

April 7, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

There is sustained community transmission of COVID-19 within the city of Long Beach. There have been COVID-19 outbreaks among several skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) and assisted living facilities in recent days. The purpose of this letter is to provide guidance to prevent introduction and transmission of COVID-19 into your facility and to rapidly detect and respond to a possible case in a resident or staff member.

All facilities should implement the following immediately, if you have not already done so:

**Visitor and Activity Restriction:**

- Restrict all visitation except for certain compassionate care situations, such as end of life situations.
- Restrict all volunteers and non-essential healthcare personnel (HCP), including non-essential healthcare personnel (e.g., barbers).
- Cancel all group activities and communal dining.
- If a case of COVID-19 occurs in a resident or staff of your facility, send a notification out to families of residents to notify them. The Health Department can provide you with a suggested letter.

**Healthcare Personnel (HCP) Monitoring:**

HCP have frequently worked while symptomatic with COVID-19 symptoms in Long Beach facility outbreaks, illustrating the imperative of educating and monitoring HCP for illness. Visitors and healthcare workers are the most likely source of introduction of COVID-19 into a facility.

- Actively take staff temperature (greater than 100.0 is considered abnormal in this instance) and document absence of shortness of breath, new or change in cough, and sore throat before start of each shift. If staff is found to be ill, have them put on a facemask and leave the workplace.
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 include muscle aches, headache, abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, runny nose and fatigue and these symptoms should be solicited from employees as well.
- Implement universal use of facemask for HCP while in the facility.
- Consider having HCP wear all recommended PPE (gown, gloves, eye protection, N95 respirator or, if not available, a facemask) for the care of all residents, regardless of presence of symptoms.
- Implement protocols for extended use of eye protection and facemasks.
- HCP who work at multiple facilities may pose higher risk and should be asked about exposure to facilities with recognized COVID-19 cases.
- Reinforce sick leave policies. Remind HCP not to report to work when ill.
- If HCP develop fever or symptoms of respiratory infection while at work, they should immediately put on a surgical mask if not already wearing one, inform their supervisor, and leave the workplace.

- Reinforce adherence to infection prevention and control measures, including hand hygiene and selection and use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Have HCP demonstrate competency with putting on and removing PPE.

### **Infection Control and Supplies:**

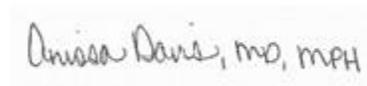
- Hand hygiene supplies:
  - Put alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 60–95% alcohol in every resident room (ideally both inside and outside of the room) and other resident care and common areas (e.g., outside dining hall, in therapy gym).
  - Make sure that sinks are well-stocked with soap and paper towels for handwashing.
- Respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette:
  - Make tissues and facemasks available for those who are coughing.
  - Consider designating staff to steward those supplies and encourage appropriate use by residents, visitors, and staff. Theft has been reported.
- Make necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) available in areas where resident care is provided. Put a trash can near the exit inside the resident room to make it easy for staff to discard PPE prior to exiting the room, or before providing care for another resident in the same room. Facilities should have supplies of:
  - facemasks
  - respirators (if available and the facility has a respiratory protection program with trained, medically cleared, and fit-tested HCP)
  - gowns
  - gloves
  - eye protection (i.e., face shield or goggles)
- Make sure that EPA-registered, hospital-grade disinfectants are available to allow for frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces and shared resident care equipment.

### **Guidance Regarding Residents**

- Encourage residents to remain in their room. If there are cases in the facility, restrict residents (to the extent possible) to their rooms except for medically necessary purposes.
- Ask residents to report if they feel feverish or have symptoms of respiratory infection.
- Actively monitor all residents upon admission and at least daily for fever and respiratory symptoms (shortness of breath, new or change in cough, and sore throat).
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 include muscle aches, headache, abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, runny nose and fatigue. Be aware of these symptoms as well.
- If there is at least one case of COVID-19 in the facility, conduct symptom monitoring on all residents and staff at least twice daily.
- If positive for fever or symptoms, implement [recommended infection control practices](#).
- The Health Department should be notified about residents or staff with any respiratory symptoms or anyone you suspect could have COVID-19. Please contact 562.570.4302 during regular business hours and 562.500.5537 after hours and on weekends.
- If a resident is diagnosed with COVID-19, implement the [LTCF COVID-19 Checklist](#) immediately.
- If they leave their room, residents should wear a facemask, perform hand hygiene, limit their movement in the facility, and perform social distancing (stay at least 6 feet away from others).
- Implement protocols for cohorting ill residents with dedicated HCP.
- If your facility does not currently have proper PPE, please request through <https://veoci.com/veoci/p/form/5wbq3edsg3z2>

With COVID-19 circulating within our community and cases expected to grow, it's imperative to institute infection prevention and control practices immediately in order to save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anissa Davis, MD, MPH". The signature is written in a cursive style and is contained within a light gray rectangular box.

Anissa Davis, MD, MPH  
City Health Officer, City of Long Beach

[Attachments: Checklist for Long-Term Care Facilities with a Case of COVID-19](#)

Source: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhealthcare-facilities%2Fprevent-spread-in-long-term-care-facilities.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhealthcare-facilities%2Fprevent-spread-in-long-term-care-facilities.html)