



Oregon

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NF-22-055 – Provider Alert

Date: October 7, 2022

To: All Nursing Facility Care Providers
All Assisted Living Facility Providers
All Residential Care Facility Providers

From: Aging and People with Disabilities (APD)
Safety, Oversight and Quality Unit (SOQ)

Subject: **Updated COVID-19 Guidance**



Purpose

On September 23, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued updated COVID-19 recommendations for health care facilities, including long-term care facilities. As we transition to implementing long term COVID-19 infection control guidance, the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) will be adopting the CDC and CMS recommendations for healthcare facilities and will be primarily referencing CDC and CMS recommendations as the source of infection control practices, rather than creating separate recommendations for Oregon.

Since there are Oregon specific requirements that remain in place, ODHS is outlining those additional requirements below. ODHS is also providing additional tools and guidance to assist providers in implementing COVID-19 infection control recommendations.

Settings: SOQ has adapted this guidance to include nursing facilities, residential care facilities and assisted living facilities. The objective is to keep safe practice standards as consistent as possible across congregate care settings, while ensuring facilities understand and follow all additional ODHS and OHA rules.

CDC and CMS Guidance

Long term care facilities must follow the CDC and CMS recommendations and any revisions outlined in the following resources, **unless otherwise noted in the section “Other Oregon Requirements that Remain in Effect”**:

- CDC - [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Pandemic.](#)
 - Assisted Living Facilities and Residential Care Facilities must follow the considerations outlined in Section 3 (Setting-specific considerations) of this guidance titled “Nursing Homes.”
- CDC - [Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2.](#)
- CDC - [Strategies to Mitigate Healthcare Personnel Staffing Shortages.](#)
- CMS – [State Operations Manual \(SOM\) Appendix PP: Interpretive Guidelines for Long-Term Care Facilities.](#)
- CMS – [QSO-20-14-NH: Guidance for Infection Control and Prevention of \(COVID-19\) in Nursing Homes.](#)
- CMS – [QSO-20-26-NH: Upcoming Requirements for Notification of Confirmed COVID-19 \(or COVID19 Persons under Investigation\) Among Residents and Staff in Nursing Homes.](#)
- CMS – [QSO-20-29-NH: Interim Final Rule Updating Requirements for Notification of Confirmed and Suspected COVID-19 Cases Among Residents and Staff in Nursing Homes.](#)
- CMS – [QSO-20-31-ALL: COVID-19 Survey Activities, CARES Act Funding, Enhanced Enforcement for Infection Control deficiencies, and Quality Improvement Activities in Nursing Homes.](#)
- CMS – [QSO-20-38-NH: Interim Final Rule \(IFC\), CMS-3401-IFC, Additional Policy and Regulatory Revisions in Response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency related to Long-Term Care \(LTC\) Facility Testing Requirements.](#)
- CMS – [QSO-20-39-NH: Nursing Home Visitation - COVID-19.](#)

Other important resources:

- CDC – [Stay Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines Including Boosters.](#)

- CDC – [Clinical Questions about COVID-19: Questions and Answers.](#)
- CDC – [COVID-19 Integrated County View – Community Transmission.](#)
- CDC – [Protecting Healthcare Personnel.](#)
- CDC – [Symptoms of COVID-19.](#)
- CDC – [Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of N95 Respirators.](#)
- CDC – [Ventilation in Buildings.](#)

Oregon Requirements that Remain in Effect

Nursing facilities, assisted living facilities and residential care facilities must continue to comply with the following OARs:

- [OAR 333-019-1011](#) – *Masking Requirements to Control COVID-19 in Health Care Settings.*
 - “Healthcare setting” includes Nursing Facilities, Assisted Living Facilities and Residential Care Facilities.
- [OAR 333-019-1010](#) – *COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement for Healthcare Providers and Healthcare Staff in Healthcare Settings.*
- [OAR 411-060](#) – *COVID-19 testing in licensed Assisted Living Facilities, Nursing Facilities and Residential Care Facilities.*
 - ODHS is in the process of amending OAR 411-060 to align with the CDC testing recommendations.
 - ODHS is expected to adopt contract tracing or broad-based testing options, however, facilities should continue to utilize broad-based testing when the facility does not have the experience and resources to perform individual contact tracing or should contact tracing efforts fail to control ongoing SARS-CoV-2 transmission. OHA plans to release resources to support facility contact tracing efforts.
- [OAR 411-061](#) – *COVID-19 vaccination reporting requirements for licensed Assisted Living Facilities, Nursing Facilities and Residential Care Facilities.*
 - Long-term care facilities that report the vaccination data through the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) in compliance with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services requirements may, in lieu of reporting this information directly to the OHA, report the information to the OHA through the NHSN.

Additional Tools and Guidance

New Admissions and Readmissions

- Hospitals are not routinely required to test prior to discharge to a long-term care facility unless the prospective resident has signs or symptoms compatible with COVID-19 or has had an exposure to COVID-19, irrespective of vaccination status.
- Additional information can be found in the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) [Best practices for COVID-19 related admissions from hospitals to long-term care facilities](#) (This document is under review by OHA).

COVID-19 Signage Guidance

- Facilities with a case among staff or residents in the previous 14 days shall post signs at all entrances indicating the facility's COVID-19 status in the building.
- Facilities must remind visitors and staff of the following:
 - The importance of remaining up to date with all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses,
 - [Recommendations for personal protective equipment and physical distancing](#), and
 - Any other facility instructions related to visitation.
- Facilities should place signs at room entry for residents in quarantine or isolation, with guidance about appropriate use of personal protective equipment. Additional resources can be found via CDC: [Protecting Healthcare Personnel](#).

Screening

Facilities must continue screening protocols for individuals entering the building, however facilities are not required to have a staff member at the entrance.

Healthcare workers must be permitted to come into the facility as long as they are not subject to a [work exclusion](#) or showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19. Facilities should provide guidance (e.g., posted signs at entrances) about

recommended actions for visitors who have a positive viral test for COVID-19, symptoms of COVID-19, or have had close contact with someone with COVID-19. Visitors with confirmed COVID-19 infection or compatible symptoms should defer non-urgent in-person visitation until they meet CDC criteria for healthcare settings to end isolation. For visitors who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 infection, it is safest to defer non-urgent in-person visitation until 10 days after their close contact if they meet criteria described in CDC healthcare guidance. Facilities may not use vaccination status as a requisite criterion for entering the building.

NOTE: EMS personnel responding to an emergent situation should not be screened so they can attend to an emergency without delay. All facility staff, including individuals providing services under arrangement as well as volunteers, should adhere to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention and must comply with ODHS testing guidance, including OAR 411-060, COVID-19 Testing in Licensed Assisted Living Facilities, Nursing Facilities and Residential Care Facilities.

Resident Admission and Readmission Testing

Facilities cannot require a hospital to test a resident as a condition of admission or readmission. Facilities can develop their own admission and readmission testing protocols which align with CDC recommendations.

For additional information regarding transfers from hospitals to long-term care facilities, please see OHA's ["Best Practices for Hospitals and Long-Term Care Facilities for COVID-19 Related New/Readmissions and Discontinuing Transmission-Based Precautions"](#).

Please note: This document is currently under review by OHA.

Method of Testing Residents and Staff with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19

Facilities can meet the testing requirements through the use of rapid point-of-care (POC) diagnostic testing devices or through arrangement with an offsite laboratory. POC testing is diagnostic testing that is performed at or near the site of resident care. For a facility to conduct these tests with their own staff and equipment, the facility must have, at a minimum, a CLIA Certificate of Waiver. Information on obtaining a CLIA Certificate of Waiver can be found

[here](#). Additionally, more information regarding the use of POC antigen testing devices can be found in the guidance issued by the Oregon Health Authority in [OHA 3249](#).

Of note, at-home/self-test kits are authorized for use by the individual being tested. These tests may only be performed on residents under a CLIA Certificate of Waiver. For additional information regarding the use of self-tests and CLIA applicability, please see this CMS [bulletin with questions and answers](#).

Oregon Testing Regulatory References and Resources:

- ODHS – [OAR 411-060](#) – ODHS testing Oregon Administrative Rules
- OHA – [OHA 3249](#) – OHA Provisional Guidance for Point-of-care Antigen Testing for COVID-19 in Long-term Care Facilities
- OHA – [OHA 3464](#) – Best Practices for Hospitals and Long-Term Care Facilities for COVID-19 Related New/Readmissions and Discontinuing Transmission-Based Precautions (under review)
- CMS – [COVID-19 Nursing Home Data](#) – Nursing Home NHSN Data
- [Local Public Health Authority Directory](#)

COVID-19 Reporting

- If a newly identified resident or staff tests positive or is suspected of having COVID-19, the facility must immediately notify their [Local Public Health Authority](#) and Safety, Oversight and Quality (SOQ). Both agencies must be contacted to ensure precautions are taken for the safety of all residents, staff and visitors of the facility and community. Nursing facilities must also report COVID-19 data to NHSN as required by CMS.
- To report positive or suspected COVID-19 to SOQ, please contact your licensing team at the email box below:
 - NF.licensing@odhsoha.oregon.gov
 - CBC.Team@odhsoha.oregon.gov

Considerations to improve facility ventilation:

- Consider working with HVAC professional before outbreak activity to increase mechanical airflow and filtration.

- When safe to do so, open windows to create cross ventilation. Use mini splits or fans to increase circulation and provide heating or cooling as needed to compensate for open windows. Monitor to ensure safe temperatures.
- When safe to do so, close doors to resident rooms to prevent air exchange with common spaces. If doors must remain open for safety, work with facility engineers to implement strategies to minimize airflow into the hallway.
- Run bathroom fans as often as possible. Consider modifying switches to enable continuous operation independent of lights. Open private bathroom doors when fan is on.
- Utilize portable HEPA filters, particularly in isolation/quarantine rooms or common spaces.
- Rebalance or adjust HVAC systems to increase total airflow to occupied spaces when possible. Remove obstructions away from vent inlets and outlets.
- Clean and maintain filters according to manufacturer recommendations.
- Generate clean-to-less-clean air movement by evaluating and repositioning as necessary, the supply louvers, exhaust air grilles, and/or damper settings. This recommendation is easier to accomplish when the supply and exhaust points are located in a ceiling grid system.
- Additional information available via [CDC Ventilation in Buildings Guidance](#).

If you have any questions about this alert, please email the corresponding program:

- Residential Care and Assisted Living Facilities: CBC.team@odhsoha.oregon.gov
- Nursing Facilities: NF.licensing@odhsoha.oregon.gov

General questions may be sent to: SOQ.LTCInfo@odhsoha.oregon.gov

Oregon Department of Human Services website: www.oregon.gov/DHS/