



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Welcome Nursing Facility Providers!

**COVID-19 Updates and Q&A with LTCR
and DSHS**

October 21, 2020

For more information:

Web: <https://hhs.texas.gov/services/health/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-provider-information>

Email: PolicyRulesTraining@hhsc.state.tx.us

Phone: 512-438-3161

COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Catherine Anglin
Program Manager; NF and LSC
Policy, Rules and Training
Long-term Care Regulation



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Robert Ochoa
Senior Policy Specialist
Policy, Rules and Training
Long-term Care Regulation

- Introduction and overview
- Reminders and updates



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Reminder

Sign-up for Gov Delivery

To sign-up for Alerts:

- Go to:
<https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/TXHHSC/subscriber/new>
- Enter your email address.
- Confirm your email address, select your delivery preference, and submit a password if you want one.
- Select your topics.
- When done click "Submit."



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

CMS/CDC NF COVID-19 Training

CMS is offering free online training for nursing facilities related to COVID-19

[Click here](#) to view currently available pre-recorded trainings.

Facilities also have access to the [CMS Targeted COVID-19 Training for Frontline Nursing Home Staff and Management](#)

Bi-weekly Live Q&As will be held Thursdays at 4pm E.T. (3pm Central) starting August 27th.

[Register Here](#) for future Q&A webinars.



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

NF Webinar: Managing COVID-19

The purpose of this webinar is to inform and prepare NF in a specific area where COVID-19 is surging.

1. Managing the COVID-19 Crisis in Hidalgo Co. and Surrounding Areas
Oct. 23, 2 p.m.
[Register for the webinar.](#)
2. Managing the COVID-19 Crisis in McClennan Co. and Surrounding Areas
Oct. 26, 10 a.m.
[Register for the webinar.](#)
3. Managing the COVID-19 Crisis in El Paso Co. and Surrounding Areas
Nov. 3, 1 p.m.
[Register for the webinar.](#)



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

NF Webinar: Managing COVID-19

The purpose of this webinar is to inform and prepare NF in a specific area where COVID-19 is surging.

4. Managing the COVID-19 Crisis in Lubbock Co. and Surrounding Areas
Nov. 5, 2 p.m.

[Register for the webinar.](#)

5. Managing the COVID-19 Crisis in Amarillo and Surrounding Areas
Nov. 12, 1:30 p.m.

[Register for the webinar.](#)

6. Managing the COVID-19 Crisis in Midland/Odessa and Surrounding Areas
Nov. 16, 2 p.m.

[Register for the webinar.](#)



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

CMS QSO 20-41

CMS published [QSO 20-41](#): Guidance Related to the Emergency Preparedness Testing Exercise Requirements

- If a NF activates their emergency plan, they are exempt from the next required full-scale or facility-based exercise
 - many NFs are activating their emergency plans related to COVID-19 and staffing
- Adds mock drill as an exercise of choice in the table-top exercise types
- Informs providers that the interim final rules from last year are finalized, specifically:
 - NFs do not have to document their efforts to coordinate with local EP officials
 - NFs have to update their emergency plan and retrain staff at least every year



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

CLIA Certificate of Waiver

A CLIA waiver is required for all NFs wanting to conduct POC testing.

NFs without a CLIA Certificate of Waiver are encouraged to apply so that they may participate in any future testing initiatives, should any additional testing initiatives occur.

NFs can apply for a CLIA waiver by filling out [Form CMS-116](#) and sending it to the [regional CLIA licensing group](#) for the zone in which the facility is located.



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

HHSC PL 20-46

HHSC published [PL 20-46](#) which condenses all requirements related to conducting POC antigen tests into one document.

[PL 20-46](#) includes:

- CLIA Certificate of Waiver requirements
- Reporting requirements related to reporting test results
- All other COVID-19 related reporting requirements



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

HHSC PL 20-44

HHSC published [PL 20-44](#) to replace PL 20-38

- Includes the same as the previous PL
- Simplifies the information by only relating to NF
- Form 2197 now only pertains to NFs and allows selections for NFs in counties with a >10% COVID-19 positivity rate
- Includes section for NFs to inform HHSC when a local order prohibits visitation



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

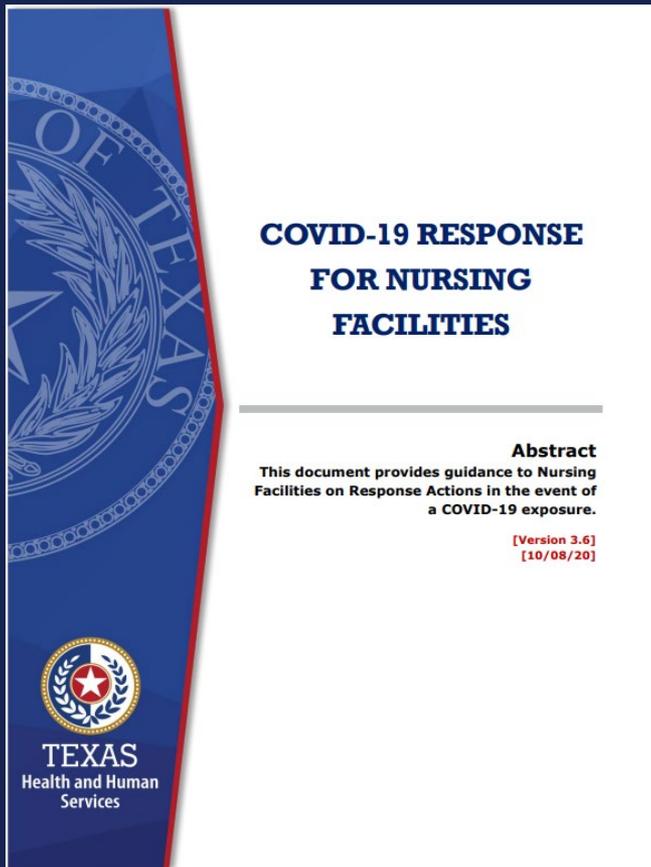
October 8 Updates - Recap From October 14

Version 3.6

COVID-19 Response for Nursing Facilities



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services



COVID-19 RESPONSE FOR NURSING FACILITIES

Abstract

This document provides guidance to Nursing Facilities on Response Actions in the event of a COVID-19 exposure.

[Version 3.6]
[10/08/20]

October 8 Updates – Recap From October 14

Updates Include:

- Incorporates guidance from [expansion of reopening visitation rules](#) and updated CMS guidance per [QSO-20-39](#)
- Incorporates additional guidance related to CMS testing requirements
- Clarifies that all residents should wear a facemask when leaving their rooms, if tolerated
- Updated resources and CDC infographics



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Reminder – COVID-19 Mitigation Rules

NFs are reminded that HHSC published emergency rules in August 2020 related to the [mitigation of COVID-19](#), which include requirements that a NF must:

- have a COVID-19 response plan including:
 - cohort plans
 - spaces for staff to don and doff PPE
 - resident transport plan
 - plans for obtaining and maintaining a two-week supply of PPE
 - resident recovery plan for continuing care after recovery from COVID-19

Continued on next slide.



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Reminder – COVID-19 Mitigation Rules

Continued...a NF must:

- implement a staffing policy including
 - designate staff to work with each cohort and not change that designation from one day to another, unless required to maintain adequate staffing for a cohort
 - staff wear appropriate PPE
 - staff report via phone if they have known exposure or symptoms
 - staff perform self-monitoring on days they do not work

Continued on next slide.



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Reminder – COVID-19 Mitigation Rules

Continued...a NF must:

- develop and implement a policy regarding staff working with other LTC providers
- ensure all staff wear facemasks or other appropriate PPE--based on cohort
- report COVID-19 activity



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Continued on next slide.

Reminder – COVID-19 Mitigation Rules

Continued...a NF must:

- screen all residents, staff, and other people who come to the facility for signs & symptoms of COVID-19
 - documents all screenings
 - screen all staff at least prior to start of shift
 - screen all residents at least 3 times day--once each shift

Continued on next slide.



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Reminder – COVID-19 Mitigation Rules

Continued...a NF must:

- cohort residents based on the residents' COVID-19 status
- quarantine and monitor a resident with unknown COVID-19 status
- isolate a resident who is COVID-19 positive until the resident meets CDC guidelines for the discontinuation of transmission-based precautions



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

BinaxNOW COVID-19 Training

The Texas Division of Emergency Management has created a short training on the BinaxNOW test kits.

The Binax 100 training is intended for non-medically trained individuals who will be conducting COVID-19 testing using the BinaxNOW Ag card.

This free, online training is available now. Register [here](#)



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Omnicare FAQ

Omnicare published FAQs for healthcare professionals related to the use of point-of-care antigen tests.

See the FAQ [here](#).



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Vaccine Pharmacy Partnership

The Trump Administration has partnered with CVS and Walgreens to ensure that LTC facilities can have access to the COVID-19 vaccine once it becomes available.

NF staff and residents will be able to safely get vaccinated through this program.

This will replace the need for facilities to register to become a COVID-19 Vaccine Provider through DSHS. NFs will no longer be required to administer or procure COVID-19 vaccines



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Vaccine Pharmacy Partnership

The Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program is:

- Free of charge to facilities.
- Available to all LTCF staff members who have not been previously vaccinated for COVID-19 (e.g., through satellite, temporary, or off-site clinics).
- Available in most rural areas that may not have an easily accessible pharmacy.
- US HHS is using multiple authorities to ensure appropriate reimbursement for these services and that no one being vaccinated for COVID-19 will have to pay out-of-pocket.



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Vaccine Pharmacy Partnership

CVS and Walgreens will schedule and coordinate on-site clinic dates directly with each facility.

Pharmacies will take charge of all management and administration of COVID-19 vaccines. They will also manage all data and reporting requirements.

There are currently no authorized COVID-19 vaccines. The partnership is a proactive measure.

Additional information can be found [here](#)



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Michelle Dionne-Vahalik, DNP, RN
Associate Commissioner
Long-term Care Regulation



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Renee Blanch-Haley, BSN, RN
Director of Survey Operations
Long-term Care Regulation



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

David Gruber
Associate Commissioner for Regional and
Local Health Operations
DSHS



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

Statewide phone: 800-252-2412

Statewide email:

ltc.ombudsman@hhsc.state.tx.us

State Ombudsman: Patty Ducayet,
737-704-9075 (or)

patty.ducayet@hhsc.state.tx.us



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Weekly Facebook Live Q&A for Families of LTC
Residents: Every Wednesday, 12:15 to 12:45

<https://www.facebook.com/texasltcombudsman?ref-ts>

COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Melody Malone, PT, CPHQ, MHA, CDP,
CADDCT

Healthcare Quality Improvement Specialist



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

TMF Health Quality Institute, the CMS-designated Quality Improvement Network – Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO) for Texas, Arkansas, Mississippi, Nebraska, Puerto Rico, and US Virgin Islands

Email nhnetwork@tmf.org to submit requests for assistance with NHSN reporting problems.

COVID-19 Q&A

TMF Presents LTC CONNECT: Making Merry Out of COVID

Ideas for Fun Holiday Activities while
Staying Safe

Thursday, November 12, 2020

11:00 a.m. CT

30 minutes

[Click here to Register](#)



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Project ECHO

- A national learning program is launching soon for nursing home infection prevention and control
- Developed with the University of New Mexico's successful Project ECHO framework for shared learning
- Funded through the CARES Act
- Nursing homes will be recruited to participate in groups of about 33-35, these groups are called HUBs
- TMF will be assisting to recruit for Texas hubs
- Participants may be eligible for financial compensation
- More info: nhnetwork@tmf.org



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Terry Hernandez
PASRR Program Manager
IDD and Behavioral Health Services

- IL 20-41: Preadmission Screening and Resident Review (PASRR) Evaluations: Use of Telephone Interviews or Videoconferencing



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Heidi Lizyness
Policy Specialist
Policy, Rules and Training
Long-term Care Regulation

- Questions from last week



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Question:

Are residents allowed to go out into the community with their loved ones – such as going to a restaurant?

Answer:

Yes. Residents can choose to enjoy time in the community with their loved ones. If the resident makes the informed decision to leave the facility, a NF must educate the resident about infection control and prevention procedures, including:

- wearing a facemask or face covering
- performing hand hygiene

(cont. on next slide)



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Answer (cont.):

- cough and sneeze etiquette
- physical distancing
- being aware of others who may potentially or actually have COVID-19
- reporting any contact with another person who may potentially or actually have COVID-19 to the facility



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Question:

If a resident has a positive result from a POC antigen test and is asymptomatic, can we have them stay in their private room and quarantine them in there, without moving them to a COVID hall, pending a PCR test?

Answer:

The answer may depend on the specific situation. If the resident is asymptomatic and being tested as a result of an outbreak then a confirmatory PCR test is not recommended. Per [CDC guidance](#), any POC antigen test result during an outbreak should be presumptive and does not require a confirmatory PCR test. *(Cont. on next slide)*



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Answer (cont.):

The CDC does not recommend testing asymptomatic residents if not in response to an outbreak so they have not provided guidance for such a situation.

If a resident is placed in the isolation unit and then later found to not be COVID-19 positive, the resident should be placed in 14-day quarantine as having been potentially exposed while residing in the isolation unit.



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Question:

What is the return to work protocol for an asymptomatic employee who has a positive COVID-19 test result from an antigen test?

Answer:

The answer may depend on the specific situation. If the staff member is asymptomatic and being tested as a result of an outbreak then a confirmatory PCR test is not recommended. Per [CDC guidance](#), any POC antigen test result during an outbreak should be presumptive and does not require a confirmatory PCR test. *(Cont. on next slide)*



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Answer (cont.):

If not in response to a COVID-19 outbreak, then the staff member should immediately be excluded from work until a confirmatory PCR can be performed. The confirmatory PCR test should be performed within 48-hours of the antigen test.

If the PCR test is negative, the results should be discussed with the local health department to interpret the results and advice on next steps.



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Question:

We did not receive a POC machine but did receive BinaxNOW cards. Do I put on the weekly NHSN reports that I have a POC machine or just mark NO?

Answer:

The BinaxNOW tests are considered to be a point-of-care antigen test so NFs that receive BinaxNOW tests should report that they have POC tests.



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Question:

Is a facility required to notify families if they admit a patient who is COVID-19 positive from the hospital? To be clear, this is not a resident that contracted COVID-19 while at the facility.

Answer:

Yes, per CMS [QSO 20-29](#) NFs must provide any cumulative updates for residents, their representatives, and families. Updates must occur at least weekly or by 5 PM the next calendar day following the subsequent occurrence of either:

- a confirmed infection of COVID-19 is identified (including new admissions)
- three or more residents or staff with new onset of respiratory symptoms occur within 72 hours of each other



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

COVID-19 Q&A

Question:

Can essential caregivers or other visitors bring food for a resident?

Answer:

Yes. Essential caregivers and other visitors are allowed to bring outside food for a resident. The only limitation is that the visitor would not be able to eat with the resident as this would require a visitor to remove their facemask. Per the [Expanded Visitation Emergency Rule](#) visitors must wear a facemask or face covering over both the mouth and nose throughout the visit.



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Questions?

For more information:

Web: <https://hhs.texas.gov/services/health/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-provider-information>

Email: PolicyRulesTraining@hhsc.state.tx.us

Phone: 512-438-3161



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Thank you!

For more information:

Web: <https://hhs.texas.gov/services/health/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-provider-information>

Email: PolicyRulesTraining@hhsc.state.tx.us

Phone: 512-438-3161