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To Agency Regulated Health Care Providers:

The Agency for Health Care Administration is committed to ensuring the safety and security of all Floridians, especially our most vulnerable citizens residing in health care facilities. The Atlantic hurricane season begins on June 1, so we are asking you to act quickly to ensure your hurricane preparedness plans are in order.

Please verify contracts, confirm arrangements for services and evacuation plans and take action to modify your plans to address COVID-19 risks for your residents and others. If the facility expects to have any gaps or needs during an evacuation, it is vital to let your County Emergency Management know as soon as possible. Below is a checklist of items for consideration.

Confirm your evacuation locations remain viable.

- Ensure you have confirmed agreements with your receiving facility (evacuation destination) as of May 1, 2021, to verify the agreements remain viable.**
- Will the destination you have planned allow isolation (private rooms) and/or grouping of any COVID-19 positive cases you may have at the time of evacuation with dedicated staff?
- Have you considered sending your COVID-19 positive residents to a separate location with your dedicated staff to allow appropriate separation?
- Have you made plans for alternative options if your original evacuation sites cancel at the last minute? Alternative options may include facilities such as a hotel, church or school. Consider these options now. If you choose an alternative evacuation site, define all the arrangements you will need to accommodate including the need to transport beds, supplies, equipment, PPE and others. Determine the emergency power options at the site including generator support and cooling equipment.

Confirm your transportation plans.

- Confirm transportation including arrangements for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 residents with the transportation provider.**
- How will you handle the transportation of any COVID-19 cases? How will you ensure residents with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 do not share transportation with non-COVID-19 residents?
- Have you confirmed agreements with your transportation providers for an evacuation as of May 1, 2021, to ensure the agreements remain viable?

Evaluate timing of evacuation.

- Will changes to your evacuation plans result in earlier movement of residents than usual?
- If you have a plan to move confirmed or suspected COVID-19 positive residents to a different location than the rest of your residents, do these residents and their dedicated staff need to move sooner?



Considerations for evacuee receiving facilities.

- If you are a receiving facility, ensure you can accommodate residents who will evacuate to your facility.
- Are you able to group confirmed or suspected COVID-19 positive residents from others and provide proper space for social distancing?
- During a power outage will your cooled space (generator supported) support your residents as well as evacuees?
- How will grouping residents and evacuees impact your use of this cooled space?

Ensure emergency power and cooling devices are in place.

- Evaluate your generator and cooling device support.
- Confirm any re-fueling arrangements for generators remain intact.
- Can you maintain isolation and distancing requirements with your emergency power plans?

Review Infection Prevention and Control Plans.

- Ensure you have appropriate PPE supplies to take in an evacuation to include all PPE needed for Standard Precautions and residents on any Transmission- based precautions (contact, droplet, etc.).
- Include the PPE and means for disposal (trash cans, bags, etc.) and hand hygiene supplies.
- Facilities with COVID-19 positive cases must continue to follow CDC PPE recommendations.
- Facilities with no COVID-19 positive cases must continue to follow CDC PPE recommendations, ensure residents and staff continue to wear masks, and the staff wear gloves when providing care.

Assess onsite supplies.

- Ensure onsite supplies for sheltering in place for an extended period of at least 72 hours.
- Given the ability for facilities to shelter in place due to generator support, it is essential to review your sheltering plans and secure sufficient amounts of food, water, and other necessary supplies to support your sheltering plans.

Evaluate the viability of hurricane shelters.

- Generally, no licensed health care facilities should plan to take residents to an emergency shelter during an evacuation. Each facility must have agreements with an appropriate location for evacuations approved by the local emergency operation officials. However, in some cases, small facilities have an approved plan to evacuate residents and staff to an emergency shelter.
- If a small assisted living facility or adult family care home has an approved CEMP plan to go to a shelter for evacuation, other options should be considered immediately, and alternative arrangements made to limit exposure to others. Please contact your county emergency management officials to discuss options.

Review and update the Emergency Status System (ESS).

- **Review entries for evacuation location and transportation to ensure current arrangements are entered.**
- **Enter and verify emergency generator information including contact information for appropriate plant management staff.**

- **Verify current facility contacts and phone numbers/emails. Make sure all mobile phone numbers are accurate and reflect the current administrator's information.**

Bolded items must be completed by your facility. Following your assessment, your facility is required to immediately list the changes you have made to your plan to accommodate COVID-19 and report these modifications to your local Emergency Management Agency: <https://www.floridadisaster.org/counties/>

New this year, the Agency has launched an updated **Generator Status dashboard**. This platform is hosted on AHCA's website and focuses on the availability of onsite generators and full generator compliance. The dashboard provides information about emergency power plan compliance, onsite visits by Agency surveyors and offers an interactive map allowing users to click on a specific county to review generator status per facility. Visit [AHCA.MyFlorida.com/generatordashboard](https://www.fhca.com/generatordashboard) to learn more.

We have also created printable posters and handouts to assist you with preparing for Atlantic hurricane season. [Click here to access these resources.](#)

Sincerely,



Kimberly Smoak, Interim Deputy Secretary
Division of Health Quality Assurance