



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

**Department of Human Services**

*Safety, Oversight and Quality*

PO Box 14530, Salem, OR 97309

3406 Cherry Ave NE, Salem, OR 97303

Phone: (503) 373-2227

Fax (503) 378-8966

**Ref: NF-20-73 Provider Alert**

**Date:** March 30, 2020

**TO:** Nursing Facilities Providers, Community Based Care:  
Assisted Living, Residential Care, Memory Care Facilities

**FROM:** Safety, Oversight, and Quality

**SUBJECT: Process for ordering COVID-19 Testing in LTC Settings**

This communication is being sent to advise all Long-Term Care Providers (LTC) of the process related to ordering COVID-19 testing in Long-Term Care Facilities.

We all know that residents in vulnerable populations, like those in Long-Term Care settings, are at potentially higher risk for more severe COVID-19 disease, so OHA and DHS would like to ensure access to timely testing in those settings, especially when a confirmed virus breakout has not been previously identified within your facility.

This past weekend (March 28/29, 2020), the local public health authorities (LPHA) were advised via a Health Alert Network (HAN) Alert that now directs LPHA to work with LTC providers to follow the same process. When the LPHA receives a call about a potential case of COVID-19 due to a symptomatic resident or staff member within LTC settings they are now advised to:

- Work with the health care provider of the resident or worker to collect a nasopharyngeal specimen and send it to the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory (OSPHL). The LPHA will notify OHA that a specimen from a high priority person will be sent to OSPHL.
- If there is a cluster of COVID-19 like illness in persons who live or work in an LTC setting, they will work with the provider to collect up to five nasopharyngeal specimens from symptomatic individuals in

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the cohort and send to OSPHL. The LPHA will contact OHA to notify them of the outbreak and that specimens from a COVID-19 like illness outbreak will be sent to OSPHL.

Approval for testing can be submitted via [eCR](#) here:

<https://epiweb.oha.state.or.us/fmi/webd/Memento%20Morbi?homeurl=http://healthoregon.org/howtoreport>. **The healthcare provider ordering the test must be sure to answer “Yes” to “Does the patient work or live in a congregate setting (e.g., LTCF, correctional facility, shelter)” question on the eCR form.**

Currently the OSPHL is processing specimens within one to three days which is faster than most other laboratories. OSPHL is able to provide initial testing to determine if COVID-19 is in an LTC or other congregate setting to help inform infection control practices.

If you are a nursing facility provider and have questions about this alert, please contact the Nursing Facility Licensing Unit at:  
[NFLicensing@state.or.us](mailto:NFLicensing@state.or.us)

If you are a community based care provider and have questions about this alert, please contact the CBC Team at:  
[CBC.TEAM@DHSOHA.STATE.OR.US](mailto:CBC.TEAM@DHSOHA.STATE.OR.US)

For general information about the DHS Office of Safety, Oversight and Quality, visit the DHS Web site at [www.oregon.gov/DHS/](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/).