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## Long-Term Care Facilities Transfers and Testing Updates

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### Accepting Patients into Long-Term Care Facilities

Unless a facility is under an AHCA moratorium prohibiting admissions, facilities are able to admit and readmit residents who are COVID-negative even if the facility has other residents who are COVID-positive as long as the positive residents are appropriately isolated in accordance with CDC guidelines. There is no requirement that facilities must be COVID free for a certain number of days before being able to admit or readmit a resident who is not COVID-positive. A facility may only admit a resident who is COVID-positive if they are able to safely isolate that resident and adhere to infection control standards.

### Coordinating Transfer of COVID-19 Positive Cases from a Long-term Care Facility

Nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and other residential health care settings are required to provide advance notice of COVID-19 status for any patient/resident prior to transfer and transportation. It remains critical to make early arrangements for appropriate transfer to avoid the spread of COVID-19 and allow for coordination of care. There are several [designated COVID-19 facilities](#) and units that may be appropriate to accept residents directly from your facility if they do not require hospitalization. ***If your community has designated a process to coordinate transfer to hospitals, ensure you are utilizing this process for transfers to obtain the most appropriate care and location for COVID-19 patients. In some areas of the state, these transfer procedures are designed to minimize any one hospital receiving a disproportionate number of transfers.***

### Previously Positive Residents – Testing

Once a person known to have COVID-19 is determined to have recovered and remain asymptomatic, continued testing for COVID-19 may continually show as positive even though the person is not shedding the virus (contagious). For this reason, it is not recommended to continue to retest positive residents after they have been medically cleared for COVID-19. For more information, please see CDC Link- [Duration of Isolation and Precautions for Adults with COVID-19](#).

### **Department of Health Visits**

The Department of Health is working with the local County Health Departments and Emergency Medical Service providers to visit long-term care facilities. The primary goal of these assessments is to assist long-term care facilities (nursing homes, assisted living facilities and intermediate care facilities for the developmentally disabled) with improvements in their ongoing response and preparedness for the COVID-19 pandemic and to document any unmet needs. The Department will use data collected from these assessments to provide assistance to facilities in areas of PPE or staffing shortages. Additional identified needs may include infection prevention and education training.

These assessments will begin on July 21, 2020, and continue until an assessment has been completed at all long-term care facilities. Each visit should last 30 minutes to one hour. Assessment teams shall provide identification and wear appropriate PPE prior to entering the facility. Your cooperation with these assessments is appreciated. Please email [StateESF8.Planning@flhealth.gov](mailto:StateESF8.Planning@flhealth.gov) if you have any questions related to these assessments.

### **Curative COVID Testing – Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities**

#### **Documentation of COVID-19 Recovery for Staff**

Long-term care facility staff may also follow CDC guidance for return to work for symptom-based, or time-based strategy for asymptomatic staff.

For the purposes of the Emergency Staff Testing Rule, staff who are previously positive are exempt from biweekly testing if they can provide medical documentation of recovery. Medical documentation may be, but is not limited to, test results and health care practitioner statements related to the current status of symptoms and duration since onset or resolution of symptoms.

### **Next Round of Curative Testing**

The second-round test kits will be mailed to nursing homes and assisted living facilities by Monday, July 20. Please look for receipt by Wednesday, July 22. These kits should enable staff testing for two more biweekly cycles.

### **Curative Test Results for Staff**

As facilities receive results of the recent Curative testing for nursing home and ALF staff, please ensure you are monitoring results in the Curative Portal several times each day. When COVID-positive staff results are reported it is essential that you immediately remove staff from the facility, address any staffing gaps, and report positive cases to the county health department.

### **Indeterminant Test Results**

If a person tested through Curative receives an indeterminate result, the facility should review the Curative instructions for proper sample collection and immediately re-test the person: proper sample collection, logged/scanned into Curative software, and mailed to Curative lab for processing. Please check the Curative software for results frequently, and contact Curative if you have any questions.

### **New Hires**

If a new staff person is hired between biweekly testing cycles, the facility may utilize a Curative test kit, direct the collection sample, log and scan into the software, and mail the properly labeled sample to the Curative lab for processing. This sample may be mailed separately from the biweekly shipping to Curative but should be combined with other new hires where practical. Please check the Curative software for results frequently. Facilities are expected to obtain test results for new hires prior to allowing entry to the facility.

### **Sending Test Samples to Curative**

When collecting staff samples for Curative testing, you must enter the staff/testing details into the Curative software prior to collecting and mailing samples to ensure you receive timely results. Please ensure the package being mailed includes the facility name.

### **Do Not Use Curative for Resident Testing**

Curative tests are provided for staff testing to comply with the emergency rules and should not be used for resident testing. If you have a resident who requires testing, please contact the resident's health care provider. You may also contact your local County Health Department for assistance.

for symptomatic residents or those who were exposed to a positive staff person.

### **Resources**

For updates on AHCA alerts and resources, visit the AHCA COVID-19 webpage at: [http://ahca.myflorida.com/covid-19\\_alerts.shtml](http://ahca.myflorida.com/covid-19_alerts.shtml).

If you require additional assistance and questions regarding the Emergency Status System (ESS), please contact your AHCA licensing unit during normal business hours:

Long Term Care Services Unit at 850-412-4303 or [LTCStaff@ahca.myflorida.com](mailto:LTCStaff@ahca.myflorida.com)

Assisted Living Unit at 850-412-4304 or [assistedliving@ahca.myflorida.com](mailto:assistedliving@ahca.myflorida.com)

*The Agency for Health Care Administration is committed to better health care for all Floridians. The Agency administers Florida's Medicaid program, licenses and regulates more than 44,000 health care facilities and 53 health plans, and publishes health care data and statistics at [www.FloridaHealthFinder.gov](http://www.FloridaHealthFinder.gov). Additional information about Agency initiatives is available via [Facebook \(AHCAFlorida\)](#), [Twitter \(@AHCA\\_FL\)](#) and [YouTube \(/AHCAFlorida\)](#).*