

Summary

The Government of Jersey is providing blood testing to eligible Islanders who may be affected by the historic use of PFOS at Jersey Airport. The testing will identify levels of PFOS in the blood and is being organised by Public Health. This information sheet is designed to help eligible Islanders make an informed decision on whether being tested is the right option for them.

For background information on PFOS, please visit <https://statesassembly.gov.je/assemblyreports/2020/r.126-2020.pdf>

Why is testing being provided?

The Government of Jersey understands that some Islanders are distressed by the pollution incident and may choose to be tested so that they are better informed about their PFOS/PFAS levels. The Government of Jersey has decided to provide one-off testing to make sure eligible Islanders are able to access reliable testing, with results that are clear to understand.

Who is eligible for testing?

Islanders will need to meet eligibility criteria for PFOS testing. They must have:

- Lived in the historical plume area between 1991 and 2006 for more than 1 year, **OR** worked in the historical plume area between 1991 and 2006 for more than 2 years, **AND**
- Regularly consumed water from a borehole in the area, **AND**
- Have at least one symptom that is consistent with the health concerns that are related to PFOS, **AND**
- Have a GP referral for testing, signed and dated by both the resident and the GP.

What does testing involve?

The test will be in the form of a blood test at the General Hospital's Phlebotomy Department. The way the testing for PFOS/PFAS is undertaken is incredibly important to get a reliable result.

Only certain laboratories have information on a reference population which means that test results can be compared to other results. This will allow us to conclude whether Islanders' results are low, normal or high.

The laboratory we have chosen, Vista Analytical Laboratory, has an excellent reputation internationally for PFOS/PFAS testing and an ability to test for a wide range of PFOS/PFAS substances.

As traces of PFOS can be found in many ordinary items, a special clinic will be set up to ensure the testing equipment is used appropriately and blood samples don't become contaminated with PFOS from the external surroundings. This is important to make sure that the blood test results are accurate.

The cost of testing and up to two GP appointments (one for referral and one for results) will be free of charge to patients and completely funded by the Government of Jersey.

What are the advantages of being tested?

You will receive reliable information about the level of PFOS in your blood.

What are the disadvantages of being tested?

- Despite growing international interest in the health consequences, it is difficult to interpret the evidence between PFOS and associated health impacts
- There are currently no interventions or treatments to reduce the level of PFOS in the blood if your results come back high
- Having information about having a high PFOS blood level could cause greater stress and anxiety to some Islanders.

What's the process for getting tested?

Islanders who choose to be tested need to have an appointment with their GP to discuss whether testing is the right option for them and to get a PFOS testing referral. This is to ensure that an informed decision in discussion with a GP is made. The deadline for referrals is 16 March.

Public Health will then review the referrals to make sure the eligibility criteria is met and will confirm to GPs whether the referral has been accepted. Islanders who have been accepted for referral will need to pick up a completed blood test form before they are invited to at the Phlebotomy Clinic.

The Phlebotomy Clinic will run once the referrals have been reviewed. GPs will be contacted with details of when the testing will be available. Testing is likely to start in May 2022.

It is expected that results will take up to eight weeks after the samples have been sent to the laboratory in the USA. Results will be sent to HCS, checked, and sent to GPs. Results are likely to be available in July 2022.