

# COVID-19 Antigen testing for all supply-chain workers

**The UK Government has announced that testing for the presence of COVID-19 antigens is being rolled out to essential (symptomatic) workers, including seafarers.**

The list of essential workers and those prioritised for testing in England only includes:

- Transport workers who keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the coronavirus response
- Those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass
- Critical personnel in the production and distribution of food, drink and essential goods, including those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery
- Those critical to the provision of other essential goods, such as medical supply chain and distribution workers, including veterinary medicine
- Workers critical to the continuity of essential movement of goods
- Utilities, communication and financial services staff, including the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors

Consequently, testing will be available for seafarers and other essential workers whose jobs are critical to the continuation of supply lines of food, fuel and other essential goods.

The Government has stated that:

*“Essential workers who are self-isolating will be able to book a test directly from Saturday 25 April using the Government portal. Tests will be available at regional drive-through test sites. Alternatively, they may order a home test kit. A delivery service for home testing kits has been designed with key industry partners, including Royal Mail and Amazon. The availability of home test kits will initially be limited but will increase over time”.*

To obtain a login, employers of essential workers should email [portalservicedesk@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:portalservicedesk@dhsc.gov.uk) with 2 email addresses that will primarily be used to load essential worker contact details.

Full information on the testing process can be found on the Government's Coronavirus website [here](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) Coronavirus (COVID-19) .

The UK Chamber of Shipping have widely supported this move, although noting that testing will only be made available to persons who display symptoms. The UK Chamber goes on to advise that it is exploring avenues for wider availability of testing for seafarers as a matter of urgency, mindful of reports that as many as 50% of persons who carry the virus are asymptomatic.

## 1st May 2020

During these difficult times and the challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the UK Chamber of Shipping is also encouraging ships across the globe, whether in port or harbour and it's safe to do so, to sound their horns on International Workers' Day, Workers' Day, Labour Day and May Day at 12.00 local time on 1st May 2020.