**Inverclyde Council – testing for key workers, employee families and household members**

The following is for all line managers of employees within Inverclyde Council.

The UK government has opened covid-19 testing facilities for everyone who is symptomatic over the age of five. This programme runs alongside the existing programme of testing in the NHS for clinical purposes and testing of key workers in health and social care sector.

Access to testing for key workers is determined using a prioritisation matrix for key workers. See Appendix 1

While access to testing can be made through the NHS site <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test>, in order to ensure priority for key workers, council employees and members of their household the referral process below should be followed.

Testing will allow symptomatic key workers and their household members to know whether or not they have the virus. This will in turn keep essential services running.

1. **Testing**

Testing will be prioritised for the following:

* If you have a member of staff absent from work because a household member has symptoms,
  + new: continuous cough
  + fever/high temperature (37.8C or greater)
  + loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste (anosmia)
* If you have a member of staff who has symptoms (but feels sufficiently well and would normally continue to work).

1. **Make a referral**

* When the member of staff contacts you please complete and submit a management referral form for either the staff member or the household member:



* The completed form should be sent to [occupational.health@Inverclyde.gov.uk](mailto:health.safety@Inverclyde.gov.uk). Before 1:30pm. This should be followed up with a phone call to the Health and Safety Section.
* The employee (or their family member) details will then be entered onto a national portal by the council’s health and safety service and submitted before 3:00pm.
* Individuals should receive a text or email the same day with a link to the employee booking system to book a slot at the regional testing centre.
* Testing is only available in the first five days from the onset of symptoms so it is important to make a referral as soon as possible.
* Employees or the family member (or their parent/guardian if they are aged under 16 years) will then be informed of the appointment slot and instructions for attending by telephone or email. Results are received in 24 - 48 hours.
* Higher priority will be given to staff members who are key workers and have a role not able to be carried out at home.
* If a staff member has symptoms then no other household member is eligible for testing. If the member of staff is off work because a household member has symptoms, it is the household member who will be tested and the member of staff will not require a test.

Please remember this is solely a testing service and does not include clinical assessment. If anyone is concerned about worsening symptoms, they should call NHS24 on 111.

Until test results are known households should continue to follow guidance on self-isolation from NHS Inform - [https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19#](https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19)

Staff with a household member who tests positive for covid-19 **MUST** stay at home for 14 days from the start of their symptoms, even if they do not have symptoms.

1. **When to get employees tested**

* Employees should get tested in the first three days of covid-19 symptoms appearing, although testing is considered effective up until day five.
* No testing should be undertaken after day five, unless it is for a specific reason which will be agreed on a case by case basis by local microbiologists.
* If the employee is self-isolating because a person they live with has symptoms, you can refer that household member for testing.
* By testing the household member(s), we can be much more certain that they should either be self-isolating or can return to work.

1. **Negative tests and returning to work**

Even if a key worker has had a negative result, it is important to still apply caution.

If everyone with symptoms who was tested in their household receive a negative result, the employee can return to work if their work cannot be done from home, providing they are well enough, and have not had a fever for 48 hours.

If, after returning to work, they develop symptoms they should follow the NHS Inform guidance and self-isolate. Employees should discuss their return to work with their line manager.

1. **Test results and staying safe**

The test will confirm if an individual who is showing symptoms of the virus actually has it. It will not confirm whether they have had it and have now recovered.

It is vital those who test negative continue to follow Scottish Government guidance including precautions related to social distancing and handwashing.

1. **What happens to the test results**

Results under the UK testing programme are communicated to individuals by text message and are intended to be fed back into public health records in due course. The Council will not receive a copy of the results just that the employee has been given an appointment slot.

1. **Testing – additional information**

For this area testing is currently conducted in drive-through sites operating at Glasgow Airport and the employee will be sent full details of how to access the facility when they receive their appointment.

These facilities are run by private sector organisations on behalf of the UK Government. This guidance will be updated as additional testing capacity is deployed on Scotland.

A limited number of home test kits are also available and can be used by employees who cannot arrange transport to Glasgow Airport.

The target for sending results is by text within 48hrs. A call centre is available by phone, to help people with the process and deal with test result queries.

Any questions from employers or key workers about accessing testing, the website, or results should be made through opshub@dhsc.gov.uk.

1. **Self-referral portal**

It is possible for staff to be able to self-refer, however this should not be used by Inverclyde Council employees unless advised to do so by your line manager.

Go to <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test>

1. **Home tests**

Home test kits are an option where key workers are unable to attend a drive-through centre, subject to availability. This option is covered in the booking process.

**How home testing works**

After a home-test kit is ordered, the test would then be delivered the next day, and the essential worker or household member would self-administer the swab, packing it up as per the included instructions.

A Royal Mail courier will arrive the day after to collect it and take it to the lab. The aim is that results will then be received by text within 48 hours.

**Reliability of home testing**

Evidence suggests that those with no clinical background or training should be completely able to secure an effective sample.

International peer-reviewed evidence suggests that self-swabbing is just as effective at securing a valid sample as clinician-administered testing.

Each kit comes with comprehensive instructions to guide you through how to administer the swab yourself. Test kits come with further instructions and a short video to take you through the process.

**Protection of personal data**

Amazon and Royal Mail are the commercial partners who are using their logistics systems to deliver home testing nationwide. They do not have access to the results or any health data.

**APPENDIX 1: Prioritisation matrix**

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| **Priority number** | **Rationale for prioritisation** | **Relevant keyworkers** | **IC Council Job Roles (for guidance only\*)** |
| Priority Group 1: Health and social care workers; and staff working in residential institutions and essential roles where service resilience is at risk. | | | |
| 1A | 1. Staff delivering NHS services.  2. Staff providing social care to protect and care for the most vulnerable.  Currently routed through Health Boards | * All NHS staff and independent contractors working for the NHS, including community pharmacy and emergency dental care. * All social care and social work staff working 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 (note key workers in these groups who are not employed through an organisation will access testing, where this can support a return to work, through the UK Government schemes) | All IC HSCP staff will be referred for testing through the NHS/HSCP portals |
| 1B | 1. Staff with face-to-face roles in residential institutions with people in the care of the state.  2. Staff are working essential services with niche roles, where service resilience is at risk. | * Operational staff in prisons * All other carers working with looked after children not already included in 1A * Staff working on critical national infrastructure (e.g. energy supply) with niche skills essential to maintain services safely * 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. | | | |
| 2A | Staff directly involved in maintaining public safety and security. | * Police * Scottish Fire and Rescue Service * Local authorities staff working public safety, security or law and order | Environmental health  Trading standards |
| 2B | Staff essential to the delivery of critical services to the public including supply chains. | * Front-line Home Office Staff, including: a) those running immigration detention centres, b) Maritime Border Force, c) frontline immigration and customs officers * Essential defence personnel * Essential environmental protection * Essential animal health and welfare * Funeral industry * Staff working for third sector organisations supporting people and children who are vulnerable, including grant aided schools | Registrars  Crematorium and burial grounds employees  Education staff, i.e. guidance, educational psychologists |
|  |  | * Essential roles within food supply chain and food processing. * Essential roles within medicines and pharmaceutical supply. * Essential roles in chemicals supply chains * Essential roles in energy and water supply | Catering staff preparing/supplying food for vulnerable service users |
| Priority Group 3: Staff directly involved in delivering other essential services. | | | |
| 3A | Staff delivering essential services. | * Staff providing child care/education in schools for key workers * Public transport workers * Postal services * Financial services * Supermarket workers * Construction and maintenance of essential public services * Court and Crown Office staff * Civil Servants, parliament staff and other critical decision makers in public sector working on the central response to covid-19 * Journalists | * Staff working in childcare hubs * Refuse collection * Roads maintenance * Legal staff working in the area of child protection * Housing benefits/customer contact centre * Staff manning shielding contact centre * extended corporate management team (ECMT)/corporate management team (CMT) |
| Priority Group 4: Staff involved in volunteering, or in nationally or locally significant industry important to economic sustainability and growth | | | |
| 4 | Staff involved in volunteering to provide support to vulnerable people and communities; and staff involved in national or local industry important to economic sustainability and growth. |  | CVS Inverclyde staff and community learning and development (CLD) |

\*If you manage a team you feel should be included in the list please contact health and safety with details of the employee group and the reason for inclusion. As the lockdown eases additional key worker groups are likely to be added to this list.