

Self-Isolation & Testing

The following self-isolation and testing requirements apply from 31st December 2021.

	Initial Test Required	Self-Isolation	Daily Testing
Index cases (all ages/categories*) (*Note- there is specific guidance for those working with extremely clinically vulnerable which still require 10 days off work)	No symptoms of respiratory illness= LFD test Any symptoms of respiratory illness - PCR test	7 days	LFD on day 6 and 7 to be negative before release on Day 8 *#
Contacts - Vaccinated and 5–17 year-olds, (including household contacts)	n/a	Not required to isolate	Daily LFDs for 7 days
Contacts - Unvaccinated (all employments and age over 5)	n/a	10 days	Day 2 and Day 8 LFD recommended
Contacts - Under 5s	Not required to test even if symptomatic unless on medical advice or best interest of the child	Not required to isolate	Not required
Contacts - Health and Social Care, vaccinated	Negative PCR test before attending work on first day	Not required to isolate	Daily LFDs for 10 days

- 10 days is the maximum isolation time required. Therefore, even if an LFT is still positive on Day 10, you can return to work on day 11, and do not have to have two clear covid free tests.

Fully vaccinated in this context means:

- you have been vaccinated with a Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) approved COVID-19 vaccine in the UK
- at least 14 days have passed since you received the recommended doses of the vaccine

You do not need to have received a booster vaccination to be considered fully vaccinated.

The rules around self-certification for sickness absence has also changed from the 10th December 2021 and the below link will provide the necessary information. Please note this is a temporary change and only lasts until the 26 January 2022 (when it will be reviewed). SLT would add that that in respect of international travel, ACAS guidance regarding pay following a return from overseas has not changed. There are also still specific provisions in respect of absences due to Covid-19 where an employer can ask for the further information after 7 days off sick.

HOME WORKING, OFFICE ATTENDANCE & VEHICLE COVID PROTOCOLS

From the 20th December 2021, the law in Wales changed and wherever practical to do so, staff should work from home.

However, there will be staff that do need to attend the office for essential work-related matters (this could include being reasonably redeployed to support their colleagues within their respective service area) or for their wellbeing needs. Any member of staff that comes into the Council Offices must continue to follow the Council's agreed protocol for office attendance, which includes good hand hygiene, mask wearing (apart from when sat at a socially distanced desk) and social distancing (where practical to do so). In respect of all Council vehicles, staff should wear a face mask if more than one person is in a vehicle.

NB – masks do not have to be worn if you are medically exempt.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Colleagues will also be aware that the Welsh Government (WG) currently recommend not to travel abroad. However, where a person does determine to travel abroad, then the points listed below capture the current requirements on travellers that are returning to Wales from countries abroad. The below narrative also reinforces previous communications from SLT around international travel.

1. There are currently no red list countries for international travel purposes.
2. **As of 4:00am on 7th January 2022, the rules for VACCINATED travellers returning to the UK from Abroad:**
 - i. **No requirement to self-isolate after arrival**
 - ii. **Must take an LFD test on day 2 after arrival (accepted as a test from 4:00am on the 9th January 2022).**
 - iii. **If the LFD is positive, then self-isolate and take a PCR test. Until the test result is known, these additional days will take the form of additional annual leave or unpaid leave and no other arrangements will be allowed**
 - iv. **If the PCR test is positive you must self-isolate for the required period (currently 10 days). The remaining isolation period will again take the form of additional annual leave or unpaid leave and no other arrangements will be allowed.**

NB – in respect of the points (ii) to (vi) above, if you are double jabbed and determine not to undertake the required LFD test within 2 days of your return from international travel, then you will need to follow the isolation period (currently 10 days in total). This isolation period will take the form of additional annual leave or unpaid leave and no other arrangements will be allowed.

3. **The rules for UNVACCINATED travellers returning to the UK and into Wales are unchanged and are:**
 - i. **Must complete a Passenger Locator form**
 - ii. **Must have a negative test within 48 hours prior to travelling back to the UK**
 - iii. **Must undertake a private PCR test within 2 days of arriving in the UK**
 - iv. **Must continue to isolate at home for the required period (10 days in total) regardless of the test result and this isolation will take the form of additional annual leave or unpaid leave and no other arrangements will be allowed**

Finally, we have had a few queries around pre-booked leave over the recent Christmas period and any isolation periods by staff. In line with previous decisions on this matter, SLT would advise that any pre-booked leave stands and will not be given back as additional days leave.