

Chief Executive's Office

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Dear Parent/ Carer

Extra Covid-19 Testing in Rastrick, Todmorden, Park and Warley, Ovenden, Illingworth and Mixenden, Sowerby Bridge, Ryburn and Skircoat.

I am asking everyone aged 12 and over who lives, works or studies in Todmorden, Rastrick, Park and Warley, Ovenden, Illingworth and Mixenden, Sowerby Bridge and Ryburn wards of Calderdale and/or mixes with people from these areas, to take a PCR test as part of our extra testing programme.

As such we would really appreciate if everyone in Skircoat and Rastrick to take a PCR test as soon as possible. There are walk-in services listed below. For those without any current COVID symptoms. You do not need to book this service.

- Mixenden Activity Centre, Clough Lane, Halifax, HX2 8SH
- Asda overflow car park. Thrum Hall Lane, Halifax, HX1 4PG (Every day, 8am to 8pm)
- Daisy Street Car Park. Brighouse, HD6 1EL (Every day, 8am to 8pm)

If you have COVID symptoms you should book and take a PCR test as normal at a local test centre.

On receipt of your PCR test you will be required to register your details and the unique PCR test barcode number via the GOV.UK website. Instructions on how to do this are included with the PCR test and we've produced a step by step guide to help guide you through the process. You will receive your test result by text or email dependant on the contact details you register.

Why are we doing extra testing?

The Covid-19 case rate in Calderdale doubled during May and is still increasing. We need to keep case rates as low as possible to prevent new variants of concern developing and spreading.

We are acting now to try and prevent further spread of Covid-19 across the whole of Calderdale and in the areas where there are high and rising case rates, and particularly in Todmorden, Park and Warley, Ovenden, Illingworth and Mixenden, Sowerby Bridge, Ryburn, Skircoat and Rastrick. This will help protect our communities from increasing cases and from new strains of the virus that spread more easily.



We have seen an increase in cases of the Delta variant of concern (first identified in India) across the borough in the last 4 weeks and the numbers are increasing quickly.

Who should be tested?

Anyone who lives, works or studies in Todmorden, Park and Warley, Ovenden, Illingworth and Mixenden, Sowerby Bridge, Ryburn, Skircoat and Rastrick and/or mixes with people from these areas should take one of the PCR tests.

I've had both doses of the vaccine, should I still get the test?

Everyone should do their bit and get a PCR test even if they are fully vaccinated. This is because people that have had the vaccine can still get the Delta variant of Covid-19, and it's important that they don't pass it on to others.

I already do lateral flow tests, should I do a PCR test?

Even if you do regular lateral flow tests, it's important that you take a PCR test as part of the extra testing. This is because the PCR tests in our extra testing programme are prioritised for genetic sequencing. That means we will be able to find out if the people that test positive have one of the new variants of concern. Lateral flow tests can't provide this information. If you usually do regular lateral flow tests, why don't you just swap one of them for a PCR test as part of the extra testing? That way you're not doing any more tests than usual.

How many PCR tests should I do?

We are just asking you to do 1 PCR test at any time during the 4 weeks that we are running the extra testing programme.

What else can we I do to protect myself against new variants?

- Limit mixing and keep your distance from people you don't live with
- Meet others outside if possible. If you're meeting others indoors make sure there's plenty of fresh air
- Wear a mask when indoors with people you don't live with, e.g. in shops, using public transport
- Isolate at home if you have symptoms or a positive test result
- Get the vaccine when invited

Calderdale's communities have shown real kindness throughout the pandemic, and I'm asking everyone in Todmorden, Park and Warley, Ovenden, Illingworth and Mixenden, Sowerby Bridge and Ryburn and/or those who mix with people from these areas, to step up once again to help the community, by getting just one PCR test in the next few weeks as part of our extra testing programme

Thanks very much for all your support.

Yours sincerely



Deborah Harkins
Director of Public Health