

Keeping Safe: PPE and Corona Virus Testing for Personal Assistants

Please note, this fact sheet will be updated in line with Government Guidance, please visit www.LinkMeUp.org.uk for current information.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Public Health England (PHE) guidance has been updated to advise that PPE should be used:

- if PPE is usually required when supporting the individual
- if the PA is providing direct care and therefore will be within 2 metres of their employer
- if the employer has been advised to shield due to being particularly vulnerable
- or because the employer, or a member of their household is experiencing [symptoms of Corona Virus](#)

In these instances, your local authority may be able to help you to access PPE, and therefore please contact your local Vibrance Team (details at the end of this fact sheet) for further guidance.

In all other circumstances it is advised that PPE is not required above normal good hygiene practices.

Corona Virus Testing

From Wednesday 29th April 2020, the Government has expanded access to Corona Virus Testing to including the following:

- All asymptomatic NHS and social care staff, and care home residents
- All symptomatic workers who are unable to work from home
- Everyone in England aged 65 with [symptoms of Corona Virus](#) along with symptomatic members of their household

The test should be taken within the first three days of showing Corona Virus symptoms, although testing is considered effective up until day five.

Tests are currently being undertaken at regional test centres or via self-testing at home. Initially home testing is limited, so if you are able to attend a test centre in person, this is the preferred option.

Attending a Test Centre

The sites operate a drive-through model, meaning that the PA or a member of their household must drive to the site. They cannot test people who arrive on foot, take public transport or a taxi. PAs will need to bring the following with them:

- Proof of ID, including letter confirming that they are a PA
- A smart phone to access the online portal
- A pen to complete the test
- Some hand sanitiser or wipes

You can find out more about what happens at the test centre by watching [this video](#)

Home Testing

Home test kits can be delivered to someone's door so that they can test themselves and their family without leaving the house. Home test kit availability will be initially limited, but more will become available.

You can find out how to carry out a self-test by watching [this video](#)

Applying for a Test

There are two ways to apply for a test:

1) Self-referral

If eligible, PAs can [apply on-line](#) on the Government website, the following steps outline the process you will go through to **access a test through a test centre**:

1. The essential worker will [click on the link and register](#) either their details (if they have symptoms) or household member(s) with coronavirus-like symptoms. The essential worker or household member(s) will be added to a list and [depending on capacity at regional testing sites](#), will be invited to book an appointment for a test.
2. The individual(s) being tested will receive a [text message](#) inviting them to book an appointment. The text message will contain a link to the [appointment booking system](#) and a unique [16 digit code](#).
3. The individual will click on the text message link and be directed to the appointment booking system where they will be asked to enter their unique 16 digit code. They will then be able to [book a specific appointment](#) for a coronavirus test at a regional testing site.
4. The individual will receive a [confirmation of their appointment via text message and email](#). These will contain a [QR code](#), which will need to be shown to security at the regional testing site. Only one QR code is required, either on a smartphone or a printed copy of the email.

The following steps outline the process you will go through to **access a home test**:

1. The essential worker will [click on the link and register](#) their details, via the online self referral portal. These details will be used to verify the identity of the essential worker before they order their test(s) for delivery. If the essential worker has access to their work email they should use this to support with the verification process.
2. The essential worker will then receive an [email with a one-time code](#). If the email address cannot be verified we will need them to complete a short verification check through TransUnion. Alternatively, the essential worker can choose to apply for a test at a drive-through centre.
3. The essential worker will then be able to request [up to five tests](#) for members of their household displaying symptoms of the coronavirus. Order details should then be reviewed and confirmed.
4. The individual will receive a [confirmation of their order by email](#), as well as details of what to do next. Tracking details for their delivery will also be provided. Once the individual receives their test kit they should follow the instructions provided.

Unfortunately, individual employers will not be recognised by the system, therefore in this instance we suggest that when asked for employer name, please state Vibrance (Direct Payments).

For further information regarding self-referral, please see the [online guide](#)

2) Employer referral

For employer referrals, individual employers should contact their local Vibrance Team via email (as per details at the end of this document) to arrange a test, please include:

- Full name of PA
- Name of Employer
- PA Mobile number
- PA Email address
- Home or test centre
- Vehicle registration number (if attending test centre)

The PA will then be contacted to arrange a test.

Further Corona Virus Information

The Government guidance around Corona Virus is being updated regularly, you can keep up to date through the news and online www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

You can find general employer guidance on the ACAS website www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus

We will also be sharing information via our website www.linkmeup.org.uk and our social media channels:

- Facebook /linkmeupuk
- Instagram @linkmeup_uk
- Twitter @LinkMeUp_UK

Contact Us

Area	Vibrance Telephone	Vibrance Email	Local Authority Telephone
Barking & Dagenham	01702 214 540	bdsds@vibrance.org.uk	020 8227 2915
Bexley CCG	0208 290 6639	phb@vibrance.org.uk	020 8298 6065 (All)
Bromley	0208 290 6639	bdp@vibrance.org.uk	0208 461 7777 (Adults) 0208 461 7373 (Children)
East Sussex	01273 025 687	eastsussexsds@vibrance.org.uk	0345 60 80 191 (Adults) 0345 608 0192 (Children)
Greenwich CCG	0208 290 6639	phb@vibrance.org.uk	020 3049 9000
Southend	01702 214 540	sdp@vibrance.org.uk	01702 215 008 (Adults) 01702 215 007 (Children)
Southend CCG	01702 214 540	sdp@vibrance.org.uk	01702 212500
Wandsworth	0203 960 9493	wandsworthsds@vibrance.org.uk	0208 871 7707

If you live outside these areas and Vibrance process your payroll and/or manage your Direct Payment on your behalf, and you have concerns regarding the continuity of your care and support, please contact our Payroll & Finance Team on 01702 214 540 or email sdp@vibrance.org.uk