

CMA secures changes from major PCR testing provider

As part of its ongoing engagement in the PCR tests sector, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) raised concerns with Randox – one of the largest providers in the sector – about some of its terms and conditions.

As a result, Randox has now reviewed its terms and conditions and has changed them to:

- Give clearer information to customers, in particular on when it will provide PCR tests and results
- Improve notification of customers' legal rights on cancellations and refunds, for example making it clear they have a right to a 'cooling off' period
- Remove terms that could suggest customers aren't entitled to compensation if things go wrong

Andrea Coscelli, Chief Executive of the CMA, said:

With recent changes to the rules for travel, the spotlight is once again on PCR testing providers and their practices.

I am pleased that Randox has agreed to change its terms, which means consumers benefit from their legal rights to cancel and get a refund, and are not stopped from pursuing compensation if there is a problem. However, it's essential that all companies play by the rules and treat people fairly. We are clear that, if they fail to do so, they risk facing enforcement action from the CMA or Trading Standards.

We recently provided recommendations to government on changes to better protect consumers in this market and we hope that, given the reintroduction of PCR testing for travellers, these will be implemented as quickly as possible.

The CMA's engagement with Randox is part of a wider set of actions the CMA has taken to protect consumers in this market. In August 2021, the CMA published an [open letter to PCR providers](#), outlining how they should comply with consumer law. Practices of concern included:

- Advertising up-front prices for PCR tests which do not include additional charges
- Advertising cheap PCR tests which are only actually available in very small quantities or not at all
- Failing to deliver PCR tests or provide results within stated timescales

- Refusing to provide people with refunds where tests are not provided within advertised or agreed timescales

The CMA has also sent letters to 25 PCR providers, warning them to review their terms and conditions – and other practices – or risk facing enforcement action. It currently has [formal investigations open into 2 PCR providers, Expert Medicals and Dante Labs](#).

In addition, the CMA has provided [advice to the UK Government on ways to make the PCR testing market work better for consumers](#). The recommendations included improving the basic standards to qualify for inclusion and remain on the GOV.UK list; monitoring providers on this list and swiftly removing, and sanctioning, those firms that don't meet these standards; and adding information to enable consumers to compare providers properly and find the best deals for them.

Visit the CMA's website for more information on the [CMA's rapid review of PCR testing for travel](#) and its [enforcement work](#) in the sector.

1. Randox Health London Ltd, is a company registered in England under company number 9102173 with registered office at 5 Finsbury House, 23 Finsbury Circus, London, EC2M 7EA. Randox Health London Ltd is a private provider of COVID 19 testing services. Randox Health London Ltd appoint their partner laboratory Randox Laboratories Limited to perform the testing and t/as RCLS, a company registered in Northern Ireland under company number NI015738, whose registered office address is Ardmore, 55 Diamond Road, Crumlin, Co. Antrim, BT29 4QY
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