

Penderels Trust: Coronavirus COVID-19

Information for Individual Employers: Personal Assistant (PA) Testing and Vaccine

This document is specifically around PA testing and vaccinations for Covid-19. For our general Frequently Asked Questions document on the Covid-19 pandemic which covers topics including self-isolation, statutory sick pay and what to do if your PA can't work, please click here:

<https://www.penderelstrust.org.uk/pdf/EmployerFAQ.pdf>

What are the different types of Covid-19 tests?

There are two types of Covid-19 test:

- a) PCR test – this test is the most accurate but takes around 48 hours to get a result. This is the test people are having if they have symptoms of Covid-19.
- b) Lateral flow test (also referred to as the 'rapid antigen test' – you get results from this test very quickly (usually within a few hours) but it is slightly less accurate than the PCR test. This may also be called 'community testing' and is for people who don't have symptoms ('asymptomatic').

Can my PA have regular testing like care home staff?

Yes. All adults can now order lateral flow tests for twice weekly testing.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-personal-assistants>

There is also an information document in the Covid-19 area of our website called 'Testing Service for PAs' which tells you what to do. You can watch a video of how to do a test correctly at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=S9XR8RZxKNo&list=PLvaBZskxS7tzQYIVg7lwH5uxAD9UrSzGJ>

Each PA should order a box of 7 LFT tests every 21 days for themselves to be delivered to their home (or chosen) address. You, as their employer, can order them on their behalf but it is probably easier for PAs to order them directly. They should order their tests by going to <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>. This will take them through the ordering process and allow them to create an account which makes re-ordering easier.

Test results are available in 30 minutes and they must register their result as soon as they have it and every time they take a test. Results should be registered at <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>

If they get a positive LFT test result, they must take a PCR test immediately, isolate until they receive a result and let their employer know. They can book a PCR test from <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

When will my PA be invited to go for a Covid-19 Vaccination?

All adults and young people aged 16 and over can have the vaccination. They should book via this link: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>

They should let you as their employer know they've booked their vaccination.

My PA wants to know why having the vaccine is important. Do you have any information I can give them?

If you want to know more about why having the Covid-19 vaccine is important, this short video produced on behalf of Department of Health and Social Care explains it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6UHLcM1vo&feature=youtu.be>

This video is primarily aimed at staff working in a care home but the explanation is relevant to those working in the community too.

My PA doesn't want the vaccine. Can they be made to have it?

The short answer is no. The UK government cannot make anyone have a vaccination against their will. It is against their human rights.

Can I end my PA's employment if they refuse to have the vaccine?

This is a very difficult situation as there are many factors to consider. We strongly recommend that you speak to your Employer Liability Insurance provider for more information on this before you take any action.

The Independent Living Group (ILG) (part of Premier Care insurance) has produced a factsheet on this topic which can be accessed here: https://be-human.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/ILG_Support_PA_vaccine_advice_note_Ver2.pdf

We know other insurance providers have also provided similar guidance.

Please remember to get advice from your insurance provide for all employment matters.

From 11th November 2021, everyone who works in a CQC-registered care home must be fully vaccinated. This does not currently apply to PAs or people working for a care agency. This may change in the future and we will keep you updated on this.

For all our Covid-19 information, please visit the home page of our website www.penderelstrust.org.uk