



RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

MARY C. MAYHEW
SECRETARY

[Home](#) | [About Us](#) | [Medicaid](#) | [Licensure & Regulation](#) | [Report Fraud](#)

July 16, 2020

Long-term Care Testing Clarification

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 at long-term care and residential facilities, the Agency for Health Care Administration issued [Emergency Rule 59AER20-6](#). This rule replaces the previous Emergency Rule 59AER20-01 and provides further clarity to hospitals and long-term care facilities about clinical decision making during the discharge of residents.

A hospital is prohibited from discharging any resident who has tested positive for COVID-19 or is exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 to any long-term care facility until the resident has been cleared for discharge using either a test-based strategy or a symptom-based strategy, unless the receiving facility has a dedicated wing, unit, or building with dedicated staff to accept the COVID-19 positive resident.

Under the symptom-based strategy, the long-term care facility resident must meet the following criteria:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and
- Improvement in respiratory symptoms; and
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Under the test-based strategy, the long-term care facility resident must have:

- Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications
- Improvement in respiratory symptoms; and
- Two consecutive negative test results separated by 24 hours. The first by an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay RT-PCR test and the second by either an FDA Emergency

Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay RT-PCR test or an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 antigen test.

Individuals who have not tested positive for COVID-19 and who are not suspected of having COVID-19 must still be tested but may be admitted to the long-term care facility while awaiting their results as long as they are isolated until they receive a negative result.

Isolation Following Admissions

Long-term care facilities may admit a patient with an unknown status (has not tested positive for COVID-19 nor been suspected of having COVID-19) as long as they isolate the resident for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result. For anyone who has tested negative prior to long-term care admission or is discharged from a hospital using the symptom-based strategy, the resident does not require isolation for 14 days but should be monitored.

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. Additional information about Agency initiatives is available via [Facebook \(AHCAFlorida\)](#), [Twitter \(@AHCA_FL\)](#) and [YouTube \(AHCAFlorida\)](#).