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# Test and Trace support payments

Last Modified May 05, 2021



From 28 September 2020, there is now a legal obligation in England to self-isolate if advised to do so.

This is to ensure individuals, who test positive or are identified as close contacts, self-isolate and minimise the possibility of transmitting COVID-19.

If people do not comply you will be subject to fines of at least £1,000 and up to a maximum £10,000 for repeat or very serious offences.

To assist people to self-isolate, the government has announced that individuals on low incomes will be entitled to a Test and Trace Support Payment of £500, if they meet certain criteria, in order to support them through their self-isolation period.

The payments are available to people who have been told to self-isolate on or after 28 September 2020 or to certain parents, guardians or carers of children who have been advised to self-isolate on or after 8 March 2021.

## Requirements

If you receive a self-isolation notification you must self-isolate as requested by NHS Test and Trace.

Please visit the [NHS website for more details of the NHS Test and Trace self-isolation requirements](#) for those

- Testing positive
- Those who have been in [contact with someone](#) who has tested positive and has now been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace

## Eligibility - applications can now be made by two groups of people

1. People who have been **officially instructed** by NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate from 28 September 2020 onwards, either because they have tested positive or been in close contact with someone who has tested positive, and have been provided with their **own personal** NHS Test and Trace self-isolation 8-digit account ID number will be entitled to a self-isolation payment providing they:

- Comply with the notification from NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate, **and**
- Are employed or self-employed, **and**
- Are unable to work from home and will lose earnings as a result (other than a reduction in earnings due to being furloughed), **and**
- (or their partner if they have one) Are in receipt of one of the following benefits:
  - Universal Credit (unless your latest payment was nil)
  - Working Tax Credit
  - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
  - Housing Benefit
  - Income Support
  - Income based Job Seeker's Allowance
  - Pension Credit

2. Parents, guardians or carers of children who have been advised to self-isolate from 8 March 2021 by their education setting or by NHS Test and Trace are now able to apply for a Test and Trace Support Payment (or discretionary payment) of £500, if they meet the eligibility criteria.

The extension of the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme, ensures that parents, guardians or carers receive the financial support they need if they are unable to attend work due to childcare responsibilities.

To be eligible you must meet all of the following criteria:

- You are the parent, guardian or carer of a child or young person in the same household and need to take time off work to care for them while they self-isolate from 8 March 2021. This is limited to one parent, guardian or carer per household for the child or young person's self-isolation period, and
- You are employed or self-employed, **and**
- You cannot work from home while undertaking caring responsibilities and will lose income as a result, **and**
- You meet all the other means-tested eligibility criteria for a Test and Trace Support Payment, **and**
- Your child or young person:
  - Is aged 15 or under (or 25 or under with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)) and normally attends an education or childcare setting
  - Has been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or by their education or childcare setting because they have been identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Nurseries, childminders, schools, colleges and further education providers are required to provide a letter to all parents, guardians or carers of the children advised to self-isolate, to support their application to the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme.

To qualify you must meet **all** the conditions above. You must provide evidence to support your application and you can upload this to support your claim; photographs are acceptable. If you do not provide required evidence with your application a decision will be delayed. If you then failed to provide requested evidence your application will be declined.

You can make a claim up to 42 days after the period of isolation has started. Any applications received after this period will be declined.

We can only accept one application per household for a child or young person's self-isolation period. This means if more than one child or young person has been told to self-isolate for the same period you can still only make one claim per household.

Any payment of £500 received will be subject to the payment of income tax.

## Discretionary scheme criteria

We will consider making a £500 discretionary payment to individuals who:

- Have been **officially instructed** to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace from 28 September 2020 onwards, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive, and have been provided with their **own personal** NHS Test and Trace self-isolation 8-digit account ID number, **and**
- Are employed or self-employed, **and**
- Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result, **and**
- Who are not currently receiving Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit, **but**
- Are on low incomes and will face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work while they are self-isolating or have no recourse to public funds, if they meet criteria above, **and**
- Have property related costs, e.g. rent/mortgage and are liable for Council Tax (occupied properties only). Applications will be considered from those who are not liable for Council Tax where a formal tenancy agreement is in place

Or individuals not legally required to self-isolate, **who**:

- Are the parent, guardian or carer of a child or young person in the same household, who is required to self-isolate from 8 March 2021 onwards and who needs to take time off work to care for them while they self-isolate. (This is limited to one parent, guardian or carer per household for the child or young person's self-isolation period), **and**
- Are employed or self-employed, **and**
- Cannot work from home while undertaking caring responsibilities and will lose income as a result, **and**
- Meet all the other means-tested eligibility criteria for a discretionary payment, **and**

- Live with a child or young person who:
  - Is aged 15 or under (or 25 or under with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)) and normally attends an education or childcare setting
  - Has been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or by their education or childcare setting because they have been identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

To qualify you should meet all the conditions above. You will need to provide evidence to support your application and you can upload information to support your claim; photographs are acceptable.

Applications outside the above criteria can only be considered in exceptional circumstances, where households would be facing severe financial hardship.

The furlough scheme has been extended to the end of September 2021. Most people who are furloughed will not be eligible for a Test and Trace Support Payment or a discretionary payment as they will not be losing income because they have been asked to self-isolate.

A small number of people may be furloughed from one job but working in another job, which can't be undertaken from home. If these individuals are asked to self-isolate, they may stand to lose income from this second job, and therefore could qualify for a payment, provided they met the other eligibility criteria.

## Information you will need to provide

To make an application for yourself you will need to provide the following information/ evidence:

- A copy of your latest bank statement (one issued within the last two months which must clearly show proof of earnings)
- Proof of any self-employment e.g. recent business bank statement (within the last two months), most recent set of accounts or evidence of self-assessment returns
- Your 8-digit NHS Test and Trace reference
- A copy of the NHS Test and Trace notification you received. This can be a photo of the letter or email, but it must clearly show the date you received the notification and the Test and Trace ID
- Your National Insurance Number

To make an application as a parent, guardian or carer you will also need to provide the following information/ evidence about the child or young person:

- The child's eight-digit NHS Test and Trace ID number. (This is for parents, guardians or carers of children or young people who have received a notification directly from NHS Test and Trace telling them to self-isolate), **or**
- A communication from the child or young person's education or childcare setting confirming that they have to self-isolate. (This is for parents, guardians or carers of children or young people who have been told to self-isolate by their education or childcare setting because they have been identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive), **or**
- A screenshot of a young person's NHS COVID-19 App notification telling them to self-isolate AND evidence that the young person has an Education, Health and Care Plan. (This is for parents, guardians or carers of young people aged 16-25 who have additional support needs and who have been notified to self-isolate by the NHS COVID-19 App)

**If you are applying as a parent, guardian or carer your application will be checked with your child or young person's education or care setting.**

We will be able to check your eligibility to benefits so you do not need to provide proof of this. We may contact your employer to verify that you are unable to work from home and have lost income.

## People not eligible

You will not be eligible for the scheme if you:

- Are quarantining after travelling abroad (unless you test positive during the 14-day quarantine period or been instructed to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace)
- Continue to receive full wages while you self-isolate
- Can work from home during a period of self-isolation

- Have not received a notification from NHS Test and Trace telling you to self-isolate

## Helping someone make an application

You can help someone else fill out an application, or fill out an application on their behalf. However, you cannot receive payments on behalf of someone else. Payments will only be made to the person who has been asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

## Appeals

There is no right of appeal if an application is declined.

## Fraud

You may face prosecution if you have manipulated or falsified your position in order to obtain these payments, including failure to self-isolate which puts others at risk. Any payment made as a result of fraud may be subject to recovery, as will any grants paid in error.

To validate your bank account details, we need to share relevant information you've given us with TransUnion.

This will be used to ensure your support payment is paid to the correct bank account and to help prevent fraudulent use of support payments.

This is not a credit check and won't impact your credit rating. [More information on how TransUnion may use your data.](#)

The government is supporting us to make the necessary checks to ensure payments can be verified and have been made correctly.

[Make An Application Now](#)

## Data sharing

The information you submit here will be processed by Blackpool Council. We need your consent so that we can access your records in the NHS Test and Trace system to confirm that you are eligible for the Self-Isolation Payment Scheme.

[More information on this via the NHS Test and Trace Privacy Notice](#)

[Blackpool Council privacy notice](#)

Blackpool Council relies on your consent to access your records contained in NHS Test and Trace data system, known as CTAS, for the purposes of confirming your eligibility for this scheme of payment.

You can find more information on [CTAS via the privacy notice](#).

Your data will not be shared with other entities outside of the council for any purpose and you may withdraw your consent at any time by contacting us on 01253 477477. Please be aware that if you do withdraw your consent, you will no longer be entitled to the payments under this scheme.

We will carry out checks with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), for verification purposes, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), for tax and national insurance purposes, and with your employer. We will not share your data with other organisations or individuals outside of the Council for any other purpose.

We will provide information to HMRC about any payments we make because Self-Isolation Payments are subject to income tax. If you are self-employed, you will need to declare the payment on your self-assessment tax return.

We may use some automated decision-making to determine if you are eligible to access funds. This means that a decision may be made by automated means, without any human involvement.

Your rights under the Data Protection Act 2018 allow you to object to any automated-decision making used in this process. If you do, there may be a significant delay in the processing of your application.

We never sell your data to third parties or use it for marketing purposes without your consent. All information is processed in accordance with the Council's data protection policy.

If you do withdraw your consent, we will not be able to make a payment to you. Your consent is necessary to establish your eligibility and to authorise any payments made.

In submitting an application you must confirm that you have read, understood and consented to your data being processed in this way for the purposes of assessing your eligibility for a Self-Isolation Payment.

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