

COVID-19 outbreak checklist for long-term care facilities

This checklist lists the first and second priorities which should be completed within the first 24-72 hours of an outbreak. The checklist is not comprehensive. Read the [Recommendations and resources for COVID-19 in LTCF](#) for more details to help guide your response. Assisted living facilities may follow the guidance in this document or adopt community prevention strategies based on COVID-19 community levels.

First priority (within 24 hours)

Contact tracing

- Identify residents and staff who may have had [close contact/higher-risk](#) exposure to the person who tested positive for COVID-19

Outbreak testing

- [Test](#) all exposed residents/staff right away (but no sooner than 24 hours after the exposure)
 - Test again 48 hours after the **first** negative test
 - Test again 48 hours after the **second** negative test
- Consider broad-based testing (testing the entire unit or building) if all close contacts cannot be identified or if COVID-19 continues to spread
- Contact HAI for mobile testing team support (PCR only) for broad-based testing

Managing positive cases

- Isolate residents who test positive in a private room and use transmission-based precautions (N95 respirators, gloves, gown, eye protection) for a minimum of 10 days, regardless of vaccination status
- Group positive residents together in the same hallway or area when possible
- Positive staff should not work for 10 days (they may return to work after 7 days if they test negative two times with an antigen test on days 5-7)

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Use N95 respirators, eye protection, gown, and gloves when entering isolation rooms
- Staff should wear masks and consider using eye protection while working in an area (unit, hallway) or facility where a COVID-19 outbreak is occurring
- Encourage residents to wear masks in common areas
- [Don and doff PPE](#) correctly between COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 resident interactions

Reporting

- Submit all individual COVID-19 test results via NHSN or the state portal (EDX)
- Contact HAI (HAI@utah.gov) and your local health department to report all new cases

Therapeutics

- Work with the facility healthcare provider and local pharmacy partners to get COVID-19 therapeutics (e.g., oral antivirals)
- Contact HAI if you need help

Second priority (within 48-72 hours)

Communication and documentation

- Post signs on outside doors to let visitors and vendors know about a COVID-19 outbreak
- Tell residents, resident families/guardians, visitors, and new admissions about the outbreak status at the facility
- Document all testing and preventive measures performed

Communal dining and group activities

- Encourage all residents to wear masks in common areas
- Consider small group dining and/or activities to reduce exposures
- Consider canceling group activities and dining if COVID-19 continues to spread

Visitation

- Implement strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19 for visitors (e.g., recommend visitors wear masks, limit contact of visitors in other areas of the facility)
- Post signs at entry points to let visitors know about proper infection prevention practices (e.g., hand hygiene, masking, don't visit if they're sick)

Disinfection

- Schedule regular cleaning and disinfection of surfaces and objects which are touched often
- Disinfect shared equipment between each use
- Use EPA registered N List disinfectants

Definitions:

COVID-19 testing: COVID-19 testing can include any of the following: point of care (POC), antigen, PCR, and NAAT testing

Close contact: Cumulative time period of 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period within six feet of a person with confirmed COVID-19 infection or any unprotected direct contact with infectious secretions or excretions. Any duration should be considered prolonged if exposure occurred during an aerosol-generating procedure.

Higher risk exposure: Occurs when the healthcare provider (HCP) had prolonged close contact with someone with confirmed COVID-19 and any of the following:

- HCP was not wearing a respirator (N95) or eye protection and the person with COVID-19 infection was also not wearing a face mask
- HCP was not wearing all recommended personal protective equipment (gown, gloves, eye protection, respirator) while performing an aerosol generating procedure