

## Test and Trace Payments FAQ

From 28<sup>th</sup> September the government has introduced support payments of £500 if you cannot work because you've been instructed to self-isolate by NHS Test & Trace and are on a low income.

### Why does self-isolation matter?

Ensuring those infected and their close contacts isolate is one of our most powerful tools for controlling COVID-19 transmission. It can take up to 14 days for you to develop coronavirus symptoms after you catch the virus, and in this time, you can pass it onto others even if you don't have symptoms. You can also remain infectious for up to 10 days after developing symptoms. Staying at home and self-isolating helps prevent family, friends and the community from contracting coronavirus, as well as helping to protect the health and care system.

### What has changed now?

You are required by law to self-isolate if you test positive or are identified as a contact by NHS Test and Trace, and your employer cannot knowingly enable or encourage you to do otherwise. Penalties include fines of at least £1,000 and up to a maximum of £10,000.

If you are employed or self-employed, on benefits and unable to work during self-isolation starting from 28<sup>th</sup> September, you may be entitled to a Test & Trace Support Payment of £500.

If you aren't eligible for a Test & Trace Support Payment, we may be able to pay you a Test & Trace Discretionary Payment of £500 instead; detailed criteria apply.

### Am I eligible for a Test and Trace Support Payment?

You must meet **all** the following criteria:

- Be resident in Rutland;
- Have been asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace either because they've tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive:
- Be employed or self-employed;
- Be unable to work from home and will lose income as a result:
- Be 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, and
- Has not already received a Support Payment in respect of their current period of self-isolation.

### Am I eligible for a Test and Trace Discretionary Payment?

If you don't meet the criteria for a Test and Trace Support payment, we will instead consider if we can pay you a Discretionary Award.

You must meet **all** of the following criteria:

- Be resident in Rutland;
- Have been asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace either because they've tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive:
- Be employed or self-employed;
- Be unable to work from home and will lose income as a result;
- Has not already received a Support Payment in respect of their current period of self-isolation; and
- Be able to demonstrate the need for financial assistance as detailed below.

And you must meet all of the following criteria:

- **Not** in receipt of Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit;
- Usually have maximum earnings of no more than £250 per week (gross)
- Usually work 16 hours or more per week
- Have savings of less than £1,000
- Responsible for paying rent/mortgage
- Have seen a drop in income of at least 25%;
- Be able to demonstrate exceptional circumstances not otherwise outlined in this policy, at the discretion of the Council.

The fund is limited and no further payments can be made after it is spent. You can find the full policy here [www.rutland.gov.uk/testandtracepayments](http://www.rutland.gov.uk/testandtracepayments)

### **Who is not eligible for a Test and Trace Support & Discretionary Payments?**

You will not qualify if you are:

- quarantining after returning to the UK from abroad, unless you have tested positive for coronavirus or have been instructed to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace;
- furloughed, as you will not lose income from self-isolation;
- told to self-isolate by the NHS COVID-19 phone App and not the Track & Trace team;
- told to self-isolate by an employer, social venue, friend etc and not the Track & Trace team;
- applying more than 14 days after your self-isolation period ended;
- unable to provide all the evidence required within 14 days of your self-isolation ending;

- a parent or carer of a child asked to self-isolate, unless your child has tested positive;
- not provided with, or do not retain, your unique NHS Test & Trace number.

### **What evidence do I need to give you?**

You will need to provide:

- a notification from NHS Test and Trace asking you to self-isolate;
- your unique 8 digit ID number, which can be found in your NHS Test and Trace notification;
- a bank statement in your name;
- proof of employment such as wage slips, P60, your contract of employment or a letter from your employer, or proof you are self-employed, such as evidence of self-assessment returns, trading income - and proof that the business delivers services which cannot be undertaken without social contact;
- your national insurance number.

If you are applying for a Discretionary Payment we will ask you to provide additional evidence. This will be limited to your own relevant circumstances.

For more details about how we will use your data [see our privacy statement](#).

### **Will these payments be taxed?**

These payments will be subject to income tax, but not subject to national insurance contributions.

### **Will these payments be included in my benefit assessment?**

No, they will be disregarded.

### **Can I make another claim if I am asked to self-isolate again?**

Yes, as long as the self-isolation periods do not overlap. You must meet all of the eligibility criteria and provide all required evidence each time.

### **Can more than one member of my household make a claim?**

Yes, people in the same household can each make an individual application to receive a payment if they each meet the eligibility criteria.

### **Can my claim be backdated?**

You will need to have made your claim and provided all required evidence within 14 days of your period of self-isolation ending. You must meet the eligibility criteria and have been asked to self-isolate on or after 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

### **Can I appeal against a decision not to award a payment?**

There are no formal appeal rights, but you can ask for a decision to be reviewed. Details are provided in the Policy.

## **How do I apply?**

Please complete the online application form here

[www.rutland.gov.uk/testandtracepayments](http://www.rutland.gov.uk/testandtracepayments)

If you need help completing the form please ask a family member or friend to do so on your behalf.

If the above options are not available, please call us on 01572 722577. An advisor will ask you for some basic details and an officer will call you back later to go through the form with you.

## **What other support is available?**

We can offer advice and support to city residents who are vulnerable during the coronavirus pandemic. You can find more details about this on our website here

<https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-services/health-and-family/health-and-nhs/health-and-support-services/coronavirus/>

## **How do I report a possible breach of the rules?**

You can tell Leicestershire Police about a possible breach of coronavirus measures online <https://www.leics.police.uk/>