



FAQs on COVID-19 Restrictions

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FAQs on COVID-19 Government Restrictions



1. Are all NCT Test Centres open?

Under Government restrictions the National Car Testing Service (NCTS) has been identified as an essential service. Customers should attend an NCT centre as normal for their test appointment. Vehicle owners requiring retests should also attend at the NCT test centre as normal. Travel restrictions do not apply to attendance for an essential service.

Vehicle owners are reminded of the 4-month test extension. The National Car Testing Service (NCTS) has now updated all records for those customers' vehicles that qualified for the 4-month test extension as announced by the Minister in April. A vehicle with a test due date on or after 28 March 2020 has now had their test date extended by 4 months.

Only one person must present the vehicle for inspection and vulnerable drivers and those with an underlying illness are asked not to attend. They should organise for someone else to present their vehicle where possible. Whoever presents the vehicle for test must produce their own identification in the form of a driving licence.

Those who are more vulnerable are advised to contact the NCTS on (01) 4135992 (Monday to Friday). Please do not visit any NCTS facility if you have been exposed to the virus or have knowingly been in contact with anyone showing symptoms. In this instance you should follow [hse.ie/coronavirus](https://www.hse.ie/coronavirus) advice.

It may be useful to bring proof of your appointment if stopped by a member of An Garda Síochána on your way to your test.

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, cash is not the preferred method of payment at this time, we would ask for customers compliance with this approach.

To mitigate against the spread of COVID19 and to protect both customers and staff, NCTS ask customers to adhere to these protocols.

Protocol for Staff:

- Before each inspection, all vehicle inspectors must wash their hands with soap and water and wear a new set of disposable gloves. In addition, they must wear a face covering where social distancing is not possible such as the public waiting area.
- Leave all entrance doors open where possible to minimise the risk of virus transfer via door handles.
- Leave Vehicle Inspection Reports and NCT Certificates (if applicable) on the front seat of the customer's vehicle following the test, thus eliminating the need for customers to re-enter the test centre, unless they have a query.

Protocol for customers:

- It is now mandatory that customers wear a face covering on the day of inspection, customers will not be permitted to enter the NCT building without a face covering. Protocols in regard to face coverings will be implemented in line with HSE guidance
- Please ensure you wear the correct clothing attire to the test centre as you may have to wait outside the building while your vehicle is inspected.
- Tests must be booked and paid online
- In advance of attending for NCT, please ensure your vehicle is being presented in a hygienic state and free of any unhygienic matter such as used tissues, gloves and wipes.
- Only customers with confirmed appointments should present their vehicle for inspection.
- Only one person must present the vehicle for inspection and we are asking that vulnerable drivers and those with an underlying illness do not attend, we ask that they organise for someone else to present their vehicle where possible.
- A maximum number of customers will be permitted to enter the centre and this will be clearly sign posted as you enter the centre.

- All customers must adhere to the social distancing guidelines.
- Driver identification will still be required to be shown at check in, but it should not be handed to the staff member.
- Once checked in, customers will be advised to wait in their vehicles or if they prefer to wait outside the building.
- Leave windows lowered slightly to allow for air to ventilate naturally throughout the vehicle.
- Ensure the air vents in the vehicle are closed and the fans are reduced to the lowest level.
- Once the inspection is complete, the Vehicle Inspection Reports and NCT Certificates (if applicable) will be left on the front seat of the customer's vehicle following the test, thus eliminating the need for customers to re-enter the test centre, unless they have a query.

2. Vehicle owners are reminded of the 4-month extension

The National Car Testing Service (NCTS) has now updated all records for those customers' vehicles that qualified for the 4-month test extension as announced by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Mr Shane Ross in April. A vehicle with a NCT certificate expiry date on or after 28 March 2020 has now had their test date extended by 4 months, see example below:

Original NCT Expiry Date	New NCT Test Due Date
28 December 2020	28 April 2021
10 March 2021	10 July 2021
15 June 2021*	15 October 2021

* All Cars **first** registered on or after 1st August 2016 are not eligible for the 4-month extension.

Customers should note this change and are encouraged to check their new test due date on the [Check NCT Due Date](#) section on the NCTS website before booking their test.

NCTS are reminding customers that if they book a test that is more than 90 days earlier than the test due date, the test will be a voluntary early test and the NCT certificate issued will be valid for 1 or 2 years (depending on the age of the vehicle) from the date of the successful test. NCTS are asking customers to note carefully the website messages they receive throughout the course of the booking process.

3. How will I make a booking?

You can book and pay online at www.ncts.ie or by calling the booking line on (01) 4135992 (Mon-Thurs 8am-1.45pm and 2.15pm – 8pm and Friday 8am-12.45pm and 1.15pm to 6pm). Due to social distancing requirements, the number of staff in the NCTS call centre is reduced so we would recommend booking online.

4. Can I pay for the service using cash?

NCTS tests can be booked online and need to be confirmed with a credit or debit card. Payment is by pre-authorisation where the test fee is only taken off your credit/debit card once the vehicle is checked in at the test centre. In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, cash is not the preferred method of payment at this time, we would ask for customers compliance with this approach.

NCTS chip and pin terminals are regularly cleaned with antibacterial wipes.

5. Where can I find the centre opening times?

Please log onto the NCTS website for the [opening times](#) of the each NCT test centre.

6. How is NCTS implementing social distancing measures in the test centres?

NCTS is following the [hse.ie/coronavirus](https://www.hse.ie/coronavirus) guidance on social distancing across all test centres

Each centre has floor markings in place to remind people about social distancing and the number of people in the waiting area is being limited. There will also be restricted seating in the test centre waiting areas. Whoever presents the vehicle for test must produce their own identification in the form of a driving licence.

Only one person must present the vehicle for inspection and NCTS asks that vulnerable drivers and those with an underlying illness do not attend and that they organise for someone else to present their vehicle where possible. If they are unable to organise someone to bring the vehicle for testing, please make a member of NCTS staff aware of this at the time of booking so that additional provisions can be put in place on the day of the inspection. Whoever presents the vehicle for test must produce their own identification in the form of a driving licence.

7. What sanitising procedures are being put in place to protect staff and customers?

Before and after each inspection, all vehicle inspectors will wash their hands with soap and water and wear a new set of disposable gloves. Staff must wear a face covering where social distancing is not possible such as the public waiting area. Hand sanitiser is provided for both staff and customers.

NCT Centres are cleaned regularly with disinfectant products. Where possible all entrance doors will be left open to minimise the risk of virus transfer via door handles.

At the end of the inspection, the customer's Vehicle Inspection Report and NCT Certificate (if applicable) will be left on the front seat of the customer's car, this saves customers having to re-enter the test centre for their test results

Hand washing facilities are also available for customers.

8. How will I know my vehicle is safe to get into following its inspection?

NCTS asks that customers also play their part in keeping themselves and NCTS staff safe, so prior to arriving at the test centre, please ensure your vehicle is being presented in a hygienic state and free of any unhygienic matter such as used tissues, gloves and wipes, this is to look after the health and safety of staff.

Before each inspection, all vehicle inspectors will wash their hands with soap and water or sanitiser gel and wear a new set of disposable gloves.

9. Will NCTS staff be wearing facemasks and will customers be expected to wear a face mask while in the test centre.

The wearing of face coverings in the public areas of the NCT test centres for both staff and customers is mandatory. Customers will not be permitted entry into the building unless they are wearing a face covering. This is considered necessary as the next step in the fight against the coronavirus. Protocols in regard to face coverings will be implemented in line with HSE guidance.

10. Do I still have to produce my driver licence at check in?

Yes, driver identification will still be required to be shown at check in, but it should not be handed to the staff member

11. Are you putting in measures to allow elderly/vulnerable customers to visit the test centre at a dedicated time?

No, unfortunately, NCTS cannot provide that option, however, vulnerable drivers and those with an underlying illness are being asked not to attend and to organise for someone else to present their vehicle where possible. If they are unable to organise someone to bring the vehicle for testing, please make a member of staff aware of this at the time of booking so that additional provisions can be put in place on the day of the inspection. Whoever presents the vehicle for test must produce their own identification in the form of a driving licence.

12. I am over 70 or have an underlying condition and am instructed to continue cocooning. My vehicle is overdue its NCT test, should I present my vehicle for test?

NCTS asks that vulnerable drivers and those with an underlying illness do not attend and that they organise for someone else to present their vehicle where possible. If they are unable to organise someone to bring the vehicle for testing, please make a member of staff aware of this at the time of booking so that additional provisions can be put in place on the day of the inspection. Whoever presents the vehicle for test must produce their own identification in the form of a driving licence.

13. I have recently been in contact with someone with COVID-19, can I still present for my test appointment?

Anyone in this situation should not visit any NCTS facility if you have been exposed to the virus or have knowingly been in contact with anyone showing symptoms. In this instance follow [hse.ie/coronavirus](https://www.hse.ie/coronavirus) advice and self-isolate. However, you may arrange for someone else to present the car for test. Whoever presents the vehicle for test must produce their own identification in the form of a driving licence.

14. Do I leave the keys in the car while I complete the booking in process?

No, you should bring the keys with you when you check in for your inspection

15. Will the key be cleaned by NCTS following completion of the test and returned to me?

Yes

16. When will the key for the car be returned to me following the test?

The inspector will return your car and keys to you in the car park following the test.

17. What will happen if there is litter or unhygienic material left in the car?

If the car is not clean and clutter free, the vehicle will not be tested. All NCTS staff will be observing social distancing practices, wearing disposable gloves, washing their hands between each inspection and wearing face coverings in public areas where social distancing is not possible. NCTS ask you to help by observing these practices and present the car in a manner that provides protection for staff and customers.

18. Will the testers clean all parts of the vehicle they need to touch?

Testers will wash their hands between each test and wear a new set of disposable gloves for each test.

19. Can my test report be emailed to me instead of handed to me at the test centre?

There is no facility to email test reports or test certificates. However, the Vehicle Inspector will leave the documents on the front seat of your car so that you do not have to re-enter the test centre unless you have a query.

20. What arrangements will be made if I become unwell while attending my NCT, or I am currently self-isolating, what should I do?

If you are unwell or self-isolating, you should not attend at the testing centre. Familiarise yourself with the Department of Health's published guidance and if possible, advise the NCTS accordingly or alternatively have another person present the car at the test centre on your behalf.

22. Are the lifts in my NCT centre working again?

All lifts have been repaired/replaced and all tests are being completed in full.

23. To whom can I report someone not maintaining the COVID 19 protocols at test centres?

Customers will be asked to refer any queries they may have to the customer enquiries team at info@ncts.ie

Frequently Asked Questions on Extension of validity of NCT Certificates

24. Where can I check my new test due date?

NCTS has updated the new test due date for all vehicles that qualified for the 4-month extension as announced by the Minister. Customers can now check to see their new test due date. The extension of NCT due dates applies only to vehicles with a NCT certificate expiry date on or after 28 March 2020.

25. Why were NCT certificates extended?

The measure was put in place because of the suspension of car testing on 28 March 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. The measures are part of the State's coordinated response to the COVID-19 virus and recognise that car owners were not able to undertake NCTs as a consequence of the suspension of car testing from 28 March 2020.

26. Why are cars with a due date prior to 28 March 2020 not being extended?

The NCT testing system was suspended on 28 March 2020 as part of the Government response to COVID 19. All cars with a NCT certificate expiry date on or after 28 March 2020 were extended by 4 months. The RSA has been advised that, legally, the Regulations extending the due dates could only be applied from the date of suspension of testing i.e. 28 March 2020 and could not be applied retrospectively. Therefore, due dates prior to this date could not be extended.

27. Will I get a new NCT Certificate?

No, a new certificate will not be issued. An Garda Síochána are aware that all NCT certificates with an expiry date on or after 28 March 2020 are valid for 4 months after the expiry date printed on the windscreen disc.

28. Do I need to apply for the extension?

No, the extension was applied automatically to all cars that are eligible for the extension.

29. Does the extension apply for all subsequent test due dates?

Yes, the date is being permanently reset and will be your car's new test due date in the future.

30. My test due date has moved from November 2020 to March 2021– when should I present my car for testing?

Your new test due date is now March 2021 and your car should be presented for NCT based on that date. Please refer to www.ncts.ie for all booking information.

31. My vehicle was first registered on 1 August 2016 and will be due its first NCT on 1 August 2020, am I eligible for the extension?

No, the date of first registration generally sets the initial test due date for cars and subsequent tests are due on the anniversary of that date. All Cars first registered on or after 1 August 2016 are not eligible for the 4-month extension.

32. Will the failure to conduct NCT inspections result in dangerous vehicles on our roads?

All vehicle owners are reminded that the roadworthiness of their vehicle is always their responsibility.

33. Should I retain my expired NCT disc and continue to display it on the windscreen?

Yes.

34. Will not having a completed NCT impact on my car insurance?

As the public restrictions prevent customers from undergoing an NCT, we understand the insurance industry has taken a pragmatic position.

In respect of vehicles that have their NCT certs extended, Insurance Ireland has said that "Insurance Ireland members are happy to be supportive and treat such licence and NCT/CRWs as valid when people are renewing their motor insurance or taking out new motor insurance policies."

However, insurance companies are private firms and the Government has no power to issue directions to them regarding this matter. You should therefore contact your insurance provider or broker for further details.

35. Will I receive fines and penalty points for not having a valid NCT disc?

An Garda Síochána are aware that vehicles with a NCT certificate expiry date on or after 28 March 2020 were extended by 4 months and that new NCT certificates and discs are not being issued. You should continue to display your current disc on your windscreen.

36. My car was declared off the road for tax purposes and the NCT certificate expired when it was off the road. Does the 4-month extension apply? If so, is the 4 months added to the end of the period which applied to the off the road declaration or the expiry date of the NCT certificate?

No, it does not apply – assuming that the test due date of the car was before 28 March 2020.

37. When does the extension cease?

Based on Regulations adopted by the Minister this is a single extension of 4 months for cars that were registered before 1 August 2016 (1 August 2019 for SPSVs) and have NCT certificate expiry date on or after 28 March 2020

38. Does the extension apply to the current testing cycle only and will future test due dates revert to the anniversary of first registration?

The date is being permanently reset and anniversaries of the new date will be your car's test due date going forward e.g. a vehicle with a test due date of 2 April 2020 will change to a test due date of 2 August 2020 and 2 August will be the car's test due date in future.

39. I have purchased a car with an expired NCT. Can I drive it?

The law requiring cars to have a valid NCT certificate has not changed.

40. I have imported a vehicle and it requires an NCT, what should I do?

VRT testing has now returned to full operation.

41. I have tried to book an NCT online but there is no availability.

NCTS are opening appointments on a daily basis for each test centre. However, if you are unable to obtain an appointment online, please reach out to NCTS customer services on (01) 4135992.