

A Letter from the Mayor

Dear Resident,

This afternoon Mayor of London Sadiq Khan declared a 'major incident' in London following the rapid spread of coronavirus across the capital and the increase of COVID-19 patients being admitted to hospitals.

It comes as the number of COVID-19 cases in Lewisham has exceeded 1,000 per 100,000, putting immense pressure on an already stretched NHS.

The London Ambulance Service is now taking up to 8,000 emergency calls a day now, compared to 5,500 on a typical busy day. These stark figures are an important reminder to us all about why we must do all we can to follow Government guidance and protect ourselves and others from this virus.

I am pleased to tell you that rapid testing is now available for all critical workers **without coronavirus symptoms**. Lewisham residents currently working in a critical role and unable to work from home can now [book an appointment online](#) for a rapid, lateral flow test at the Civic Suite, Catford SE6 4RX.

You can book a rapid test below if you are in one of the following categories:

- Critical workers who are unable to work from home and must travel to their place of work.
- Those in the same household or support bubble of a critical worker who is currently unable to work from home.
- Whilst schools are setting up their own rapid testing, tests will be available for children of critical workers and vulnerable children who are currently in school, as well as young people and children currently attending alternative provisions and special schools. Rapid tests are only open to children over the age of 11.
- We are also offering rapid tests for our Community Champions, those caring for friends and family and the voluntary networks who are, once again, working so hard to look after the most vulnerable in the community.

Tests are processed on site, meaning that a test result can be returned quickly on the same day. A full list of critical worker roles can be found on the [Government's website](#).

There are no walk-in appointments available, testing slots must be [booked in advance online](#). The centre will be open seven days a week 10am – 4pm.

It is vital that we stop the spread of the virus. Rapid tests can help us identify those individuals who may have COVID-19 without symptoms and this is an important step in helping to stop the spread of the virus.

If you are working in a critical role I would encourage you to book a rapid test. It's quick, free and you will receive your results on the same day.

Anyone with coronavirus symptoms can still get tested – [find full details of testing sites](#).

Please continue your efforts to keep yourselves and each other safe.

Best wishes,
Damien Egan
Mayor of Lewisham

COVID-19 in Lewisham – update from our Director of Public Health

Lewisham's COVID-19 infection rate is the highest we've seen at any point during the pandemic. Dr Catherine Mbema, our Director of Public Health, shares the latest update on coronavirus in our borough. [Read the full public health update](#).

COVID-19 vaccination webinar

To help in the fight against COVID-19, the NHS is delivering the largest vaccination programme in its history. Find out more about the vaccines and current eligibility for Lewisham residents by joining a free webinar on Thursday, 14 January at 6pm. Our Director of Public Health, Dr Catherine Mbema, will also talk about safety and dispel any myths about vaccination. The event is open to all Lewisham residents and will take place on Zoom. [Join the event using this link](#) and the following login details: Meeting ID: 936 4942 4146 Passcode: 0wh6fu

Severe cold weather warning

A cold weather alert is in place from today until 9am on Monday, 11 January. Conditions could increase the health risks to vulnerable people. Do check up on neighbours, family and friends who may need support. [Read our guide on how to keep yourself and others well during cold weather.](#)

Primary admissions deadline next week

If your child is due to start primary school in September 2021, you need to apply for a primary school place by Friday, 15 January. We advise you to [complete your application](#) as soon as possible as the website will be very busy close to the deadline.

Virtual Get Involved Fair

Find out about volunteering opportunities in Lewisham on Thursday, 14 January at 6.30pm. [Sign up for this online event](#) hosted by Lewisham Local.

Housing allocation scheme

We are proposing some changes to the Housing Allocation Scheme. The scheme is a way of allocating social housing to eligible applicants on the housing register. [Find out more and share your views.](#)