

NewsRelease



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Essex residents urged to book Lateral Flow Test

13 fast Covid-19 testing centres are now fully operational across the county, offering individuals without Covid-19 symptoms easy access to a fast Lateral Flow Test (LFT – otherwise known as a rapid test) to check if they have the virus.

Essex County Council (ECC) has led on the roll-out of the centres, alongside district council partners, and rapid LFTs are now the default testing approach in Essex.

Close to 50,000 people have been tested to date and residents are being urged to book an LFT as soon as possible - if they haven't already - to help break the chain of Covid-19 transmission.

LFTs give results in around 30 minutes and quickly help to identify hidden cases of Covid-19 in the community.

This means individuals who aren't showing symptoms can take immediate action and avoid the risk of passing on the virus. This is particularly important in respect of individuals who are unable to work from home or who have to come into close contact with others as part of their job.

Anyone living or working outside of their home in any district of Essex will be able to access a LFT at the relevant local centre for their district or the district that they work in.

If the LFT gives a positive result individuals must self-isolate. There is [support available](#) for anyone who is required to self-isolate, including financial support if they are unable to go out to work or work from home.

If the LFT is negative, it is vital that residents continue to follow guidance on social distancing, keep two metres away from other people, and remember – Hands Face Space.

Dr Mike Gogarty, ECC's Director of Public Health, said: "The new fast LFT centres are an integral part of our Covid-19 response in Essex and represent an important shift in terms of our focus and approach to testing across the county.

"Although the light is at the end of the tunnel with the roll-out of the Covid-19

vaccine, we are not there yet and local health services remain under significant pressure. We need anyone not showing Covid-19 symptoms to play their part and book a LFT as soon as they can.”

Cllr John Spence, ECC’s Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, said: “I am extremely proud of how quickly we have been able to introduce additional rapid-test capacity across Essex. This will quickly help to identify positive asymptomatic cases and enable us to break the chain of Covid-19 transmission in local communities.

“I would urge anyone not showing Covid-19 symptoms and especially those who have to go out to work in situations where they are more exposed to the infection, to get tested as soon as possible. This really will make a difference in terms of containing the spread and reducing the current pressure on our precious health services.”

There is [at least one fast Covid-19 testing centre in each Essex district](#) and appointments are open to book now.

LFTs are available by appointment only and can be [booked online](#) or by calling 0333 772 6144. Lines are open from 8am to 8pm every day, including Saturday and Sunday.

Residents can also email booking.confirmation@nhs.net and a member of staff will contact them to arrange an appointment.

Anyone WITH symptoms should book a test via [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

ENDS

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