



Rapid front-line worker testing to launch in West Lancashire

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A targeted community testing initiative is to begin in West Lancashire from **Wednesday 27 January** to help drive down Covid-19 transmission rates.

The testing programme will help protect people most at risk, using rapid turnaround tests supplied by NHS Test and Trace. Testing will be available for asymptomatic **front-line workers** who cannot work from home or have physical contact with other people as part of their job, including unpaid carers.

The first three weeks of testing will take place at the sites and times below. The schedule has been devised to allow for repeated testing. There is no need to book ahead.

Week one:

Wed 27 January	Burscough Sport Centre	12:00 to 18:00
Thur 28 January	Skelmersdale, Concourse	10:00 to 16:00
Fri 29 January	Chapel Gallery, Ormskirk	12:00 to 18:00

Week two:

Mon 1 February	Burscough Sports Centre	12:00 to 18:00
Tue 2 February	Chapel Gallery, Ormskirk	12:00 to 18:00
Wed 3 February	Skelmersdale Concourse	10:00 to 16:00
Thur 4 February	Burscough Sports Centre	12:00 to 18:00
Fri 5 February	Chapel Gallery, Ormskirk	12:00 to 18:00
Sat 6 February	Skelmersdale Concourse	10:00 to 16:00

Week three:

Mon 8 February	Burscough Sports Centre	12:00 to 18:00
Tue 9 February	Chapel Gallery, Ormskirk	12:00 to 18:00
Wed 10 February	Skelmersdale Concourse	10:00 to 16:00
Thur 11 February	Burscough Sports Centre	12:00 to 18:00
Fri 12 February	Chapel Gallery, Ormskirk	12:00 to 18:00
Sat 13 February	Skelmersdale Concourse	10:00 to 16:00

(Testing within the Concourse will take place in the Concourse Kitchen on the first floor. Future dates and times will be made available shortly).

Around one in three people who are infected with Covid-19 have no symptoms so could be spreading the disease without knowing it. Broadening testing to identify those showing no symptoms will mean finding positive cases more quickly, breaking chains of transmission.

With its targeted approach, community testing aims to reduce the prevalence of the virus in the highest risk areas. Those booking a test will need a mobile phone or email address. The test produces a result within an hour.

Councillor Ian Moran, Leader of West Lancashire Borough Council said: *"The availability of rapid testing in the Borough will give a massive boost to our ability to fight this deadly virus on a local level. If people can find out they have the virus before they start to show symptoms, we will save lives and cut infection rates."* Councillor Kevin Wright, Portfolio Holder for Emergency Planning, Preparation and Implementation added: *"I encourage everyone who is eligible to get tested on a regular basis for their families, their close contacts and their own peace of mind. The more people who get tested, the quicker we can beat this awful disease and once again enjoy the freedoms we've all missed over the last year."*

For more information and FAQs visit: <https://www.westlancs.gov.uk/symptom-freetesting>

All efforts to find people without symptoms work hand in hand with the existing free testing service for those with symptoms. Anyone with one or more of these symptoms – a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste – should book a test at nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119.

There are PCR test centres for those with symptoms across the area which are open seven days a week.

Visit <https://www.westlancs.gov.uk/more/emergencies/coronavirus/testing-sites-for-coronavirus.aspx> for more information.