

FAQ testing strategy (valid from 9 November 2020)

Who is tested in accordance with the national test strategy or the test strategy in Rhineland-Palatinate?

Taking into account the respective epidemiological situation and at the request of the responsible health authority or the treating physician:

- persons with symptoms typical of corona
- persons who have had contact with a person infected with the SARS-CoV-2 corona virus, for example members of the same household or persons who have been identified as contact persons via the Corona Warning App
- affected persons in community facilities and accommodation (e.g. doctors' surgeries, schools, day nurseries, asylum seekers' homes, emergency accommodation, juvenile detention centres) if a person infected with the corona virus SARS-CoV-2 has been identified in the facility
- patients and residents before (re)admission to hospitals, inpatient care facilities, facilities for the disabled and other facilities for vulnerable groups in addition to outpatient care
- residents of nursing homes and patients in hospital in addition to staff in nursing homes, hospitals and other institutions regularly independent of cases.

Occasional testing of asymptomatic persons in the vicinity of recognised cases is already an integral part of Rhineland-Palatinate's testing strategy.

Where can I be tested in Rhineland-Palatinate?

In principle, tests on symptomatic individuals are carried out by general practitioners, fever outpatient clinics, coronary practices, surgeries and outpatient departments. The list of the current locations for fever outpatient clinics in Rhineland-Palatinate can be found at

<https://msagd.rlp.de/de/unsere-themen/gesundheit-und-pflege/gesundheitsliche-versorgung/oeffentlicher-gesundheitsdienst-hygiene-und-infektionsschutz/infektionsschutz/informationen-zum-coronavirus-sars-cov-2/>

Testing of asymptomatic persons who are entitled to a test in accordance with a determination by the treating physician, the health authority or a specific institution is carried out at the above-mentioned institutions and additionally in local test centres amongst others.

Do I have to pay for the test?

Testing for the corona virus is free of charge for those tested in many cases. This applies, for example, to all cases in which persons have been suspected by the doctor treating them or the health authority as being infected themselves or as contact persons of a person infected with corona. In addition, people can be tested free of charge if they work in specific companies in the education or healthcare sector, such as hospitals, nursing homes, schools or social integration services in which a case of corona has been detected outside the regular care system.

In addition, residents and employees in care and integration facilities can also be tested regularly free of charge. Persons entering the country from a foreign risk area are also entitled to free testing under certain conditions.

I want to know whether I have already had Corona and am now immune. How can I get tested for this?

To date no test system has been established to prove immunity since the detection of antibodies is not equivalent to the detection of so-called neutralising antibodies. So far, there is a lack of systematic studies which allow an assessment of antibody titres associated with protection against reinfection.

What are antibody tests and who pays for them?

The verification of precisely-matching antibodies (specific antibodies) from the blood is used for indirect detection of an infection with the corona virus. Normally, specific antibodies are not formed until 10 to 14 days after the onset of symptoms and are therefore not suitable for the diagnosis of an acute infection with the corona virus.

The costs of testing for the presence of antibodies are currently not regulated by federal legislation and are not paid for by the statutory health insurance funds. These would therefore have to be paid for privately.

I was in a risk area abroad - what applies to me now?

Persons entering from foreign risk areas or returning to Rhineland-Palatinate from such areas are principally obliged to go directly to their homes or other accommodation enabling isolation immediately after entry and to remain in quarantine there for a period of ten days after entry. In addition, they must contact the health authority responsible for them immediately after entering the country. A new digital entry registration form will be made available by the Federal Government for this purpose. Immediate release from the quarantine obligation by presenting a negative test result on entry is not generally possible. However, the quarantine period may be shortened by presenting a negative test result. In principle, the test may only be carried out at the earliest on the fifth day after entry.

Various exceptions have been laid down for the quarantine obligation. For example, persons in transit, persons who stayed in a risk area for less than 72 hours or who enter Federal territory from a risk area for up to 24 hours are exempt from the quarantine obligation. Other exceptions are provided for, for example under specific conditions for special groups of people such as so-called cross-border commuters or frontier workers.

In addition, the quarantine obligation does not apply to specific additional groups of persons if they can present a negative test result. This applies, for example, to persons entering to visit first or second-degree relatives or for urgent medical treatment, doctors, nurses, judges or members of parliament and the police force. With special consideration of economic interests, persons who have been in a risk area for up to five days or who enter Rhineland-Palatinate for urgent and unavoidable reasons, including professional reasons, are also exempted from the obligation to remain in quarantine on presentation of a negative test.

If I return from holiday (not in a risk area), will I have to go into quarantine at home afterwards?

No. Holidaymakers who have not stayed in a risk area and are asymptomatic do not have to be quarantined.