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**Welcome Nursing Facility Providers!**

**COVID-19 Updates and Q&A with LTC  
Regulation and DSHS  
June 18, 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](mailto:PolicyRulesTraining@hhsc.state.tx.us)

Phone: 512-438-3161

# COVID-19 Q&A

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## Panelist

Cecilia Cavuto, MSML  
NF, ICF & LSC Policy and Rule Manager  
Policy, Rules and Training  
Long-term Care Regulation

- Introduction and overview
- Reminders and updates
- COVID-19 Response for Nursing Facilities



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# Reminder

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## Local Health Departments

Please stay in contact with your [Local Health Department](#) for any COVID-19 related events at your facility.

- They help with response and testing strategies



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# Reminder – CDC Reporting

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## Requirements for Notification of Confirmed and Suspected COVID-19 Cases Among Residents and Staff in Nursing Homes: [CMS QSO 20-29-NH](#)

Reminder that per CMS, NFs must report COVID-19 information weekly to the CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN).

NFs must also inform residents, their representatives, and families by 5 p.m. the next calendar day following either a single confirmed infection of COVID-19, or three or more residents or staff with new-onset of respiratory symptoms occurring within 72 hours of each other.



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# Reminder – CDC Reporting

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Continued: [CMS QSO 20-29-NH](#)

- Failure to report in accordance with these requirements can result in an enforcement action cited at F884 and F885.
- CMS is now citing for this
- CMS will use the CASPER Shared folders to communicate findings of noncompliance with the requirement to report as required. You will not receive a notice if you are found in compliance



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# Reminder – CMS Reporting

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Continued: [CMS QSO 20-29-NH](#)

- Questions about **the QSO** should be directed to [NH\\_COVID\\_Data@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:NH_COVID_Data@cms.hhs.gov)  
[v](#)
- Questions about **the NHSN system and enrollment** should be directed to [NHSN@cdc.gov](mailto:NHSN@cdc.gov)



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# PPE Infection Control Basics Webinar

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The webinar emphasizes how to prevent or minimize the spread of infectious disease by using PPE. During this webinar you will:

- Review standard and transmission-based precautions
- Learn proper hand hygiene techniques
- Demonstrate how to utilize PPE
- Discuss the importance of social distancing in an outbreak situation
- June 26: 8:30 a.m.  
[Register for the webinar here.](#)



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# Emergency Preparedness for LTC Facilities – Webinar

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The webinar will help providers prepare for hurricane season and other emergencies and includes COVID-19 considerations.

- Monday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>: 1 - 4:30 p.m.

[Register here](#)

- Tuesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>: 1 - 4:30 p.m.

[Register here](#)



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# Updates

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## Reopening Plans

We are actively working on plans to ease some of these current restrictions related to visitors and group activities in phases, while still prioritizing safety. While we don't have a definite date at this time, we expect the first level of guidance to be published in the coming weeks.



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# COVID-19 Q&A

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## Panelist

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

- Updates



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# COVID-19 Q&A

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## Panelist

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

- Updates
- Additional information from CMS



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# CDC Reporting

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Additional information from  
CMS: [CMS QSO 20-29-NH](#)



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# COVID-19 Q&A

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## Panelist

David Gruber

Associate Commissioner for Regional and Local  
Health Operations

DSHS

- Updates



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# COVID-19 Q&A

## What is considered close contact in a Nursing Facility (NF)?

- CDC defines close contact in the community as:
  - A close contact is defined as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html>

- CDC defines close contact in a healthcare setting as:
  - being within 6 feet of a person with confirmed COVID-19
  - (or) having unprotected direct contact with infectious secretions or excretions of the person with confirmed COVID-19 (e.g., being coughed on)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html>



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# COVID-19 Q&A

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## Panelist

Cecilia Cavuto, MSML  
NF, ICF & LSC Policy and Rule Manager  
Policy, Rules and Training  
Long-term Care Regulation

- Questions and Answers from the week



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# COVID-19 Q&A

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## Question:

How should we handle Resident Council meetings with the guidance from CMS to cancel group activities?

## Response:

[QSO 20-28-NH](#) refers back to [QSO 20-14-NH](#) and states, “there should be no group activities occurring outside or inside of the building, due to the risk of transmission.” NFs should encourage and assist residents in holding virtual council meetings while these restrictions are in place.



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# COVID-19 Q&A

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## Question:

Clarification: Are new and re-admits considered to be suspected of having COVID-19 during their 14 day quarantine, and do staff have to wear an N95 mask when caring for them?

## Response:

New and re-admitted residents are considered to have unknown COVID-19 status. Per DSHS, a person with “unknown COVID-19 status” is defined as someone who has not been diagnosed with COVID-19, but may have been exposed, especially during times of localized or widespread COVID-19 transmission within the facility or community from where the patient is transferring, and could therefore be within the incubation phase of the infection.

Contd.



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# COVID-19 Q&A

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## Contd. Response:

CDC guidance is for NFs to create a plan for managing new admissions and readmissions whose COVID-19 status is unknown and states:

“All recommended COVID-19 PPE should be worn during care of residents under observation, which includes use of an N95 or higher-level respirator (or facemask if a respirator is not available), eye protection (i.e., goggles or a disposable face shield that covers the front and sides of the face), gloves, and gown.”



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# Questions?

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# Thank you!

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