

## Daily test and release for work for care staff identified as contacts of a COVID-19 case

### Guidance to Providers

Even when fully vaccinated, one in twenty individuals remain vulnerable to severe COVID-19 or death. This is why care staff and providers must adhere to the existing guidance on self-isolation for staff identified as contacts of a COVID-19 case. A rare exception to this is when:

- There is a demonstrable risk that the safety of individuals needing care will be compromised due to shortage of care staff.
- All options for meeting that shortage from staff who are not known to be contacts of COVID-19 positive individuals have been exhausted and there has been a discussion with social care at Essex County Council about the situation: Please email: [ProviderResilience@essex.gov.uk](mailto:ProviderResilience@essex.gov.uk).
- The use of staff identified as contacts of a COVID-19 case has been formally agreed by Essex County Council and continues for the shortest possible time.

The Council is committed to supporting providers and carers at this difficult time and will work with you to help avoid this situation arising.

### What to do if you think you will need to ask for carers to be released for work

Please get in touch with us as soon as possible so we can work with you. If all other means of providing sufficient staff to maintain continuity of care have been exhausted we will ask the Director of Public Health, or their designated deputy, to consider whether the formal conditions for early release of care staff are met. ALL the following conditions must be met:

- The staff member should be fully vaccinated, defined as having received both doses of an MHRA approved vaccination, with 14 days having elapsed since the final dose at the time of last contact with the positive case.
- The staff member should undertake a PCR test and should isolate until they receive the result. **They should only attend work if this result is negative.**
- They should undertake daily LFD tests every day prior to starting work. They should continue with daily test if on a rest day but likely need to be released from isolation to work after the rest day.
- Test results should be reported to NHS Test and Trace via the web portal and to their duty manager. Any staff member who has a positive LFD test during this period should not attend work and should arrange a PCR test as soon as possible.
- If the staff member develops any [COVID symptoms](#) during the 10 days from their last exposure to the case, they should stay at home and immediately arrange a PCR test.
- Staff working during this 10-day period should comply with all relevant infection control precautions and PPE should be properly worn throughout the day. Any breaches should be reported immediately to their line manager.
- Where possible, the staff member should not work with [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) patients.
- It is recommended that the staff member should not take breaks or eat meals with other staff.
- They can only leave their place of self-isolation to undertake work activities, including travel to and from work. They can travel to work by their normal route but should wear a face covering for their journey if within an enclosed space with other individuals.
- Outside of work activities, the individual must follow current advice for self-isolation.

Alternatives to the release of staff who should be self-isolating must continue to be explored. As soon as another solution is available, or the situation is no longer critical, permission to release staff from isolation will be void.

The table below is a tick box that managers and staff can use to check that all the necessary mitigations are in place.

Requirement	Tick if meet
The staff member should be fully vaccinated (at least 14 days after final dose)	
The staff member has had a negative PCR test since being instructed to self-isolate	
The staff member undertakes daily LFD tests and received a negative result every day prior to starting work	
Test results should be reported to NHS Test and Trace via the web portal and to their duty manager.	
If the staff member develops any <a href="#">COVID symptoms</a> they should stay at home and immediately arrange a PCR test.	
Staff working during this 10-day period should comply with all relevant infection control precautions and PPE should be properly worn throughout the day. Any breaches should be reported immediately to their line manager.	
The staff member should not work with clinically extremely vulnerable patients, as determined by the organisation.	
Staff member should not take breaks or eat meals with other staff.	
Staff can only leave their place of self-isolation to undertake work activities, including travel to and from work. They can travel to work by their normal route but should wear a face covering for their journey if within an enclosed space with other individuals.	