



## Long Term Care Facility COVID-19 Outbreak Control Recommendations

These recommendations supplement the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) All-Facilities Letters [All Facilities Letters \(ca.gov\)](#) and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Provider Information Network ([CDSS PIN's](#)) and include additional precautions and actions to control a suspected or confirmed outbreak.

**Note: All changes to this document on 6/30/21 are italicized.**

### Definitions for Skilled Nursing or Residential Care Facilities

**Confirmed COVID-19 Outbreak LTCF:**  $\geq 1$  facility-acquired<sup>1</sup> COVID-19 case in a resident.

**Other Reportable Events:**

- $\geq 1$  probable<sup>2</sup> or confirmed COVID-19 case in a resident or Health Care Personnel (HCP)
- or  $\geq 3$  cases of acute illness compatible with COVID-19 in residents with onset within a 72-hour period.<sup>3</sup>

**Clinical Criteria for Probable COVID-19:** at least one of the following symptoms: new or worsening cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, new olfactory/taste disorder(s); **OR** at least two of the following symptoms: fever (measured or subjective), chills, rigors, myalgia, headache, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, or runny nose.

**Epidemiologic linkage:** One or more of the following exposures in the prior 14 days: Close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 disease; Member of a risk cohort as defined by public health authorities during an outbreak. [CDC Case Definitions](#)

**Fully vaccinated:** refers to a person who is:  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine.

**Close Contact:** *within 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period and*

- *HCP not wearing a respirator or face mask.*
- *HCP not wearing eye protection if the person with SARS-CoV-2 infection was not wearing a cloth mask or facemask.*

### Reporting Requirements

<sup>1</sup> Facility-acquired COVID-19 infection in a long-term care resident is defined as a confirmed diagnosis 14 days or more after admission for a non-COVID condition, without an exposure during the previous 14 days to another setting where an outbreak was known or suspected to be occurring.

<sup>2</sup> Probable case is defined as any one of the following: a person meeting clinical criteria AND epidemiologic evidence with no confirmatory laboratory testing performed for COVID-19; a person meeting presumptive laboratory evidence AND either clinical criteria OR epidemiologic evidence; a person meeting vital records criteria with no confirmatory laboratory testing performed for COVID-19.

<sup>3</sup> See CDPH AFL 20-75 for more information <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/AFL-20-75.aspx> See CDC update <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html> 3-29-2021



- Report **initial (i.e., first) confirmed outbreak or reportable event** to the Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD) at (510) 764-7639, Mon-Fri 8:30 am to 5 pm and begin isolation and quarantine of any confirmed/suspected cases. On weekends, call Alameda County Fire Dispatch at (925) 422-7595 and ask to speak to the Public Health Duty Officer on call.
- For **repeat outbreaks** (i.e., already had at least one outbreak in the past), please report to (510) 764-7639 or email [LTCFOutbreak@acgov.org](mailto:LTCFOutbreak@acgov.org). Reports made on weekends will be responded to on Monday (or next business day).
  - o **Do not contact the After-Hours Duty Officer for these reports.** Begin implementing the Outbreak Control Recommendations (including Isolation/Quarantine) immediately.
- Skilled Nursing Facilities** (SNFs) should report outbreak to Licensing and Certification East Bay District Office: (510) 620-3900.
- Residential Care Facilities** (RCFE and ARF) should report to Community Care Licensing and Certification Regional Office: (510) 286-4201 and [CCLASCPOaklandRO@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CCLASCPOaklandRO@dss.ca.gov).
- Complete a [Confidential Morbidity Report LTCF-SNF-RCFE \(CMR\) Form](#) for all resident deaths and residents that test positive. Completed forms should be sent by secure email to your assigned nurse. If you have not yet been assigned to a nurse, send forms by secure email to [LTCFOutbreak@acgov.org](mailto:LTCFOutbreak@acgov.org).
- If an LTCF medical provider/director serves as the ordering provider for testing staff, complete a standard CMR form for staff deaths and staff that test positive: [Confidential Morbidity Report - LTCF Staff](#). Completed forms should be sent by secure email to [covidreport@acgov.org](mailto:covidreport@acgov.org) or by fax to 510-273-3944.
- Complete/update a line list for all **new** cases and with any changes. Submit to ACPHD by secure email to [LTCFOutbreak@acgov.org](mailto:LTCFOutbreak@acgov.org) until instructed otherwise by ACPHD. ACPHD's Line List Template can be downloaded at <https://covid-19.acgov.org/lpcf> à Outbreaks and Reporting.
- Submit a map/floor plan of your facility to ACPHD within 24 hours of reporting the outbreak.
- For **other reportable diseases and contact information**, see [Reportable Communicable Diseases](#)

### Outbreak Control Recommendations

#### Communication

In addition to notifying ACPHD and Licensing & Certification, notify:

- Infection preventionist and Director of Nursing
- Facility administrator
- Medical director
- Health Services Director
- HCP and caregivers who work at the facility
- Primary care provider of residents who:
  - o Test positive for COVID-19
  - o Are a close contact of a resident who tested positive for COVID-19
  - o Reside on a unit where an outbreak is occurring
- Residents, family, and visitors

Distribute an outbreak communication letter to all residents and their families.

Post signs at facility entrance. Post visual alerts instructing residents and staff to report symptoms of COVID-19 to a designated person.

#### Surveillance of Staff and Residents



	<p>Measure temperature and <b>oxygen saturation</b> and assess for symptoms of suspected COVID-19 every shift among all residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Residents in the Red and Yellow zones should be assessed more frequently with vital signs including oxygen saturation (e.g., twice a shift).</b></li> <li>• For residents with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, check for subtle changes in mental status, somnolence, hydration status, and respiratory rate. A change in baseline temperature (up or down) and/or a drop in oxygen saturation should trigger a more thorough assessment. Residents over 60 may present with atypical signs and symptoms such as loss of appetite, confusion, weakness &amp; falls.</li> <li>• Older adults with SARS-CoV-2 infection may not show common symptoms such as fever or respiratory symptoms. Less common symptoms can include new or worsening malaise, headache, or new dizziness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of taste or smell. Additionally, more than two temperatures &gt;99.0°F might also be a sign of fever in this population.</li> <li>• Identification of these symptoms should prompt isolation and further evaluation for SARS-CoV-2 infection.</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html#evaluating-managing">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html#evaluating-managing</a></p>
	<p>Maintain Standard precautions while performing all surveillance activities. See CDC guidance for <a href="#">Using Personal Protective Equipment</a>.</p>
	<p>Institute symptom monitoring and temperature checks of all staff at the facility entrance or within main reception area. See <a href="#">Screening Guidance for Employers</a> &amp; <a href="#">Self-Assessment Guidance for Workers</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclude from entrance any staff presenting with the following symptoms: new or worsening cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever (measured or subjective), chills, rigors, myalgias, headache, sore throat, new or worsening congestion &amp; runny nose, new olfactory and taste disorder(s), nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.</li> <li>• See “Managing Ill Staff &amp; Exposure” section for details on handling ill staff.</li> </ul>
	<p>Monitor and report staff absenteeism due to any suspected COVID-19 symptoms.</p>
<p><b>Diagnostic Testing</b></p>	
	<p>Develop and implement plans to conduct testing at your facility. See guidelines for testing residents and health care personnel in LTCF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Testing Guidelines for Nursing Homes (CDC)</a></li> </ul>
	<p>Follow infection control precautions when collecting nasopharyngeal (NP) and other swabs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patient should be in a single room with door closed.</li> <li>• Minimum number of staff should be in room.</li> <li>• Wear N-95 respirator (or equivalent), eye protection (face shield or goggles), disposable gown and gloves.</li> <li>• Perform hand hygiene immediately before donning and immediately after doffing.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Don and doff in the correct sequence</a> to avoid self-contamination.</li> <li>• For further guidance on proper specimen collection, see CDC guidelines for methods of specimen collection.       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens from Persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Please check with your testing laboratory to confirm the most appropriate specimen,</li> </ul>



	transport medium, etc. for collection.
	Consider testing for additional respiratory viruses, for example, influenza A and B during flu season.
<b>Response-Driven Testing</b>	
	<p>As soon as possible after a COVID-19 positive case is identified in a facility, “response-driven” serial retesting of all residents and HCP who tested negative upon initial baseline testing or during routine screening testing (<i>regardless of vaccination status</i>) should be performed every 3-7 days until no new cases are identified in two or more sequential rounds of testing AND <b>14 days</b> have elapsed since last report of new confirmed or probable cases; the facility may then resume their regular screening testing schedule.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once a resident or HCP tests positive, no additional testing is needed for that individual for 90 days <i>if they remain asymptomatic</i>.</li> <li>• <i>For residents or HCP who develop new symptoms consistent with COVID-19 during the three months after the date of initial symptom onset, if an alternative etiology cannot be identified, then retesting can be considered in consultation with the medical director, infectious disease or infection control experts.</i> <a href="#">AFL 20-53.4</a></li> <li>• Results should be used to immediately implement cohorting of residents and HCP who provide direct patient care. Refer to your mitigation plan strategies for testing and cohorting.</li> <li>• Specimen collection from residents should be performed by facility care staff or contracted service and testing should be performed by the facility’s usual laboratory provider with a preferred turnaround time of 48 hours or less for results.</li> <li>• Staff should ideally be included in the overall facility testing. As an alternative, they can be tested by their health care provider or at <a href="#">community testing sites</a>.</li> <li>• All testing must be ordered by a clinician who will be responsible for informing the patient and arranging for appropriate clinical follow-up.</li> </ul>
	<p>If using a <b>rapid antigen</b> test for response-driven testing of asymptomatic residents and staff <b>during an outbreak</b>, test twice a week and refer to: <a href="#">Alameda County Point of Care Testing Guidance</a> (testing symptomatic AND asymptomatic individuals during an outbreak in a congregate setting when RT-PCR turnaround time is prolonged, page 4). Consult with your assigned LTCF Outbreak Team nurse for more information.</p> <p><b>Also see</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Antigen Test Algorithm for Congregate Living Settings</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Interim Guidance for Antigen Testing for SARS-CoV-2   CDC</a></li> <li>• <i>Requirements for reporting non-positive COVID-19 Antigen results</i> <a href="#">AFL 20-53.4</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Nucleic Acid Amplification Tests (NAATs)</a></li> </ul> <p>(Note: An advantage of Point of Care Antigen Testing is the rapid turn-around time (TAT); but the decrease in accuracy may require PCR confirmation with 48 hours.)</p>
	RCFEs experiencing an outbreak may consult with ACPHD to consider a more targeted testing strategy. This might include focusing testing within an affected unit or building.
	ACPHD offers assistance to coordinate testing but has limited ability to support testing in facilities; contact the Public Health Nurse assigned to your facility outbreak and/or email <a href="mailto:LTCFOutbreak@acgov.org">LTCFOutbreak@acgov.org</a> with requests for assistance.
	Do <u>not</u> send specimens directly to the Alameda County Public Health Laboratory without



approval.

### Resident Placement, Movement Restrictions & Transferring Residents

Create three distinct, cohort areas. These could be a separate wing, unit, or rooms at the end of the hallway:

1. **Red zone:**

- COVID-19 positive **symptomatic** for duration of Isolation period, regardless of their vaccination status
- COVID-19 positive **asymptomatic fully vaccinated** residents should be isolated and observed for development of symptoms while additional evaluation is conducted in consultation with the local health department. [AFL 20-53.4](#)
- COVID-19 positive **asymptomatic unvaccinated or partially vaccinated** for the duration of Isolation period
- Should have dedicated HCP who do not provide care for residents in other cohorts and should have separate break rooms, nurses' stations, and restrooms if possible.

2. **Yellow zone:** COVID-19 unknown status.

- \*Residents recently returned from a hospital with a known outbreak: fully vaccinated or unvaccinated.
- \*Suspected or probable cases pending lab results in fully vaccinated or unvaccinated residents.
- \*\*SNF (Skilled Nursing Facility) residents newly admitted or SNF residents that leave the facility for > 24 hours with no known exposures: unvaccinated
- \*\*Residents with known exposures to COVID: fully vaccinated, unvaccinated or refuse testing.

3. **Green zone:**

- COVID-19 negative
- COVID-19 recovered
- Fully vaccinated new admission
- Readmission of **Green zone** resident with no known exposure.

\*Type of **Yellow** zone should be identified, i.e., an observation/quarantine unit

\*\*Residents with known exposures, residents returning from a hospital with a known outbreak, suspected or probable cases pending lab results should not be placed in the same room as a newly admitted unvaccinated resident with unknown status.

DO NOT MOVE probable or suspected-cases from their rooms within the **Green** or **Yellow** zones unless they receive a laboratory confirmed COVID-19 (+) test. Call your assigned ACPHD outbreak nurse for instructions on moving patients between zones.

Instruct staff on the importance of using separate equipment and fully changing PPE whenever going from one resident to the next to provide care,

*Facilities should consider implementing limitations on communal activities, dining, and salon, podiatry, and other non-essential personal care services. If the outbreak is limited to one area and the green zone residents have not been exposed, you may not need to impose such limitations. This should be decided in consultation with the LTCF Outbreak Nurse.*

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/AFL-20-22.aspx>

Residents in **Yellow** and **Red** zone should stay in their rooms and be served meals in the room. Doors should remain closed if possible.





	Residents who must leave their room should perform hand hygiene, wear a face mask before leaving the room and maintain social distancing.
	Before transferring ANY resident outside of the facility, such as to outpatient appointments, dialysis centers, acute care hospitals, and other facilities, you <b>must</b> use the <a href="#">Alameda County Infection Control Transfer Form</a> to communicate to transport personnel and other HCP <b>accepting the resident that your facility is experiencing a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 outbreak</b> . If the resident is a probable or confirmed COVID-19 case, you must also include symptoms, signs, date of illness onset, laboratory test results, and infection control precautions.
<b>Quarantine (Yellow Zone)</b>	
	Fully vaccinated <b>skilled nursing facility</b> residents who leave the facility for non-essential purposes for > 24 hours (e.g., out to a restaurant or visit family in their home) do not need to quarantine. <i>Unvaccinated and partially vaccinated residents newly admitted to a <b>skilled nursing facility</b> should be quarantined in the <b>Yellow</b> zone for 14 days and be tested before releasing into the <b>Green</b> Zone.</i> <a href="#">AFL 20-22.8</a>
	<i>Skilled nursing residents who leave the facility and have prolonged close contact with SARS-CoV-2 infection should quarantine and be tested immediately and 5-7 days after the exposure regardless of vaccination status.</i> <a href="#">AFL 20-22.8</a> <i>Consider this for all Long-term care facilities.</i> However, CDPH guidance on quarantine recommends that SARS-CoV-2 <b>exposed individuals</b> who reside in a high-risk congregate living setting, <b>quarantine for 14 days</b> . Due to the unknown vaccine effectiveness in the SNF resident population, vaccinated residents should continue to quarantine following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. <a href="#">CDSS PIN 21-17.2 Visitation, Dining, Group Activities, Outings, Admissions &amp; Entertainment</a> <a href="#">AFL 21-08.2 Guidance on Quarantine for Health Care Personnel Exposed to SARS-CoV-2</a>
<b>Transmission-Based Precautions and Other Infection Control Measures</b>	
	Follow PPE guidance from your licensing agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">CDSS PIN 21-12 Resident Isolation and Cohorting, Staffing, PPE and Face Coverings</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">CDPH COVID-19 PPE, Resident Placement/Movement, and Staffing Considerations by Resident Category</a></li> <li>• Include clear and visible signage for PPE donning and doffing and appropriate infection prevention precautions.</li> </ul>



Public Health Department: Main Line (510) 267-8000

COVID-19 Information: (510) 268-2101

California Department of Public Health, Healthcare-Associated Infections Program  
 COVID-19 PPE, Resident Placement/Movement, and Staffing Considerations by Resident Category

Recommendation	COVID Positive Residents (Red Area)	Symptomatic, Suspected COVID, Awaiting Test Results (Yellow PUI, Single Room if Available)***	COVID Exposed Residents (Yellow – Exposed) ***	Newly Admitted Residents Under Observation (Yellow – Observation)***	Residents with No Known Exposure, or COVID Recovered (Green Area)
N95 respirator *	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Facemask *	Only in crisis if N95 not available	Only in crisis if N95 not available	Only in crisis if N95 not available	Only in crisis if N95 not available	Yes
Eye Protection *	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gowns	Yes – Extended use** permitted in supply crisis, except for residents with known multidrug resistant organism (MDRO). – Maintain clean areas on unit where gowns are not worn such as nurses' station.	Yes – Extended use** NOT recommended. – When gowns in short supply, may reserve gown use for when indicated for high contact activity per Enhanced Standard precautions, or may dedicate gown for each resident and keep in room.	Yes – Extended use** NOT recommended. – When gowns in short supply, may reserve gown use for when indicated for high contact activity per Enhanced Standard precautions, or may dedicate gown for each resident and keep in room.	Yes – Extended use** NOT recommended. – When gowns in short supply, may reserve gown use for when indicated for high contact activity per Enhanced Standard precautions, or may dedicate gown for each resident and keep in room.	As needed per Enhanced Standard precautions

\*Extended use may be implemented for facemask (source control), N95 respirator, and eye protection (goggles or faceshield) during supply shortage. Extended use refers to the practice of wearing the same facemask/N95 respirator/goggles/faceshield for repeated close contact encounters with different residents, without removing between patient encounters, typically in a cohort setting. When practicing extended use of N95 respirators, the maximum recommended extended use period is 8–12 hours. Respirators should not be worn for multiple work shifts and should not be reused after extended use. Respirators should be removed and carefully stored in a clean paper bag before activities such as meals, restroom breaks, and other breaks and then re-donned and worn through the remainder of the shift. The respirator must be discarded if at any time it becomes contaminated or does not fit or function correctly.

\*\* Extended use and reuse of gowns can transmit MDRO and should be avoided if possible (i.e., these are crisis strategies). Extended use of gowns refers to the practice of wearing the same the same gown by the same HCP when interacting with more than one resident known to be infected with the same infectious disease when these residents are housed in the same location, only if residents do not have other diagnoses transmitted by contact (e.g., C. difficile, C. auris). If the gown becomes visibly soiled, it must be removed and discarded. When extended use of gowns is practiced, e.g., on a dedicated COVID-19 positive “Red” unit, gowns should not be worn in clean areas on unit, e.g., nurses’ station, clean supply room, breakrooms, etc.

\*\*\*Although residents that are symptomatic with suspected COVID pending test results, COVID exposed residents, and newly admitted residents under observation would be placed in the Yellow status, these residents should be cohorted based on their designation and not placed with residents on Yellow status for different reasons.

All staff, residents who must leave their rooms, and essential visitors at facilities should always cover their nose and mouth with a surgical mask while in the facility. If surgical masks are not available, a clean and dry cloth mask or other cloth covering shall suffice. If cloth coverings are used, they should be laundered after each shift before reuse.

Use a fit-tested N-95 respirator or equivalent when performing Aerosol Generating Procedures. [CDC FAQ re: Aerosol Generating Procedures](#)

HCP should perform hand hygiene before and after donning and doffing personal protective equipment (PPE). Ideally, PPE should be discarded after every contact with every resident if supplies allow.  
 See [Cal/OSHA Interim Guidance on COVID-19 for Health Care Facilities:](#)



	<p><a href="https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/Cal-OSHA-Guidance-for-respirator-shortages.pdf">Severe Respirator Supply Shortages</a> (<a href="https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/Cal-OSHA-Guidance-for-respirator-shortages.pdf">https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/Cal-OSHA-Guidance-for-respirator-shortages.pdf</a>) and <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html">Optimizing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Supplies</a> (<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html</a>).</p>
	<p>“Once PPE supplies and availability return to normal, health care facilities should promptly resume conventional practices” and use their regular vendors as available. <a href="#">CDC PPE Strategy</a></p>
	<p>Identify dedicated HCP to care for residents with COVID-19 and ensure they are fit-tested for an N-95 respirator. Fit-testing of N-95 respirators must be performed at least annually or when there is a change in type of mask used. Ask the nurse assigned to your facility about fit testing options. <a href="#">Cal/OSHA enforces CCR, Title 8, Section 5144</a> which includes a requirement for an employer to develop and implement a written respiratory protection program with required worksite-specific procedures and elements for required respirator use, including, but not limited to, respirator Fit Testing. <a href="#">PIN-21-10</a></p>
	<p>Educate HCP on hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, cough etiquette, and document training activities. (Consider use of Glo Germ<sup>R</sup> for training of hand hygiene.)</p>
	<p>Ensure all HCP are familiar with Standard, Droplet, and Contact precautions, as well as eye and respiratory protection, and document training activities.</p>
	<p>Verify all HCP can demonstrate competency in proper PPE donning and doffing procedures, and document competency assessments. <a href="#">CDC PPE donning and doffing procedures and signage</a></p>
	<p>Conduct ongoing monitoring of compliance with hand hygiene and PPE procedures, and provide on-the-spot correction as needed.</p>
	<p>Ensure an adequate supply of facemasks, N-95 respirators (in size and model for fit-tested staff), face shields/goggles, gowns, and gloves. Place supplies in all areas where patient care is provided.</p>
	<p>Ensure an adequate supply of alcohol-based hand rub (at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol) and that it is easily accessible both inside and outside every patient room. Ensure that hand-washing stations are easily accessible and equipped with soap and paper towels.</p>
	<p>Cohort HCP caring for residents with COVID-19. Do not allow these staff to interact with other residents or the staff who care for residents without COVID-19. Cohorted HCP staff should not take breaks with other staff. Provide separate locker rooms, bathrooms and/or break areas if possible; otherwise, consider staggering the use of these areas and clean and disinfect thoroughly after each use.</p>
	<p>Ensure all <i>unvaccinated</i> HCP practice source control measures and social distancing in the break room and other common areas (i.e., HCP wear a facemask and sit more than 6 feet apart while on break).</p>
	<p>Whenever possible, bundle care &amp; treatment activities to minimize entries into resident room (e.g., having clinical staff clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces when in the room), and minimize the overall number of HCP assigned to the COVID-19 positive cohort.</p>
	<p>Use single-use equipment for residents with COVID-19 infection whenever possible; otherwise, dedicate reusable medical equipment to residents with COVID-19 infection (e.g., thermometers, stethoscopes, Hoyer lifts, medication carts, wheelchairs) and clean/disinfect between each use.</p>





### Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions for COVID-19 Recovered Residents (Transferring Out of **Red** Zone)

Discontinuation of transmission-based precautions should be determined by using a time and symptom-based strategy for patients with lab-confirmed or suspected COVID-19 as follows:

1. For residents who have never been symptomatic, transmission-based precautions may be discontinued 10 days from date of COVID-19 (+) test.
2. For residents who were symptomatic and **NOT** severely immunocompromised, discontinue Transmission-based precautions after at least 24 hours have passed since last fever (without fever-reducing medications), **and** improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and** at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
3. For residents with severe or **critical illness or who are severely immunocompromised**, Transmission-based precautions may be discontinued after at least 24 hours have passed since last fever (without fever-reducing medications), **and** improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and** at least 10-20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Patients who are **severely immunocompromised** may produce replication-competent virus beyond 20 days after symptom onset or, for those who were asymptomatic throughout their infection, the date of their first positive viral test. Consultation with infectious diseases specialists is recommended. Use of a test-based strategy for determining when Transmission-Based Precautions may be discontinued could be considered in these rare situations.

This category includes patients under cancer treatment, bone marrow or organ transplant recipients, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, on immunosuppressant medications such as prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications, and patients who were critically ill with COVID-19 (intubated and/or in ICU). For severely immunocompromised definition per CDC, see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-hospitalized-patients.html>

### Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions for COVID-19 Exposed Residents (Transferring Out of **Yellow** Zone)

Transmission-based precautions and use of an N-95 respirator may be discontinued after two consecutive weeks of response-driven testing reveal no positive test results AND 14 days have elapsed since last report of new confirmed or suspected cases. Consult with your LTCF Outbreak Nurse to determine end point of response driven testing.

When transferring out of the **Yellow** zone, residents should remain on [Enhanced Standard Precautions](#) if they have another indication (for example, colonized with multidrug resistant organism [MDRO], have an active *C. difficile* infection, etc.).

### Environmental Cleaning

Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces and shared resident care equipment with EPA-registered, healthcare-grade disinfectants. See the EPA Pesticide Registration List: N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 for products with label claims against COVID-19.



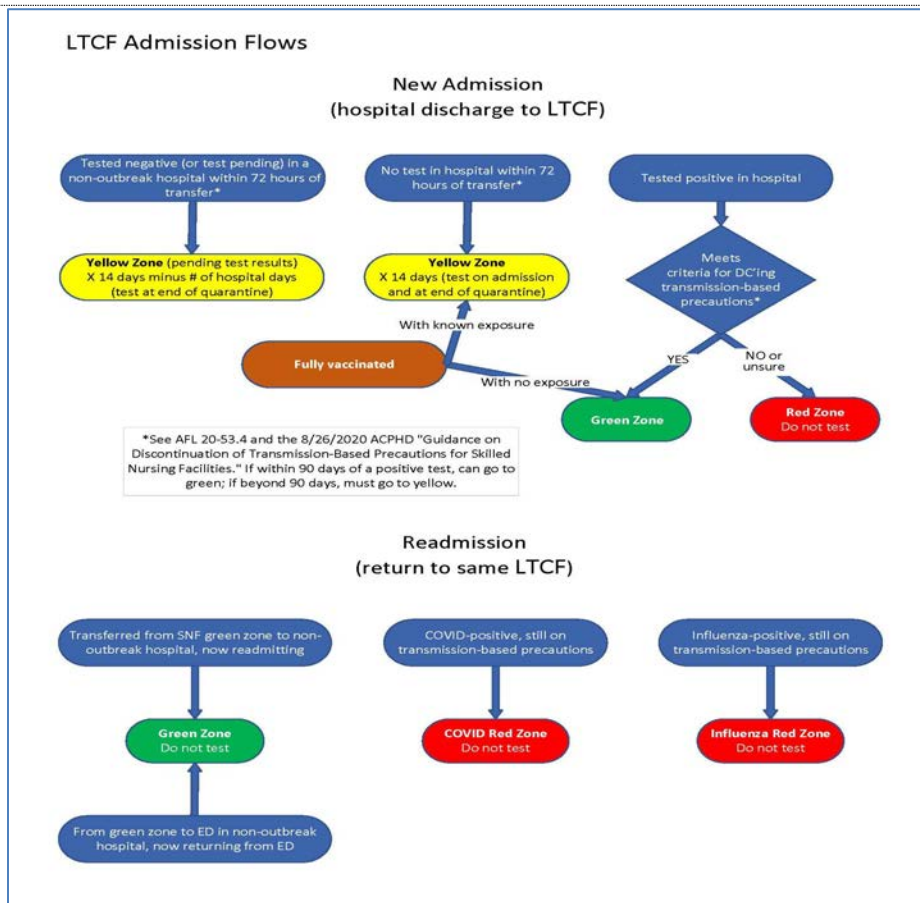
	<p><a href="https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2">https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2</a>. When dealing with <i>Candida auris</i>, <i>C. difficile</i> and other resistant organisms refer to other EPA list disinfectants (verify that these are effective against SARS-CoV-2 as well).</p>
	<p>Increase frequency of environmental cleaning to at least twice per shift and whenever surfaces or equipment are soiled or contaminated with body fluids or respiratory secretions. Greater frequency of cleaning will also be needed for any areas where someone must take off their mask to eat or drink.</p>
	<p>Perform <b>TERMINAL CLEANING</b> when an infected patient (COVID, other infectious agent and/or MDRO) is moved out of one room to another or discharged from the facility.  <a href="#">Environmental Cleaning Procedures</a>   <a href="#">Environmental Cleaning in RLS</a>   <a href="#">HAI</a>   <a href="#">CDC</a></p>
	<p>Educate Environmental Services staff on proper hand hygiene, PPE donning &amp; doffing procedures &amp; appropriate cleaning and disinfectant contact times. Document training.</p>
	<p>Consider placing EPA-registered disinfectant wipes on or next to frequently used equipment so they are easily accessible for all staff to use.</p>
<p><b>Managing Staff Illness &amp; Exposure</b></p>	
	<p>In general, during an outbreak in a LTCF, all HCP are considered potentially exposed and may continue working regardless of their vaccination status as long as they remain asymptomatic and are serially tested as part of facility-wide outbreak response testing.  <a href="#">AFL 21-08.2</a></p>
	<p>Instruct HCP who develop any symptoms suspicious for COVID-19 while at work to immediately stop work, alert their supervisor, leave the facility, and self-isolate at home. These HCP should be tested immediately for COVID-19 if possible, regardless of vaccination status.</p>
	<p>Instruct HCP who develop symptoms for COVID-19 before work to report these to their supervisor. Advise HCP to see their Primary Care Physician to determine if symptoms are due to COVID-19 or another diagnosis before returning to work.</p>
	<p><b>Instructions for HCP who test positive for COVID-19:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated</b> HCP that test positive and are <b>asymptomatic</b> should be excluded from work for 10 days from the date of their positive test, as long as they have not subsequently developed symptoms, in which case the symptoms-based criteria for discontinuing isolation should be applied.</li> <li>• <b>Fully vaccinated</b> HCP who test positive and are <b>asymptomatic</b> should be excluded from work and observed for development of symptoms while additional evaluation is conducted in consultation with the local health department. <a href="#">AFL 20-53.4</a></li> <li>• HCP that test positive and are <b>symptomatic (regardless of their vaccination status)</b> should be excluded from work for 10 days from the date of their symptom onset.</li> </ul>
	<p>You <b>MUST</b> issue work exclusion letters to all staff who test COVID-19 (+). Use the letter sent to you with the outbreak control recommendations provided by your assigned LTCF Outbreak Nurse. <a href="#">ACPHD Work Exclusion Letter</a></p>
	<p>For return-to-work criteria for employees, follow current guidance under “Criteria for Returning</p>



	to Work after Isolation or Quarantine” on our website: <a href="#">ACPHD Worker-resources</a>
	HCP who are <u>not</u> fully vaccinated and who experience an exposure should be excluded from work for 14 days. During critical staffing shortages, HCP can return to work after day 7 if they have a negative PCR test on or after day 5 from the exposure and remain asymptomatic. <a href="#">AFL 21-08.2</a> <a href="#">HOO 20-06i</a>
	Fully vaccinated HCP who experience a high-risk exposure but remain asymptomatic do not need to quarantine or be excluded from work but should not care for immunocompromised residents.
	During critical staffing shortages, fully vaccinated SNF HCP with a higher risk exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 may continue to work onsite during their post-exposure period if they meet all of the following criteria per updated CDC guidance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The staff are <b>fully vaccinated</b> (i.e., ≥2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or ≥2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine).</li> <li>• They remained <b>asymptomatic</b> since the current COVID-19 exposure.</li> </ul> HCP meeting the above criteria would not be required to quarantine outside of work. HCP who does not meet the above criteria should continue to follow current quarantine guidance after a higher risk exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. <a href="#">HOO 20-06i</a>
	<b>Work restrictions for fully vaccinated HCP populations with higher-risk exposures should still be considered for HCP who have underlying immunocompromising conditions</b> (e.g., organ transplantation, cancer treatment), which might impact level of protection provided by the COVID-19 vaccine.
	When a COVID-19 positive HCP returns to work they should restrict contact with <b>severely immunocompromised patients</b> until 14 days after illness onset. This includes patients under cancer treatment, bone marrow or organ transplant recipients, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, on immunosuppressant medications such as prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications, and patients who were critically ill with COVID-19 (intubated and/or in ICU).
	Do <b>NOT</b> require a negative test or doctor’s note for return to work
	If staffing shortages arise, consult with ACPHD about mitigation strategies. In limited situations facilities may be authorized to have asymptomatic (never symptomatic) HCP with confirmed COVID-19 return to work before full Return to Work Criteria are met. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These HCP should provide direct care only for residents with confirmed COVID-19, preferably in a cohort setting.</li> <li>• These HCP are restricted from contact with severely immunocompromised patients.</li> <li>• A separate break room &amp; bathroom should be provided.</li> </ul>
	Plan for worker absences. Do not require a healthcare provider’s note for employees who are sick to validate their illness.
	Facilities must avoid as much as possible using employees who have worked at another Licensed Facility or Other Agency in the past 14 days, while maintaining adequate staffing needs of the facility. If this is unavoidable then consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask HCP who arrive directly from another facility to change scrubs or uniform prior to entering your facility.</li> <li>• Maintain consistency of assignments as much as possible (same registry staff caring for the same residents in the same cohort unit).</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruct HCP who work at multiple facilities to notify all other employers that they are working at a facility that is currently experiencing an outbreak.</li> <li>• Encourage HCP tested routinely at another facility to share these results with all other employers or to participate in routine surveillance testing at this facility.</li> </ul>
	<p>Facilities shall keep a daily log of employees present, identifying any other facilities they have worked at in the previous 14 days. That log shall be made available to local health department if requested.</p>
	<p><b>Travel Guidance:</b> <a href="#">CDC travel guidance</a></p>
<p><b>Closure, Admissions and Re-admissions</b></p>	
	<p>Consult with medical director and ACPHD to determine if the facility should temporarily suspend new admissions during a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 outbreak. If recommended, the duration of suspension to new admissions will be determined for each situation individually. The effectiveness of the infection control measures implemented and the availability of a separate, unaffected building or unit to receive new admissions may be considered. <a href="#">AFL 20-87</a></p> <p><u>Other Criteria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Acceptable staffing levels</u></li> <li>• <u>Adequate supply of PPE</u> <a href="#">CDC Burn Rate Calculator</a></li> <li>• <u>Appropriate cohort zones</u></li> <li>• <u>Following applicable testing strategies – first round of testing has been completed and results have been received.</u></li> <li>• <u>Provide care safely without putting existing residents at risk.</u></li> </ul>
	<p><b><i>Covid-19 Positive Admissions and Re-admissions:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities must develop plans for managing new admissions and providing care for residents with COVID-19 who require Transmission-based precautions in a <b>Red</b> zone, while still maintaining the capacity to provide care safely for other residents. <u>A negative test result is not required for admission.</u></li> <li>• Hospitalized patients with COVID-19 should be discharged when they no longer require the level of care provided in an acute care setting. Hospital discharge and admission or re-admission to a facility should not be delayed or prevented due to the COVID-19 status of the patient. Facilities should be prepared to accept and care for COVID-19 (+) patients and provide care <b>safely without putting existing residents at risk.</b></li> <li>• For new or returning residents who were hospitalized for COVID-19 and are clinically ready for discharge from the hospital, implement Transmission-based precautions including an N-95 respirator (or equivalent) and place resident in a single room in the <b>Red</b> zone until they qualify for discontinuation of precautions. If a single room is not available, residents with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 may be cohorted in the same room.</li> </ul>
	<p>Please see the schematic below for guidance on accepting transfers from acute care hospitals to skilled nursing facilities</p>



**Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated residents:**

- All new admissions should be quarantined in single rooms or a separate observation area (Yellow zone) for a period of 14 days. If the resident was not tested for COVID-19 in the 72 hours prior to admission then test upon admission, and test again on day 14. If negative, release from quarantine. See [CDPH AFL 20-87](#) for more information.
- *Testing and 14-day quarantine are recommended for residents readmitted after hospitalization or who leave the SNF for more than 24 hours, as well as for residents who leave the SNF for ambulatory care (e.g., emergency department, outpatient procedures, dialysis, or other clinic visits) when there is suspected or confirmed COVID-19 transmission at the outside facility. (Consult with your nurse investigator regarding outbreak status at sending Hospital and/or the sending hospital infection preventionist) [AFL 20-53.4](#)*

**Fully vaccinated residents admissions and re-admissions:** "Testing and quarantine is no longer required for residents who are being admitted to a post-acute care facility if they are fully vaccinated and have not had prolonged close contact with someone with SARS-CoV-2 infection in the prior 14 days; local health departments may continue to recommend quarantine for newly admitted residents from a hospital where there is known SARS-CoV-2 transmission."

[AFL 20-53.4](#) [AFL-21-08](#) [PIN 21-17.2](#)





## Managing Family, Visitors, and Volunteers in a COVID-19 Outbreak

**Any visitor entering the facility, regardless of their vaccination status, must adhere to the following:**

- Be screened *by a designated staff member* for fever and COVID-19 symptoms *within the last 24 hours*, wear appropriate well-fitting face mask and adhere to physical distancing of at least 6 feet and perform hand hygiene when entering the facility and when leaving the resident's room.
- Screen for close contact with anyone with COVID-19 symptoms or COVID-19 positive.
- If personal protective equipment (PPE) is required for contact with the resident due to quarantine or COVID positive isolation status (including fully vaccinated visitors) or other conditions such as MDRO (multi-drug resistant organism) colonization, it must be donned and doffed according to instruction by HCP. (Visitation in **Red** zone is for compassionate care visitation only)
- If a visitor has COVID-19 symptoms or has been in close contact with a confirmed positive case, they must reschedule their visit.

**Visitors who are unable to adhere to these core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention should not be permitted to visit or should be asked to leave.**

### **Visitation Guidelines:**

- **Fully vaccinated visitors of fully vaccinated **green** zone residents** may visit without face masks and physical distancing with the resident and include physical contact (e.g., a brief hug, holding hands, assisting with feeding or grooming) while in the resident's room. A fully vaccinated visitor **should** present their CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card indicating their name, the product name/manufacturer, and date of dose(s) to the licensee or facility staff at the time of screening [PIN 21-17.2](#)
- Visitors can access a digital copy of their COVID-19 vaccine record at <https://myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov/>
- If vaccination status cannot be determined, the safest practice is for all participants to wear a well-fitting face covering (except while eating or drinking).
- Visitation in Isolation **Red** zone is for compassionate visitation only.
- Visits for residents who share a room should be conducted in a separate indoor space or with the roommate not present in the room (if possible), regardless of the roommate's vaccination status.
- Safe, outdoor visitation may continue during an outbreak regardless of tier and is preferred because it poses a lower risk of transmission due to increased space and airflow.
- Visitation may be allowed in large communal spaces where 6-foot distancing is possible between resident-visitor groups and staff for **green** zone residents only. **Fully vaccinated visitors of fully vaccinated residents** may visit without face masks and physical distancing if 6-foot physical distancing is maintained between other groups and staff. Visitors should be informed about the outbreak in order to make informed decisions about visitation. This should be decided in consultation with the LTCF



*Outbreak Nurse.*

- For in-room visits, visitors may only go the resident's room and not to other areas of the facility.
- Facilities should limit the number of visits per resident at one time and limit the total number of visitors in the facility at one time (based on the size of the building and physical space). *Visits should be scheduled for at least 30 minutes.*
- Facilities should consider scheduling visits for a specified length of time to help ensure as many residents as possible are able to receive visitors.

[AFL-20-22](#) and [PIN 21-17.2](#)

**Exemptions for Healthcare workers including Volunteers and Nursing Students:**

- *Healthcare workers: Facilities should follow [CDC guidelines](#) for limiting access to the facility to healthcare workers. Healthcare workers, including those from the local public health offices, should be permitted to come into the facility if they meet the [CDC guidelines for healthcare workers](#). For purposes of this AFL, health care workers include employees, consultants, contractors, **volunteers**, and caregivers who provide care and services to residents on behalf of the facility, and **students** in the facility's nurse aide training programs or from affiliated academic institutions.*
- **Students:** *Students obtaining their clinical experience as part of an approved nurse assistant, vocational nurse, registered nurse, pharmacy, social work or other healthcare training program should be permitted to come into the facility if they meet the [CDC guidelines for healthcare workers](#). **Students** entering the facility routinely must participate in the facility wide screening testing. [AFL 20-22.8](#)*

**See Below for Visitation/Outings/Admissions per Licensing Agency**

CDPH SNFs and ICFs	CDSS RCFEs, AL, B&C
Allow indoor visitation even if LTCF is in outbreak and completing response driven testing	Allow indoor visitation even if LTCF is in outbreak and completing response driven testing
<b>Indoor in-room visitation is allowed for residents who are COVID negative or COVID-recovered AND residents in quarantine (Green and Yellow Zone)</b>	<b>Indoor in-room visitation is only allowed only for residents who are COVID negative or COVID-recovered (Green Zone only)</b>
Compassionate Care visitation allowed in all zones	Compassionate Care visitation allowed in all zones
<b>Fully vaccinated new admissions do not need to quarantine if they have not had prolonged close contact with someone with SARS-CoV-2 infection within the prior 14 days. Unvaccinated have to quarantine</b>	<b>New admissions do not need to quarantine if they test negative prior to admission and if they have not had close contact with someone with COVID-19 in the prior 14 days</b>
<b>Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated visitors and residents should wear well-fitting face masks and maintain 6-ft physical distancing during their visit</b>	<b>If a resident is fully vaccinated and the visitor is not fully vaccinated, the resident can choose to have close contact (including touch) with their visitor while both wear a well-fitting face covering, whether indoors or outdoors</b>
<b>Residents who leave the facility and have prolonged close contact with SARS-CoV-2</b>	<b>Residents returning to the facility from outings should quarantine for 14 days to a single room (if</b>



***infection should quarantine for 14 days and be tested immediately and 5-7 days after the exposure regardless of vaccination status***

[AFL 22.8](#) [HOO-20-06j](#)

***available) if the resident is symptomatic or if the resident is asymptomatic and had close contact with a person who is positive for COVID-19, regardless of their vaccination status***

[PIN 21-17.2](#)

### Assess Outbreak Control Measures

If new cases continue to be identified, facility leadership and ACPHD should review practices, obstacles to fully implementing control measures, and additional actions.

ACPHD LTCF Outbreak surveillance for new cases will continue until two consecutive weeks of response-driven testing reveal no positive test results AND 14 days have elapsed since last report of new confirmed or probable cases. Certain exceptions may apply.

### Additional resources:

- ACPHD [COVID-Influenza-like-Illness \(C-ILI\) Guidance](#)
- ACPHD [Fit-Testing Resources](#)
- ACPHD [COVID-19 Long Term Care Facility Webpage](#)
- CDPH [COVID-19 Webpage](#)
- CDC [Nursing Homes and Long-Term Care](#)
- CDC [Infection Control Training Modules](#)
- CDC PPE [Burn Rate Calculator](#)
- CDC Duration of Isolation and Precautions for Adults with COVID-19: [Ending Isolation](#)
- CDC (Interim Guidance): [Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions](#)
- [CDC donning and doffing procedure and signage](#)
- [CDC YouTube-How to Safely Take Off PPE](#)
- [CDC YouTube-How to Safely Put on PPE](#)
- [CAHF YouTube-Creating Airborne Infection Isolation Rooms \(AIIR\) for Long-Term Care](#)
- [CAHF YouTube-Understanding the Effects of Wildfire Smoke in the Long-Term Care setting](#)
- [CDSS PIN 21-23-ASC Quarantine and Isolation Guidance 4/20/2021](#)
- [CDSS PIN 21-17.2-ASC Visitation, Communal Dining, Group Activities, Non-essential Services, Outings, New Admissions and Entertainment 5/14/2021](#)
- [AFL-21-08.2](#) Guidance on Quarantine for HCP Exposed to SARS-CoV-2 3/23/2021
- [AFL 20-53.4](#) Mitigation Plan Recommendations for Testing of HCP and Residents at SNF 6/7/2021
- [AFL 20-22.8](#) Guidance for Limiting the Transmission of COVID-19 in Long-Term Care Facilities