

This is a rapidly evolving situation. Recommendations will be updated and shared as new information becomes available.

This guidance outlines updated infection control recommendations for COVID-19 in adult care homes.

### What we know

Current evidence suggests that COVID-19 is transmitted via respiratory droplets between people in close contact, and contact with contaminated surfaces of equipment; not by airborne transmission.

Older adults – people over age 60 – and those with serious chronic medical conditions (including, but not limited to, heart disease, diabetes, and lung disease) are at highest risk for contracting COVID-19 infection.

### Reduce the risk of your staff and your residents getting sick.

- **Take precautions** to keep space, ideally 6 feet, between people in the facility.
- **Have supplies on hand** – including medications for residents. If they cannot get extra medications now, help them look into mail-order for medications.
- **Inventory and replenish over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies including PPE.** You should work through your normal supply chains and seek alternate supply procurement. **IF** all your resources are exhausted, contact [EOCLogchief@pima.gov](mailto:EOCLogchief@pima.gov) to submit supply assistance requests.
- **All personnel should wash hands often with soap and water** for at least 20 seconds. Review this hygiene practice with residents as well. Hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol should be used if you have it available.
- **Clean and disinfect your facility** – routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks, cell phones & tablets) in both patient care areas and locations frequented by staff (med rooms, supply areas, break rooms). Clean equipment routinely handled, such as B/P cuffs and machines, glucometers, and med carts. [Use the CDC's guidance on disinfecting for COVID-19.](#)
- **Develop or review facility policies and procedures for patient isolation.** This means that the resident is in a room alone and does not interact with the general population of the facility. Isolate residents with symptoms, which can include fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath. Review the [CDC's guidance on infection control for COVID-19.](#)
  - If you call in medical personnel, including emergency medical services, **please let them know the resident's symptoms** so the responders can take appropriate precautions.

### **Prevent the introduction of respiratory viruses INTO your facility:**

- **Limit visitors.** The general population should avoid visiting Assisted Living Facilities unless they must provide critical assistance. Contact (via letter, email, or phone call) families advising them to considering postponing or using alternative methods for visitation (e.g., video conferencing) during the next several months.
- **Post signs** at the entrances to the facility instructing visitors not to enter if they have fever or symptoms of a respiratory infection.
- Ensure sick leave policies **allow employees to stay home if they have symptoms** of respiratory infection.
- **Assess resident for symptoms** of respiratory infection upon admission to the facility and implement appropriate infection prevention practices for incoming symptomatic residents.
- **Screen healthcare workers and therapists** for symptoms before allowing entry to the facility.

### **Prevent the spread of respiratory viruses BETWEEN facilities:**

- **Notify facilities prior to transferring** a resident with an acute respiratory illness, including suspected or confirmed COVID-19, to a higher level of care.

**If employees develop any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (fever or respiratory symptoms) while at work, they must:**

- **Cease contact** with residents.
- **Put on a facemask** immediately (if not already wearing).
- **Notify** their supervisor or occupational health services prior to leaving work.

**If you are concerned a resident could have COVID-19:**

- Please follow PCHD guidance for testing a resident/patient for COVID-19 at the Arizona State Public Health Laboratory.
- If you think a resident meets testing criteria, please contact PCHD at 520-724-7797 (line answered 24/7).
- **If a resident does not meet testing criteria**, COVID-19 testing can be ordered through commercial laboratories by a healthcare provider.
  - **You do not need to go through PCHD to order a commercial COVID-19 test.**

What to do if employees have known exposure to COVID-19:

- Allow **asymptomatic** employees to continue to work after consulting their occupational health program. Use your monitoring system to **ensure exposed employees are monitored daily** for the 14 days after the last exposure.
- If you have sufficient supply, healthcare personnel **who are not wearing recommended PPE** during the COVID-19 exposure could be asked to wear a facemask while at work for 14 days after the exposure.

Facilities should notify staff, residents, and family/guardians of laboratory positive COVID-19 cases in the facility.

<https://www.azdhs.gov/documents/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-diseases-services/coronavirus/exposure-to-covid-19-staff.docx>

<https://www.azdhs.gov/documents/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-diseases-services/coronavirus/exposure-to-covid-19-to-residents.docx>

For more detailed information, including on cleaning, please go to [www.pima.gov/Covid19](http://www.pima.gov/Covid19).

Adult care facilities or residents with questions can call 2-1-1  
For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/> OR [www.pima.gov/covid19](http://www.pima.gov/covid19)