



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Human Services

Aging and People with Disabilities

500 Summer St. NE, E-02

Salem, OR 97301

March 10, 2020

To: All Licensed Nursing Facilities
All Licensed Residential Care Facilities
All Licensed Assisted Living Facilities
Including, but not limited to, those with Memory Care Endorsements



Re: Executive Letter specifying immediate additional policies to limit exposure to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Dear Providers:

Background:

Oregon has recently seen COVID-19 cases in people without high-risk exposures (i.e., travel to affected regions or contact with known cases). This means COVID-19 has spread in communities in Oregon. Community-wide measures like hand hygiene and staying home when ill are essential to decrease further community spread. The CDC states that early information out of China shows that some people are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. This includes older adults and people who have serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes, lung disease, and people who are immunocompromised. This policy direction is being implemented immediately to prevent the spread of COVID-19 to some of the most vulnerable community members in Oregon.

In consultation with the Oregon Health Authority, based on its public health recommendations and under the authority of [Executive Order 20-03 issued by the Governor on March 8, 2020](#), the Oregon Department of Human Services is adopting policies to:

- Restrict and limit entry to nursing facilities, residential care facilities and assisted living facilities, including those with memory care endorsements;
- Require 100% screening of all individuals who are allowed to enter facilities;
- Document screening procedures for all visitors; and
- Limit community activities.

"Assisting People to Become Independent, Healthy and Safe"

These extraordinary actions are being taken to limit the potential for residents' exposure to novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Long-term care facilities should apply infection control principles used to manage respiratory infections and outbreaks to COVID-19.

We encourage all providers to monitor the CDC website for information and resources and contact their local health department when needed (CDC Resources for Health Care Facilities:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/index.html>).

AUTHORITY

Governor Brown's [Executive Order 20-03](#) dated March 8, 2020.

I. APPLICATION

This policy applies to all nursing facilities, residential care and assisted living facilities, including those with memory care endorsements. These actions are required until further notice, with the understanding that guidance from the Department of Human Services may change as the situation evolves.

II. RATIONALE

The long-term care facility visitation policy stems from a desire to have a uniform policy that is better communicated to stakeholders and maximizes facilities' ability to prevent and contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

III. DEFINITIONS

a. *Essential* individual includes:

- Facility staff;
- Outside medical personnel;
- Vendors;
- Adult protective services staff;
- Licensing/ Survey staff;
- Long Term Care Ombudsman and Deputies (not volunteers);
- Friends or family members visiting during end-of-life stages;
and
- Friends or family who are essential for the individual's emotional well-being and care.

- b. *Screening* means: the evaluation by facility staff of every individual entering the facility consistent with the screening criteria.
- c. *Screening criteria includes identifying:*
 - Signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat.
 - Contact, in the last 14 days, with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, or under investigation for COVID-19.
 - Whether there has been international travel within the last 14 days to countries with sustained community transmission. For updated information on affected countries visit:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>
- d. *Restricting* means: not being allowed in the facility at all.
- e. *Limiting* means: Not being allowed in the facility, except for certain situations, such as end-of-life situations or when a visitor is essential for the resident's emotional well-being and care.

IV. POLICY

Effective March 10, 2020, facilities must follow CMS guidelines related to screening, limiting and restricting visitors (CMS Ref. QSO-20-14-NH (March 9, 2020)) and must:

1. Restrict visitation of non-essential individuals.
2. Screen 100% of essential individuals prior to entry into the building consistent with screening criteria.
3. Limit visitation of essential individuals.
 - a. If an essential visitor meets any of the screening above, visitors must:
 - i. Limit their movement within the facility to the resident's room
 - ii. Limit surfaces touched
 - iii. Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) – gown, gloves and mask
 - iv. Limit physical contact with resident

All screenings must be documented via a form and logged. Screening documentation must be maintained and made available for inspection by regulatory agencies.

There can only be two essential visitors per resident at a given time. Essential individuals who meet any of the screening criteria must follow the limitations listed above.

Facilities shall post signage clearly summarizing the essential individual visitor policy.

If a facility has a suspected, presumptive, or confirmed COVID-19 patient, the facility must:

- Consult with local public health.
- Notify its licensing authority (Safety, Oversight and Quality)
- Further restrict visitation.
- Maintain a log of visitors and staff interacting with a patient who is isolated for presumptive or confirmed COVID-19.
- Be able to identify the staff who interacted with the resident and resident's environment.
- Restrict all internal group activities to prevent infection exposure to other residents.

Effective immediately, facilities shall discontinue community outings. Facilities shall provide guidance and education to residents who independently engage in community outings, but **MAY NOT** prevent residents from embarking on those outings.

Facilities must continue to accommodate medical visits, regardless of whether such visits are routine, preventive or critical.

Visitation and socialization promotes emotional wellness for residents. As such, facilities must provide guidance and technological solutions for "virtual visits" using tools such as FaceTime and Skype to both residents and potential visitors who are being denied entry.

This policy will be updated as additional information is released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Oregon Health Authority. The Department will also provide tools to assist facilities with implementation shortly.

It is so ordered that this policy is in effect from March 10, 2020, until rescinded via executive letter.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael McCormick", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Michael McCormick, Interim Director
Aging and People with Disabilities Program
Department of Human Services