

## Asymptomatic Lateral Flow Testing

### Running your own test site

#### FAQ for Data Centres

**These guidance notes are taken from discussions with those running sites and from Government briefings. You should refer in the first instance to information provided by DHSC [here](#), as this may change. These notes DO NOT cover PCR testing which is for those with symptoms.**

February 2021

#### **What is Asymptomatic Lateral Flow Testing (ALFT) and why is it useful?**

The purpose of lateral flow testing is to screen communities because around 1/3 of infected people are asymptomatic and government estimates that at least 50% of COVID-19 infection is spread this way.

Lateral flow tests are simple and quick and the results are delivered by text within about 30 minutes (much faster than the 24 hours required for PCR tests. They are slightly less accurate than PCR testing (which can detect very low levels of virus but require laboratory processing to concentrate the sample). There is a very good POST Note on LFT here: <https://post.parliament.uk/mass-testing-for-covid-19-using-lateral-flow-tests/> Alternatively this useful video explains lateral flow testing, why it is appropriate for large scale screening and what the caveats are: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZ\\_8b\\_Ydsv0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZ_8b_Ydsv0).

Asymptomatic testing is for those without COVID-19 symptoms (the clue is in the name) who cannot work from home. Those with symptoms need to take a PCR test. Negative test results do NOT reduce the need for PPE, whether the test was PCR or lateral flow.

At present it is not envisaged that people will have to take a test and show negative result before they arrive on site, but will be encouraged to undertake regular (twice a week) tests and may be asked to show that they have had a negative test result within the last few days.

There are two main routes for businesses to implement regular lateral flow testing for staff: community testing and running your own site.

#### **Community Testing Provision**

At time of writing, Government is rapidly extending community provision. So if you do not qualify for the business offer (see below) or are not equipped, or are disinclined, to run your own site, the community offer is a really good alternative. Most data centre clusters appear to be in areas where there is ample community provision. You can find out more [here](#). This link: <https://www.gov.uk/find-covid-19-lateral-flow-test-site> allows you to put your postcode in to identify whether there are community ALFT sites near your workplace or home. This will pop up the relevant page on your local authority website. If the link does not take you to a useful page, it is likely that your local authority has not implemented ALFT yet.

For those on or near the Slough Trading Estate, there is a dedicated a community workforce test site hosted by SEGRO at 951 Yeovil Road SL1 4NH and operated by Slough Borough Council. It's available for staff, visitors, contractors, consultants, customers and construction staff etc, and is open from 10am to 5.30pm (last test at 5.20) until at least the end of March 2021. You can book in advance or just turn up but you do need a mobile phone with you so you can get your results You can find more details here:

<https://www.techuk.org/resource/asymptomatic-lateral-test-site-on-slough-trading-estate.html> Or access the booking link directly here (you may need to paste this into your browser)  
<https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/LFTCurve@slough.gov.uk/bookings/>

### **Business Offer: Setting up your own mini test site**

Government is also rolling out an offer to businesses with over 50 employees to run their own test sites and will fund and supply tests for this purpose until the end of March 2021 (policy beyond this point has not been defined at point of writing so this may change). You do not need to have all the staff at one site to qualify. The Department of Health and Social Care is running webinars to explain how to run a test site. Policy is developing rapidly so the first port of call should be gov.uk in all cases: <https://www.gov.uk/get-workplace-coronavirus-tests>. Basically, government provides the tests and employers run the sites, process the tests and upload the results.

Broadly speaking, if you want to set up your own test site, it is a three stage process:

- 1) Attend two webinars: Introductory webinars provide an initial overview and are held on multiple days each week, usually at 2pm and last about half an hour. They are useful and well structured. The enquiry line for details is: [P-and-PSector@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:P-and-PSector@dhsc.gov.uk). If you think you want to go ahead you need to attend a follow up operational webinar that takes you through more detail.
- 2) Register via the government Egress platform, sign the Ts and Cs, wait for approval.
- 3) Do the training – all the materials and guidance is provided. Set up the site. Stand by for delivery of tests (about a week).

You can find slides from the introductory webinars reproduced [here](#)

You can find the guidebook [here](#): (do look for updates, this changes frequently)

You can find SOP for test sites [here](#) (again, do look out for updates – this changes frequently)

### **FAQs: Running your own test site**

The following FAQs are taken from information provided on the introductory webinars and through dialogue with DHSC. Information may change and don't forget to check with Gov.uk which should be your first port of call.

#### **What do you need in terms of materials?**

For employer testing government will supply the test kits but you must supply PPE and cleaning equipment (this differs from community testing). This is non trivial as they are the biggest consumables. There is a standardised bill of material (see Annexe A). However, there are six pre-requisites for running your own test site. These are:

1. A hard, non permeable floor
2. A flat surface – table, counter to process tests on.
3. Tape to mark routes and social distancing
4. Device, tablet, phone pc to upload the test results
5. Wifi or mobile data to upload results
6. Clinical waste disposal – see guidance in guidebook.

For the non-clinical elements there is a government supplier but feedback from those administering existing sites suggests that it is quicker and cheaper to procure these items from local suppliers or from retailers like Screwfix, Wilco and Amazon. Most sites use their own furniture provided it can be wiped down. Those running community sites say the trickiest items are the clear screens because they are expensive and tend to break easily, but these are not obligatory.

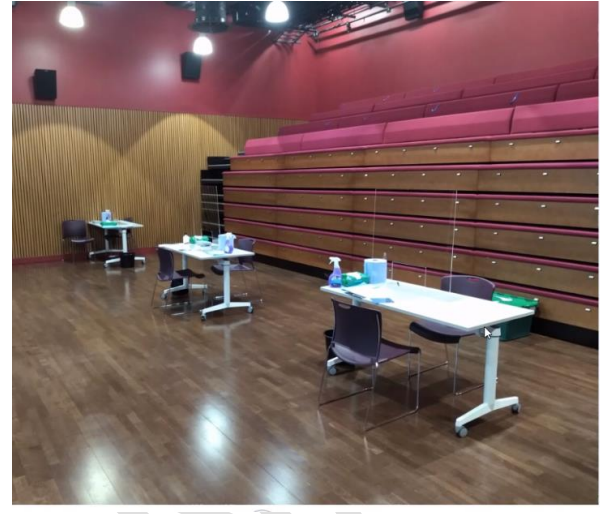
#### **How does it work in practice?**

Anyone who is getting tested has to register prior to testing, but most do this on arrival at the test site. The first time they register it takes a little longer – 5 minutes perhaps. Subsequently registration will be very quick. The person enters the test site ID number and gets a QR code and a barcode that is linked to their mobile phone. The barcode is attached to the test. The test site staff ensure that each test is registered to the right individual, process the swab and log the results on an app using their test site ID. The app notifies the national pathology exchange of the result and emails /texts the person their test result using the contact details they provided during the registration process. So most of the administration is automated.

Operators need to allocate or recruit staff to run the site and train them. Training materials and information are provided by government (see below).

### What does the set-up look like?

Test sites can be static or mobile: Here are two examples of three bay static community sites.



The three “bays” are three (wipeable) desks or tables 2.5 m apart; note the clear screens on the desks in the right hand photo which you can only just make out (If you were doing this for staff entirely in house you might not need screens, and you might manage with fewer bays. A workforce calculator is available to help you estimate how much space and how many tests you will need. A three bay test site like these can process 220 lateral flow tests in an 8 hour day.

### How you do the actual test?

The test is self administered. You are given a swab and you must swab the back of your throat, covering each side and the tonsils for 5 seconds and then up your nose also for 5 seconds. You hand the swab back to the operative who puts it into a solution for 5-10 seconds and that solution is poured into the test slide. After 30 minutes it turns negative, positive or void. The guidance provided is clear and this link from the BBC explains how it works: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/54878280>

### At what interval should tests be administered?

It is envisaged that people should be tested at least twice a week. Staff administering tests might test themselves more frequently.

### How long does it take to get results?

See above - 30 minutes to a definitive result, void results tend to be quicker.

### Which tests are being used?

Lateral flow tests - issued by Government so no choice about individual supplier

### How are tests delivered? How often/ what volume? What receipt /security arrangements are needed?

You order them from government in line with your testing capacity and demand. As mentioned above there is a workforce calculator to help you estimate your requirements. No special security measures are needed but tests should be stored in a secure place like a locked room or a manned office.

### What environmental conditions are needed for storing tests? How much space? What temperature?

No special conditions, they can be stored in their boxes. Temperature range for storage is between 2°C and 30°C so it is important that they are not frozen. For processing, temperature should be between 15°C and 30°C. This means that tests can be taken outside but need to be processed inside if the external temperature is low.

### **Does this generate clinical waste?**

Yes, you will need to ensure your waste contractor can dispose of clinical waste.

### **Do we need a holding area or waiting room for people waiting for results?**

No, though public sites report some queueing at peak times, nobody needs to hang around afterwards. It is up to you whether people return to work as normal after testing, to a specified area in the office or to their cars to await results.

### **What else do you need to do to run a test site?**

You should do a risk assessment in line with company policy. You must use PPE – minimum gloves apron, mask and visor. You must complete the training and get the certification before running a site.

### **What human resources are needed?**

The minimum number of people it takes to run a site is 2, for GDPR reasons. You can choose the hours you want to run your test site for, based on capacity and demand and available resource. Businesses are handling this in different ways – for instance some appoint one member of each operational team to be trained and then they test everyone else on that team a couple of times a week. In this case they would need consent from testees (see below). Many businesses run an internal booking system and offer slots, or just run the test site for a limited period during each shift.

### **How do we comply with GDPR?**

The basic offer for the test is GDPR compliant and ensures that those running the site do not have access to any personal medical data about those being tested. This is why a minimum of two people are needed. Companies may wish to be notified of test results but if so, individuals must all sign a consent form.

### **Do we need medically qualified staff?**

No, many sites are being run extremely professionally by ex bar staff and people brought back from furlough.

### **How long does training take?**

Training takes about two hours. It is essential that only trained, certified people run a site. Training and guidance is provided.

### **Can we contract in specialist staff?**

Yes, some already do this- there are specialist firms like Solutions for Health – ask for email details. They must be UKAS accredited.

### **Could we provide this service to other operators nearby?**

Yes, if you have capacity you let them register and book using your test site ID. Your company would need to be the single point of contact.

### **Any legal aspects around liability for false positives etc?**

Employers are not responsible for the accuracy of the tests, they are just running the test site. The tests are not being represented as 100% accurate. Individuals can follow up a positive LFT with a PCR test. There is further information on accuracy in the [guidebook](#) (Section 2, p60 and Section 6, P207 onwards). Those obliged to self isolate may be eligible for financial support.

### **Other observations from existing test sites**

The other observation from those running sites is that encouragement, if not compulsion, is needed to overcome people's reluctance to take tests: *"aaargh - it will mean I have to self isolate with my kids if I am positive"* or *"I won't get paid if I am positive"* so a significant amount of nudging may be needed. Operators should be prepared to release staff during working hours, not to expect them to fit tests around shifts.

Government is not mandating asymptomatic lateral flow testing but businesses may do so if they wish, in line with corporate infection control measures.

#### ANNEXE A: Sample Bill of Materials for Three Booth Site, for a week, processing 220 tests a day

(Left column is setup kit, right column is consumables, items in red supplied by Govt- but note comments about screens)

One-off purchase	Quantity	Consumables	Quantity
Acrylic protective clear screen	5	Test kits	1200
Partition	6	LFD barcodes	1200
Booth Chair	9	Registration cards	1200
Table	7	Boxes of Tissues	9
Digital Clock	3	Disinfectant Spray Bottle	6
Hand held mirrors	3	Hand Sanitiser Pump Bottle - 500ML Refillable	12
Small General Waste Bin	3	Blue Paper Towel Roll	6
Biohazard Spill Kits	6	Cleaning Cloth	12
Mop Bucket	2	Sick Bowls – Disposable	20
Mop	2	Floor cleaner 5lt	1
Squeegee	1	Anti bacteria Wipes	4 packs
Wet floor signs	2	Black Waste Binbags	1 roll
Digital Thermometer for Screening Staff	1	Clinical Waste Binbags	1 roll
Double Sided Tape - 50M	1	Aprons	100
Hazard Tape - 50M	2	Visors	50
Scissors	1	Small gloves	200
A2 Self Test Instruction Posters - Laminated	3	Medium gloves	200
ATS Signage pack - Laminated	1	Large gloves	200
Ipads	2	XL gloves	200
Iphones	2	Masks	100
Pens	24	Paper plates	1200
First aid kit	1	Staplers & staples	1

#### Further information:

You can find all this and more on our data centre resource index here: Scroll down for the section on COVID-19 for the full dossier.

<https://www.techuk.org/data-centres-programme/data-centres-resource-index.html>

#### Contacts



Emma Fryer  
Associate Director, techUK  
Tel: 01609 772 137  
Mob: 07595 410 653  
[emma.fryer@techuk.org](mailto:emma.fryer@techuk.org)



Lucas Banach  
Programme Assistant  
Tel: 020 7331 2006  
[Lucas.banach@techuk.org](mailto:Lucas.banach@techuk.org)