

Ministers urge hauliers to pre book and allow enough time for pre-departure COVID-19 tests

From [Department of Transport](#)

Published on 27 January 2021

Last updated on 27 January 2021

New requirement for all commercial vehicle drivers travelling on ferries from Ireland to France comes into effect from Thursday

Testing requirements for hauliers travelling from Ireland to France – where they must have evidence of a negative COVID-19 test – will be introduced from Thursday 28 January 2021, following a decision by the French Government. The Department has been advised by the French authorities that this will apply to drivers travelling on any ferry setting sail from Ireland to France after 11pm (Irish time) on Wednesday.

All commercial vehicle drivers (Heavy Goods Vehicle drivers, Lights Goods Vehicle drivers or Coach drivers) travelling from Ireland to France must have evidence of a negative COVID-19 antigen or PCR test to carry out their journey. Proof of a negative test result will be required to board ferries and to enter France.

The Department of Transport, in conjunction with Wexford County Council and Transport Infrastructure Ireland has established State-supported antigen testing facilities so that these unprecedented requirements can be met and hauliers can be tested before they travel.

Minister for Transport, Eamon Ryan TD said:

“Hauliers and the overall transport and logistics sector have worked tirelessly to ensure the continued movement of essential supply chains over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, and against the challenge of Brexit. I am now encouraging all hauliers to familiarise themselves with new testing requirements that are coming into effect for travel to France. To meet these new requirements, we have established state supported testing facilities near Dublin and Rosslare ports to ensure hauliers can be tested in advance of travel. Hauliers should be aware that if they do not present evidence of a negative COVID-19 test result, they will be denied boarding a ferry to France. It is important to factor in these additional requirements to avoid any unnecessary disruption.”

Minister of State with special responsibility for International Road Transport and Logistics at the Department of Transport, Hildegard Naughton TD, said:

“I am urging all hauliers who are travelling to France to allow adequate time for pre-departure COVID-19 tests to take place. Pre-booking an early COVID-19 test within 72

hours of departure will allow flexibility in the unfortunate event that a driver receives a positive result and will also prevent any unnecessary delays at testing centres.”

Free COVID-19 antigen tests for commercial drivers will be made available at dedicated testing facilities near the ports of Dublin and Rosslare. Tests will only be provided to hauliers who are travelling to France or other countries where a negative COVID-19 test is required for entry.

There will initially be two dedicated testing sites for hauliers intending to travel from Dublin and Rosslare ports to France, which will open from tomorrow morning (28 January):

- Dublin Airport’s Blue Long Stay Car Park, signposted from M1 Junction 2 (Airport) and M50 Junction 4 (Ballymun)
- Gorey (Circle K) Motorway Service Area, Wexford, accessible from the M11

The Department is continuing to work with Wexford County Council on an additional site for Rosslare bound traffic, located at Holmestown. It is intended that this site will open for testing over the coming days.

The testing facilities will be reviewed on a daily basis to ensure alignment between demand and provision of the service. Hours of operation at the sites will be based around ferry sailing times to France and will be subject to review based on demand. The testing facilities can be availed of by all commercial drivers who are departing on ferry sailings from Ireland to France including hauliers from Northern Ireland.

All hauliers will be required to have a negative COVID-19 antigen (from a list of French approved tests) or PCR test result obtained less than 72 hours before embarking on their ferry journey to France.

Drivers planning to avail of a free antigen test at the Dublin and Wexford dedicated sites are now encouraged to pre-book their test at <https://rocdochealthcheck.ie/get-tested.html> as early as possible and to bring proof of their ferry booking to these sites when attending for a COVID-19 test, along with a form of photo identification and their digital tachograph card.

Proof of the negative test result (pdf) must be shown to the ferry operator before boarding and to French authorities if requested upon disembarkation. If a driver attempts to board a ferry to France without evidence of a negative Covid-19 test result, he/she will be denied boarding. If drivers somehow board a ferry to France without a check, they will be denied entry to France and turned back.

Drivers undertaking a COVID-19 antigen test at one of the sites on the day of their ferry departure should pre-book their test and allow plenty of time.

Drivers also have the option to get their test earlier if that suits, as long as it is within 72 hours prior to embarking on their ferry journey to France, and they can provide proof of their ferry booking (if attending one of the dedicated testing sites).

The test that will be provided at the dedicated testing sites is an antigen test taken using a swab. Test results should be available within an hour of receiving the test.

Drivers may also get tested at the many private facilities around the country as long as these tests meet the French requirements, but these costs will not be covered by the State – see <https://covid-19.sante.gouv.fr/tests>

Drivers who test positive for COVID-19 will need to be referred by a GP/doctor for a free COVID-19 PCR test in Ireland. Where PCR test results are positive, drivers must follow public health guidance and self-isolate for 14 days.

It is essential that drivers travelling on ferries direct to France are tested before they enter the ports of Dublin or Rosslare. Drivers that enter the port without evidence of an authorised negative COVID-19 test will be denied boarding by the ferry operator.

Drivers will also need to carry with them a signed “declaration of honour” form for the French authorities, confirming that he/she has no COVID-19 symptoms and that he/she has not been a close contact of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the previous 14 days. This form will be available here: <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Actualites/L-actu-du-Ministere/Attestation-de-deplacement-et-de-voyage>

The completed “declaration of honour” form must also be shown to the ferry operator before boarding and to French authorities if requested upon disembarkation.

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Additional Information

Drivers en route from Northern Ireland to the continent via Ireland can also avail of these free COVID-19 testing services.

Drivers travelling to Britain to use the landbridge route to reach France, the Netherlands, or Germany, can get a test in Ireland before travelling or take a test in Great Britain at one of the haulier advice sites offering tests. Free testing is available at 36 Information & Advice (I&A) sites across the UK. Testing will not be provided to hauliers travelling to destinations where a negative COVID-19 test is not required for entry, such as the UK.

Ireland will continue to maintain the exemption for transport workers entering the State and will continue to call for EU Member States to comply with the EU’s Green Lanes recommendation that no such tests should be required for essential transport workers, including hauliers, in the interests of supply chains and the Single Market.