

Testing for Events and Large Gatherings

Going into the summer period, and with the reduction in restrictions, there are a large number of events which will draw significant numbers of people to attend. This includes sporting events and music events, along with a range of cultural and social events.

Rapid COVID-19 tests – known as Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests – have an important role in detecting asymptomatic cases. This means people who are infected but are showing no symptoms and may be unwittingly passing the virus on to others.

The use of LFD testing is important as an additional measure alongside the range of existing safety measures in place across workplaces and other settings including schools, healthcare settings and organised events. It is important to remember that, even with a negative LFD test, people should not change their behaviours and must continue to follow all other public health and safety measures in place.

It is strongly recommended that anyone participating in, or attending, any event which will bring them into close proximity with other people from outside their existing bubble should test themselves before they attend, and on days 2 and 8 after the event. The purpose of this testing is to identify any positive cases in advance of the event, and allow them to self-isolate. Post event testing will also help to identify any asymptomatic COVID-19 infections arising from the event, or social interactions that may occur before or after an organised event.

Attendees should be advised of the range of options that are available for people to access testing.

Rapid COVID-19 tests can be obtained by anyone who requires them, free of charge. Rapid test packs can be ordered online for free delivery to your home.

<https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>

You can also order them for collection in a number of locations across NI:

[Find where to get rapid lateral flow tests - NHS \(test-and-trace.nhs.uk\)](https://www.test-and-trace.nhs.uk)

If anyone has symptoms of COVID-19, they should self-isolate and book a PCR test immediately. PCR tests are available at testing sites across Northern Ireland and can be booked at:

<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. **They must not attend events unless they receive a negative PCR test.**

Event Organiser's Responsibilities

Although testing is not mandatory, event organisers are advised to strongly recommend that anyone attending an event should test themselves no more than 24 hours in advance of attending an event, and on days 2 and 8 following the event.

Event organisers may register with NI SMART to deliver Rapid COVID-19 testing. Registration is free of charge and enables events organisers to provide tests directly to all involved in, or attending events. It also provides them with a unique organisation number (UON) and the ability to create new Site Codes which can then be used by people attending an event. This provides event organisers with additional information about how many people attending an event have participated in asymptomatic testing.

Further information on the NI SMART: Asymptomatic Testing Programme is available at:

[Rapid Tests | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk)

