



## RM/CWU Joint Statement - Covid-19 Bespoke Weekend Priority Postbox Collection



Royal Mail Group and the CWU are proud to be playing a key role in the delivery and return of Covid-19 test kits which is an integral part of the Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a vital part of the National effort to combat the coronavirus.

In April 2020 the Government selected Royal Mail Group and its unparalleled nationwide network to lead as the Prime Supplier on a number of products. To date Royal Mail and the CWU have worked together to adapt to the changing demands from Government as the pandemic unfolds. In a very short period Royal Mail Group and the CWU have established a network comprised of:

- Regional/Local Test Centres: Royal Mail Relay are collecting test kits from c.200 test sites up to 4 times daily.
- Home Collection Service: The Royal Mail Core Network has 394 Delivery Offices undertaking doorstep collections seven days a week.
- c.30,000 Priority Postboxes: Have been labelled with collection time after 4pm.
- Nursing/Care Homes/Schools/GP Surgeries: Royal Mail are delivering c2,700 boxes of test kits to important parts of our communities.

Both parties continue to work together to ensure that standard operating procedures are in place. In addition, Royal Mail and the CWU continue to work with the Chief Medical Officer to ensure that the operational processes put in place are effective and safe for all colleagues and are supported by the necessary Health & Safety documentation and Safe Systems of Work (SSOW).

To meet the demand for testing into the Autumn and Winter the Government have asked Royal Mail Group to put in place an operation for a later collection from a subset of the current Priority Postboxes on a Saturday and to introduce a new collection service on a Sunday.

### **Involvement / Structures**

In order to ensure compliance to all of the SSOW and Operating Processes required to meet the service requirements and resourcing of the product Local Joint Working Groups (LJWG) based on each Mail Centre catchment area will be established. This will be to ensure that the cross functional working is adopted and all functions are aware of the roles and responsibilities.

The LJWG for the Mail Centre catchment area will be overseen by the relevant Service Delivery Leader and nominated CWU Divisional Representative with the core attendees being:

#### **CWU**

Area Delivery Representative  
Area Processing Representative  
Area Distribution Representative  
Area Safety Rep

#### **Royal Mail**

Operations Manager  
Mail Centre Manager  
Area Distribution Manager  
Area Safety Manager

The LJWG can also be extended to include the relevant RM Managers and CWU Representatives across those units selected as Test Kit Hubs within the areas covered by the Mail Centre catchment area as required.

### **Planning and Next Steps**

Given the tight timescales and requirement to ensure that the necessary measures and plans are in place across the Mail Centre catchment area, the LJWG will immediately plan and consider the following:

- Weekend Priority boxes are predominantly within a 20 mile radius with the exception of some postcodes where this radius has been expanded.
- Collections have initially been primarily planned to originate from and return to the Mail Centre for test kits to be processed.
- It is accepted that in specific situations e.g. geographical constraints, resourcing availability and/or vehicle availability, Collections can originate at a Delivery Office Hub. In these circumstances it is critical that there is a robust plan to connect collections with the Mail Centre for onward delivery to the Laboratory.
- Recognising the tight timescales in setting up this operation regular reviews will take place to ensure that quality of service is maintained and also that resourcing plans remain robust taking into consideration units that are already performing COVID Home Collection test kits, LAT products and/or operating a CSP operation in place on a Sunday.
- Existing collections from Priority Postboxes Monday to Saturday will remain unchanged.
- Collections will be formed from a subset of pre-existing Priority Postbox estate across the UK between 15:00 and 18:00hrs on a Saturday and a Sunday.
- Weekend Priority Postboxes will be affixed with a new label indicating this, in addition to the current PPB label.
- Where it has been agreed to originate collections from a Delivery Office Hub, plans will need to be included for the collection of tests kits to be returned to the parent Mail Centre for onward cascading that day.
- A new direct connection will be established from the Mail Centre to a Regional Lab.
- Exempted postcode areas remain unchanged.
- This arrangement could also apply on Bank Holidays (including Christmas).
- It is expected that other mail will be collected at the same time as the test kits, but this mail shall not be advanced any further once at the Mail Centre.
- Where the Priority Postbox is located outside a POL, the collector shall be expected to clear the POL counter also.

It is currently anticipated that this service shall commence during late November and extend into March 2021.

### **Resourcing Menu of Options**

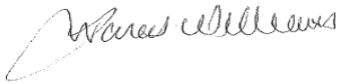
The resourcing arrangement to perform the Bespoke Weekend Collection service will be on a voluntary basis. To ensure that Royal Mail customers can be confident that all collections will be undertaken and also to take account of any employee concerns, the resourcing process may include but is not limited to the following options:

- Use of hybrid duties performing core delivery and LAT parcel deliveries
- Use of hybrid duties performing collections & LAT parcel deliveries
- Opportunity for P/T employees to increase their contractual hours
- Use of new duties and/or new recruits
- Use of contracted Scheduled Attendances in line with current agreements
- Review of existing collection Scheduled Attendance
- If resource shortfalls for the collection of test kits still exist, depending on the hub locations utilisation within the wider resourcing units will be used as an interim solution until a permanent resourcing solution is agreed as a last resort.

### **Summary / Next Steps**

Given the changing nature of the current operational requirements to perform all aspects of the COVID test collections, Royal Mail and the CWU commit to undertaking weekly reviews of the plan to ensure it remains fit for purpose and in addition if further new products and services are secured the bespoke weekend plans will be reviewed to ensure we work together to ensure that any changes required are finalised to continue to play our part in the National effort.

Any issues in relation to the interpretation or application and deployment of the Joint Statement will be raised with the signatories for resolution.



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