

Dear Professional Court User

You might be aware that we are establishing a lateral flow device testing (rapid testing) pilot site at Southwark Crown Court. We are providing you with this brief to keep you updated with our progress so far.

Why are we having test sites within our court building?

HMCTS is very keen to support the Department of Health & Social Care's national testing programme to identify individuals within the population who are positive for COVID-19 but do not present symptoms. Identifying asymptomatic positive cases and informing them to self-isolate will reduce the spread of the virus. There are many public sector departments contributing to the national public health imperative to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and we want to explore how effective asymptomatic testing will be in our settings.

Lateral flow testing will supplement our existing suite of COVID secure measures. Testing asymptomatic individuals will help to control the impact of COVID-19 on court hearings and provide additional reassurance to the public that our buildings are safe.

What are we doing?

There will be a pilot test site operating from the canteen area of Southwark Crown Court with effect from 15 February 2021 for a period of four weeks. The test site has been established in accordance with DHSC standard operating procedures and guidance. All staff, judiciary, jurors, contractors and professional court users will be offered the opportunity to book a voluntary lateral flow test (LFT).

The tests will only be available to those who are attending the building for a scheduled hearing (this will not be a public test centre and we do not anticipate any footfall increase) and those not showing any symptoms. The access rules to the court and the COVID-secure measures will not be relaxed. We will continue to follow the existing protocol for those who have symptoms; i.e. they will not be allowed into the building. Those testing negative will still be required to follow the "hands, space, face" guidance.

Judiciary, jurors, staff and contractors (touchpoint cleaners and security) in public facing roles will be offered a test twice per week. If these individuals test positive for COVID-19, this poses the highest risk of causing significant operational disruption.

It's not practical for us to do this for everyone. Staff in non-public facing roles and professional court users who have business in the court will be able to access a test, should they wish to do so.

How will it affect you?

You will be offered the opportunity to book a test slot. You must not eat or drink for at least 30 minutes prior to having your test. When you attend the test site, you will be asked to register your details on the NHS portal using your smartphone or a

registration device, this includes providing your consent to take the test. The Data Privacy Notice explains how NHS Test and Trace will use your data (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronaviruscovid-19-testing-privacy-information>).

The test will be self-administered using a lateral flow device testing kit. They are quick and easy. They are taken using a swab of your throat and/or nose and shouldn't be painful.

Trained personnel specifically recruited to manage the testing site will supervise those taking a test and process the results.

All staff (including cleaners) working within the testing site will be wearing PPE at all times.

Your result will be communicated to you after 30 minutes by NHS Test & Trace via text message and/or an e-mail using the contact details recorded during the registration process. The wording of the result text will reflect the national guidance published by the NHS. Please be aware that due to the anonymous process (results are processed using a barcode) HMCTS will not be made aware of your test result.

The result of the test is valid at the point in time that the test is taken. Rapid testing does not confirm that an individual has COVID-19, it will give an indication whether an individual is infectious.

If you test negative, then the viral load is not indicative of being infectious.

If you test positive following an LFT you should notify a senior person on site. You will be required to leave the court building and return home quickly and directly. You must follow the [Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#) and self-isolate.

How can I book a test?

If you would like to book a test, please contact the booking support mailbox: SouthwarkTestCentreEnquiriesandSupport@justice.gov.uk.

Please ensure that you provide booking support with;

- a) the day of the week you would wish to take a test and
- b) a couple of time options that you will be available to take the test;

The testing centre will be open between hours of 8:00 – 4:00 pm with booking slots allocated on an hourly basis (10 minutes per test). For professional court users your preference may be before 10:30 am and during the lunch period; i.e. 13:00 – 14:00 and we have allocated more time slots for professional court users during this time; e.g. option 1 could be between 9:00 am and 10:30 am, time option 2 could be between 13:00 and 14:00 hours.

The booking scheduler will confirm your test date and time after considering your preferences and you will receive a confirmation of test booking.

Where to get more information

If you would like further information regarding the testing regime, please contact:

SouthwarkTestCentreEnquiriesandSupport@justice.gov.uk

Please note that we will be releasing further communications locally and nationally in the coming days via the intranet and other methods.