If the swab stick is too long still, you may need to use scissors to cut it to size. Clean and dry the scissors first.

Securely fasten the lid on the vial. Make sure the lid is securely fastened and sealed so that no liquid can leak.

### Important: Your vial, biohazard bag and box should have pre-affixed barcode labels.

If any barcodes are missing, or they do not match, please contact the helpdesk on 119.



Check that the vial has the same barcode stuck on it as the barcode on the leakproof bag.



Place the absorbent pad into the leak- proof bag. Put the tube next to the absorbent pad in the same bag.

Let some air out of the leakproof bag and then seal it using its adhesive seal.



Make a note of the test kit barcode and the barcode of the large outer return box it will go into. You'll need this information to register the kits.

Put the test kit in the large outer return box.



When the box is full of 50 test kits or there are no more kits left to pack, close the box and apply the security seals on the box.



Write the number of test kits packed on the right side of the box.

You are now ready for the courier to collect the box.



#### Fill out the test record and keep for your records

You can choose to fill in the record keeping spreadsheet with **personal information** of those being tested, before you start testing, or ask a colleague to fill in this information while you carry out the test. Your colleague should also record the **barcode number of the test kit and return box** and the **time of the swab** as the test is conducted. This is to ensure that you avoid touching anything while testing.

You can stick one of the barcodes to the record keeping spreadsheet to make the administration process easier and to help ensure that the test is connected to the right individual. Note: Do not send the spreadsheet along with your completed tests



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#### Important

**Change your apron and gloves each time** you do a test. Throw these away in a closed bin.

**Finish testing by 3pm each day** to allow time to package your completed tests securely using the packaging provided. Courier collection will take place between 4pm and 10pm.

Make sure you record the individual's information correctly on the test record and match them with their test barcode.

Register the completed test online as soon as possible at gov.uk/register-organisation-tests



**Record PCR test sample** 

#### **Record swab samples**

When you conduct the swab test, you must register each completed test online. This will record the URN or barcode of each swab against the name and details of the individual who has been tested. This will also enable you to receive the test results back by email (or text if a number has been provided) within 72 hours of the test arriving at the laboratory. You should monitor your email account carefully.

Ensure that each swab sample is clearly recorded against the correct staff details.

You should follow these steps:

- If possible, complete each test in full on a staff by staff basis including swabbing, packaging and record keeping, before moving on to the next person.
- To help with your record keeping, you should download a copy of <u>the record keeping spreadsheet</u> fill in the personal details of the individuals being tested on your device, and save. Then, use a printed copy of the spreadsheet to capture the date, time and associated barcode or URN number of each test. You will need all of this information to register each person's test kit online.
- Please only use the spreadsheet provided as part of the registration process on: https://organisations.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/register-organisation-tests
- Keep hold of the record keeping spreadsheet for your personal record. **Please do not send any personal information along with the completed tests to the lab.** This will be reported as a clinical incident and could delay getting your results back.

TEST DETAILS - COMPLETE FOR	REFERENCE ONLY	SYM	PTOMS	SUBJECT DETAILS											
*For printed use only	Date and time of swab taken *For printed use only	symptoms? (MANDATOR	symptoms	First name (MANDATORY)	Last name (MANDATORY)	Date of birth		Ethnic group (MANDATORY)	NHS number Used to match to GP records (OPTIONAL)	Country Country the person lives in. (MANDATORY)	Posto Used t to GP Person perma addre (MAN				
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### **Register completed PCR tests online**

## It is crucial that you register each completed test online at

gov.uk/register-organisation-tests

This registration process is essential, as without it, the laboratory will not be able to provide you with the test results. Note that you must complete this on the SAME DAY that you conduct the swab testing and as close as possible to the time that the swab is taken.

• You can use the link above to register staff or resident tests individually.

#### 🏥 GOV.UK

ALPHA This is a new service – your <u>feedback</u> will help us to improve it

### Register test kits for your organisation

Use this service to register coronavirus (COVID-19) tests for your organisation.

Get a coronavirus test

If you're registering a test for yourself, you can still use this service. You can get the results sent directly to you by entering your personal contact details.

#### Before you start

- read the online guidance pack and your printed instructions
- if you need to, book your courier collection here
- take your test on the same day you're returning your kit

#### Get consent

- Make sure people getting tested have freely given you consent to
- register them
  get their results sent to the contact details you enter

#### What vou'll need

- vour 8 digit organisation number
- if you're registering lots of tests, use the correct spreadsheet (if you don't have this, you can download it during this registration process)

Once you have successfully registered each test you will receive a confirmation email or text message. You will receive the test results by email or text within 72 hours of the test arriving at the laboratory. You should monitor your email account carefully. Registered managers should not use a personal email or phone number to receive test results for any staff.

When you receive the test result email, this may not include the name of the staff member. You should therefore retain a careful record of each test URN/barcode and the name of the staff member. Staff members should also retain a record of their own test URN/barcode.

### What you'll need to register your test online

#### **Before testing**

You may pre-populate sections on the registration portal spreadsheet.

- 1. UNIQUE ORGANISATION NUMBER (UON): This is the unique 8-digit number provided to you by the National Testing Programme which will be be sent to you via email. Otherwise visit <a href="https://organisation-number-lookup.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/">https://organisation-number-lookup.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/</a> for a reminder.
- 2. STAFF: Select Staff.
- 3. FIRST AND LAST NAME: Of the person who has been tested.
- 4. DATE OF BIRTH, GENDER, AND ETHNIC GROUP: Of the person who has been tested.
- 5. FIRST LINE OF ADDRESS, COUNTRY AND POSTCODE: This will be the home address (of staff members).
- 6. NHS NUMBER: Of the person who has been tested, if available (not required).
- **7.** WORKING CIRCUMSTANCES, AREA OF WORK, OCCUPATION, AND EMPLOYER: Of the person who has been tested, if available (not required).
- 8. EMAIL AND PHONE OF THE PERSON WHO SHOULD RECEIVE THE TEST RESULTS: i.e. the staff member. In certain cases it may be more appropriate for the registered manager to receive the test results on behalf of staff, if consent has been obtained. Registered managers should not use a personal email or phone number and must ensure that written consent has been obtained via usual policies and procedures. As test results are personal information no resident or staff member should be compelled to provide consent.
- **9. SYMPTOMS:** Indicate whether the person being tested is experiencing symptoms at the time the test is taken.

#### **During testing**

This information will need to be collected while testing.

- **10. ENTER THE TEST BARCODE:** Enter the 11 character reference below the barcode on your test kit, or scan the barcode using your phone or computer camera. Take care to double check that this number is correct.
- **11. DATE AND TIME OF THE TEST:** to ensure tests have reached the lab within the 48 hour window required for a valid test result.

### Setting up your handheld scanner



**Turn off** your computer's power before connecting the scanner.



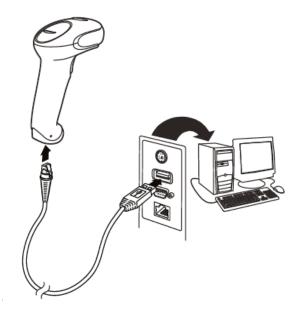
**Plug the cable** into the bottom of the scanner and plug the other end into a computer.



**Turn on** the computer once the scanner is fully connected



The computer should recognise the scanner automatically as a USB keyboard device.



### **Registering with a handheld scanner**



#### For single registration

To use the scanning device when registering a single person on the registration portal:



On the page "Enter the unique test kit barcode" Click in the "Test kit barcode reference" box



Scan the barcode using your handheld scanner. This automatically adds it to the box



Click in the "Confirm test kit barcode reference" box



Scan the barcode again using you handheld scanner. This automatically adds it to the box



Click "Continue"

Further instructions on how to use the handheld scanning device are located on the registration portal, under the drop down field in blue **"how to use a barcode scanner"** 

ALPHA This is a new service - your <u>inveltance</u> will help us to improve it.	
Gas	
Enter the unique test kit barcode	
You'll find the f5-character barcode attached to the plastic tube, biohazard bag and return box inside the test kit.	
There are 3 ways to enter the barcode:	
use the camera on your phone or computer     use your handheid scanner     enter it manually	
What does the barcode look like?	
How to use the barcode scanner	
Use camera	
Use carriera to scan barcode	
Use handheld scanner or enter manually If you're using a handheld scanner, click in the box before you scan the	
barcode	
Test kit barcode reference	
Confirm test kit barcode reference	
Continue	
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ALL	© Crown copyright

Multiple registration on next page



#### For multiple registration on the bulk upload portal

For bulk uploads, scanning should be completed through the registration portal, not the bulk upload spreadsheet. To use the scanning device when registering multiple test kits:



On the page "Check the test kit details for each person" Click in the "Test kit barcode reference" box



Scan the barcode using your handheld scanner. This automatically adds it to the box



Click in the "Confirm test kit barcode reference" box



Scan the barcode again using you handheld scanner. This automatically adds it to the box



Confirm all records are correct and click the "I confirm all details are correct" box



Click "Continue"

Further instructions on how to use the handheld scanning device are located on the registration portal, under the drop down field in blue "how to use a barcode scanner"

## If you have any issues using the scanners or have technical support questions please contact:

Codeway Mobile & Scanner Support Team

Email: scannersupport@codeway.com

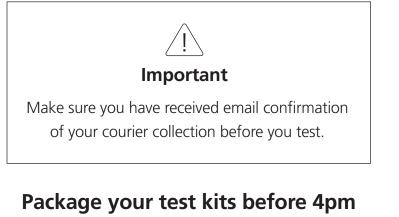
Telephone: 01206 986492

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 09:00 to 17:00

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ticking the box. There m depending on how many	The details on this page, confir ay be more than one page for y v tests you're registering.		
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Confirm records 1	to1of1		
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# Securely package and give the completed PCR tests to the courier



Use one of the empty boxes you will have received with your test kit delivery and add the UN3373 label to the box

The courier will collect completed test kits from you between 4pm and 10pm on the day you have selected.

## Tests must be picked up on the same day they are taken

There is a 48 hour window to get a swab sample to the lab for processing. If this window is missed, there is a high chance that the individual may not get their results and a retest may be required at a later time.

When returning test kits, please do not send any personal information along with the completed test kits, in the form of a record keeping spreadsheet or otherwise.

You will be able to book multiple collections, but please make sure that you only test on a day where you have a confirmed courier scheduled to collect your test kits that same day between 4pm and 10pm.

## If there is a problem with your courier collection

If your courier has not collected your test kits by 10pm, please call the customer contact centre on 119 the following morning to request an urgent courier collection. You will receive an email confirmation of your revised collection time.

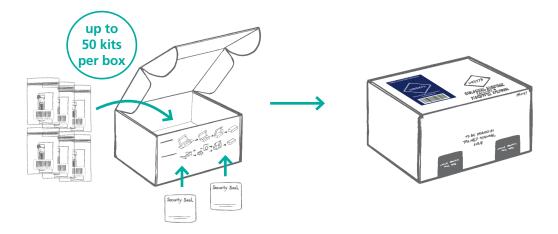
If the courier arrives before 4pm and your test kits are not yet ready for collection, please politely ask the courier to wait or return at 4pm the same day.

If you have any other problems with your delivery or collection that are not addressed above, please call the helpline number at the bottom of this page.

### **Return box tracking**

#### What is Return Box Tracking?

Return box tracking enables the Test and Trace Programme to track each test sample through the entire end-to-end testing process. This is conducted by linking individual test samples to barcodes attached to outer return boxes.



#### What you'll need to do



Continue testing staff as normal.



Link test samples to Outer Return Boxes on the registration portal for both single and multiple registration.



Pack up to 50 test samples in each Outer Return Box.



Place test samples directly in the Outer Return Box, do not use individual test sample boxes.



Write the number of test samples on the Outer Return Box



Leave the outer return box for the courier who will collect and scan the barcode.

#### Ordering outer return boxes

When you place your regular PCR order, you will be sent additional boxes with your kits. The number of boxes will be calculated based off the size of your kit order, to ensure you will have enough.

#### For single registration



Complete the registration process as normal until you reached the screen "Do you have the outer return box barcode?"

To check the correct barcode select the drop down "What does the barcode look like?" this will show an example of what the barcode label should look like.

Then confirm if you have an outer return box barcode, click "yes" to continue.

On the next screen you will be asked to enter the barcode that's on the blue label on the large outer return box.

Enter the barcode by using your handheld scanner; the camera on your phone or computer; or enter it manually.

Once the barcodes are entered, click continue to go to the next screen.

Next please check answers. Once you have confirmed the details are correct. Click Save and continue.

If you are registering more people, then you will need to complete the process for each test sample to link the test sample to the box. Alternatively, you can use the Multiple Registration Journey to link the outer box barcode to multiple registrations at once (see below for instructions).

#### For multiple registration

The multiple registration journey remains the same. Link test samples to the outer return box on the multiple upload sheet. Then enter the outer return box barcode in the box barcode column.

Test details - Con	nplete for reference	Sympton	15	Test subject's d	etails													Box barcode	STATUS
		g	Date symptoms started Only enter if shoving symptoms	First name	Last name	Date of birth DD/MM/YY YY	Male or	Choose from drop-down list	NHS number Used to match to GP records (Optional)	Country the person lives	Used to match to GP records. This is the person's permanent	First line of address	Currently in Work? If they have a job, enter whether they travel to work or work from home.	work	Occupati on Only enter if currently in work (Optional)	Employer Only enter if currently in work (Optional)	Mobile number for receiving results (Optional)	The barcode is on the blue label on the outer return box. Leave blank if you do not	Check all required fields have been entered
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Please make sure that you have downloaded the most recent version of the spreadsheet.

Further information on the multiple registration journey is here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/organisation-testing-registration-record-of-users

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