

Consumer Alerts – June 2020 - NHS Test & Trace

NHS Test & Trace – make sure the contact you receive is genuine

As of 28 May 2020, the Government have introduced a national contact tracing system to provide a more targeted approach to isolation, as restrictions start to be lifted. Contact tracing works by asking people who have tested positive for the virus to share the details of others who they have been in contact with who could have caught it from them. It is important that everyone supports and participates in this scheme to help in the fight against Coronavirus.

Under the new system, if you have symptoms of coronavirus you and your household must self isolate, and you should order a test from <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>. If you test positive for the virus, you'll be contacted within 72 hours of taking the test.

Genuine texts, calls or emails from the NHS service won't ask you for any personal details upfront. You'll be given a unique ID number to log in to the NHS Test and Trace website. The only official web address for the NHS Test and Trace service is: <https://contact-tracing.phe.gov.uk/> Once you've logged in using your ID, you'll be asked to enter some basic information about yourself including: Your name, date of birth and current address the names of the people you live with places you've recently visited names and contact details of people you were in touch with around 48 hours before you developed symptoms.

Genuine Contact tracers will:

- call you from 0300 013 5000
- send you text messages from 'NHS'
- give you a unique ID number to log in to the NHS website at <https://contact-tracing.phe.gov.uk/>.

Once signed in, you will be asked:

- for your full name and date of birth to confirm your identity, and postcode to offer support while self-isolating
- about the coronavirus symptoms you have been experiencing
- to provide the name, telephone number and/or email address of anyone you have had close contact with in the 2 days prior to your symptoms starting

If you receive contact from anyone requesting you to sign in to a website ensure that you check independently that the caller is genuine. Take time to check that telephone numbers, email addresses and websites are genuine. Fake websites and email addresses often have spelling errors or will not be a gov.uk address, if in doubt do not provide any information, and seek advice from Trading Standards or the police.

Contact tracers will never:

- ask you to dial a premium rate number to speak to them (for example, those starting 09 or 087)
- ask you to make any form of payment or purchase a product or any kind
- ask for any details about your bank account

- ask for your social media identities or login details, or those of your contacts
- ask you for any passwords or PINs, or ask you to set up any passwords or PINs over the phone
- disclose any of your personal or medical information to your contacts
- provide medical advice on the treatment of any potential coronavirus symptoms
- ask you to download any software to your PC or ask you to hand over control of your PC, smartphone or tablet to anyone else
- ask you to access any website that does not belong to the government or NHS"

The NHS will also contact you if someone else who has tested positive for the virus has been in close contact with you. You'll be asked to self-isolate for 14 days. You'll be given advice on how to do this, what symptoms you should look out for and what to do if you develop the illness. You won't be asked for any other personal details or payment information in this kind of call or message. And, crucially, you won't be asked to pass on the details of anyone you've been in contact with either. This is because unless you have tested positive or developed symptoms, there is no need to notify anyone you've been in touch with at this stage. It's a red flag if you're asked to hand over this information to a caller or by replying to a message.

Anyone who has concerns that they may have been contacted by someone purporting to be from NHS Test and Trace but asking for more information than detailed above can **report the matter to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2014 or go to www.actionfraud.police.uk**

For advice, contact the Trading Standards Service via the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0808 223 1133