



Note No A103/20

Protocol Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office presents its compliments to all diplomatic missions and international organisations and has the honour to provide a further update on Her Majesty's Government's response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

As announced by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) on 23 April 2020, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-testing-extended-to-all-essential-workers-in-england-who-have-symptoms>.

All essential workers who have symptoms of coronavirus, as well as members of their households who are showing symptoms, will now be eligible for testing. DHSC and the governments of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have confirmed that their definition of essential workers includes members of the diplomatic community. All categories of staff will be eligible to book a test; it is for missions and organisations to determine which members of their staff they choose to categorise as essential workers.

In order to facilitate testing, the Her Majesty's Government has launched a self-referral portal, at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>, through which you will be able to register and book a test for yourselves and/or your household member(s) if they have coronavirus-like symptoms. Tests are available by booking an appointment at a regional testing site, or by requesting a home delivery test. Full details are set out in the self-referral portal user guide, at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/881043/covid-19-testing-self-referral-portal-user-guide.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/881043/covid-19-testing-self-referral-portal-user-guide.pdf)

Please note specific guidance explaining the expansion of testing arrangements in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland is available at the following sites:

<https://www.gov.scot/news/covid-19-testing-to-get-key-workers-back-to-work/>  
<https://gov.wales/critical-workers-testing-policy-coronavirus-covid-19-html>  
<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus>

The Directorate remains grateful for the cooperation of diplomatic missions and international organisations at this unprecedented and challenging time, and requests their ongoing cooperation in adhering to the eligibility criteria for testing. This will help to ensure that those key individuals who cannot work from home and who are experiencing uncertainty due to COVID like symptoms within their household are able to return to work as quickly as possible. It will also help to avoid over-burdening the testing system.

The Directorate has revised its frequently asked questions guidance, accessible at [protocol.fco.gov.uk](https://protocol.fco.gov.uk) (password: Diplomatic2012), to reflect this change. Please also

continue to check <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> for detailed information and advice on the UK Government's response.

Protocol Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all diplomatic missions and international organisations the assurances of its highest consideration.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

LONDON SW1A 2AH

28 April 2020

