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Dear Business

Free Covid-19 tests for workplace testing of staff that cannot work from home

I am writing to ask for your help in stopping the spread of Covid-19 by testing your workforce to find people who have the virus but show no symptoms, so they can isolate quickly and not spread the virus to their colleagues and their families.

Around 1 in 3 people who have the virus have no symptoms and may be unknowingly spreading the virus. To help stop the virus spreading, free testing is available for all firms to test their workforce. The government is providing employers **with 50 or more employees** with lateral flow testing kits to test their staff that cannot currently work from home, or who will return to the workplace as the economy opens up as set out in the Roadmap announced on 22 February.

The test kits are **entirely free of charge until 30 June 2021 for firms that have registered by 31 March** at <https://www.gov.uk/get-workplace-coronavirus-tests>. The Department for Health and Social Care will also offer advice and guidance to support setting up testing facilities, along with a list a list of accredited private providers who can organise testing on your behalf if preferred. Companies with fewer than 50 employees can take advantage of community testing for their staff. It is vital that we ramp up the testing of those without symptoms in order to break the chains of transmission.

Lateral flow tests are good at detecting those who are infectious and have already been hugely successful in finding positive cases we would not otherwise find, enabling those people to be taken out of the transmission chain. Workplaces that have introduced regular testing find they can plan with more certainty and spot individual cases before whole teams fall ill.

I am strongly encouraging employers and workers to take this offer up to help stop the spread of the virus and protect the NHS. We want to be able to reopen the economy and recover our way of life as soon as it is safe to do so, and large-scale workplace testing will complement our work in getting the British people vaccinated.

Yours faithfully,

RT HON KWASI KWARTENG MP
Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy