

## Media Release

**Date: 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

### **Steep decline in cases means PCR tests available again for islanders who want one following positive LFT**

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As a result of the recent significant drop in the number of active COVID-19 cases, islanders will again have the option to receive a confirmatory PCR test should they receive a positive lateral flow test.

The Medical Officer of Health had previously, on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2021, announced an increased reliance on lateral flow tests to help manage the large increase in cases at that time.

However, following the steep decline in case numbers we are now in a position to again offer islanders the choice should they wish to have a PCR test following a positive LFT. If that PCR is negative, then the requirement to self-isolate will fall away. People who were symptomatic but testing LFT negative were always able to have a PCR test and this will remain the case.

**It is important to emphasise that this change is about offering flexibility for islanders. There is no requirement to have a confirmatory PCR test if a positive LFT is present.**

It remains strongly recommended that islanders take regular LFTs for surveillance purposes. Guidance on the use of LFTs can be found at [Lateral Flow Testing \(LFT\) | States of Guernsey - COVID-19 \(gov.gg\)](https://www.gov.gg/covidnotification).

The process for testing is:

- If you receive a positive LFT you must immediately notify the States of Guernsey via either the clinical helpline (01481 220001 or 01481 220002) or the online form at <https://www.gov.gg/covidnotification>
- The online form has been updated to include an option to request a confirmatory PCR test if desired, or this can be requested via the clinical helpline.
- If you have decided against having a confirmatory PCR test after notifying of your positive LFT, you will receive confirmation that you must now self-isolate for 10 days, with a reduction in self-isolation if you are symptom-free and test LFT negative on days 6 and 7. This confirmation will include all the necessary legal requirements and advice, including the steps that must be followed if you are able to release yourself

from isolation on day 7 (**please note this is due to change from Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January to the potential to self-release on Day 6**).

- You will be asked to notify close contacts that they are requested to take an LFT daily for 10 days, while also limiting their social contacts during this time.
- If you are symptomatic but LFT negative, please contact the clinical helpline on (01481 220001 or 01481 220002) or complete the online form at <https://www.gov.gg/covidnotification> as you may still be referred for a PCR test depending on your symptoms.

Dr Nicola Brink, Medical Officer of Health, said:

‘I want to thank islanders for the fantastic response we had to our change of testing strategy, announced over the Christmas weekend. At that time we were seeing significant increases in the number of positive cases and needed to streamline the management of cases, with a focus on community testing on lateral flow tests. We have continued to see islanders doing the right things, following the guidance and for that we are grateful.

‘But as cases have now dropped so rapidly we are in a position to again offer the flexibility of a PCR test should an islander want it following a positive LFT. This does mean that you can be released immediately if your PCR test is negative. It is not a requirement for anyone to do this, we are offering this option for people who wish to take this up.’