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PIN 20-04-ASC

TO: ALL ADULT AND SENIOR CARE PROGRAM LICENSEES

FROM: *Original signed by Pamela Dickfoss*  
PAMELA DICKFOSS  
Deputy Director  
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SUBJECT: **GUIDANCE ON 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS OR COVID-19**

**Provider Information Notice (PIN) Summary**

PIN 20-04-ASC provides guidance based on what is currently known about the transmission and severity of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The Department, in consultation with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), will update this guidance as needed and as additional information becomes available.

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a novel virus that has been spreading worldwide. Community-acquired cases have now been confirmed in California. We are gaining more understanding of COVID-19's epidemiology, clinical course, immunogenicity, and other factors as time progresses, and the situation is changing daily. The CDPH is in the process of monitoring COVID-19, conducting testing with local and federal partners, and providing guidance and resources to prevent, detect and respond to the occurrence of COVID-19 cases in California.

At this time, community transmission of COVID-19 has occurred in California. Facilities should prepare for possible impacts of COVID-19 and take precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as well as other infectious diseases, including influenza and gastroenteritis.

## **Illness Severity**

The complete clinical picture with regard to COVID-19 is not fully understood. Reported illnesses have ranged from mild to severe, including illness resulting in death. While information so far suggests that most COVID-19 illness is mild, data out of China suggests serious illness occurs in 16% of cases. Older people and people with certain underlying health conditions like heart disease, lung disease and diabetes, for example, seem to be at greater risk of serious illness.

## **Reporting an Outbreak**

Please contact your [local health department](#) immediately if you have someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in your facility and/or suspect an outbreak in your facility.

In addition, adult and senior care program licensees are required to report a suspected or confirmed outbreak of COVID-19 to your local [Adult and Senior Care Regional Office](#), and the persons' in care authorized representative, as required by applicable regulations (California Code of Regulations, [Title 22, section 80061\(b\)\(1\)\(H\)](#), [Title 22, section 81061\(b\)\(1\)\(G\)](#), [Title 22, section 82061\(a\)\(1\)\(F\)](#), and [Title 22, section 87211\(a\)\(2\)](#)).

## **Prevent the introduction of respiratory germs INTO your facility.**

- Limit visitors to the facility by not allowing those with symptoms of respiratory infection or who have a travel history to China, South Korea, Italy, or Iran over the course of the last 14 days.
- Ensure sick leave policies allow employees to stay home if they have symptoms of respiratory infection.
  - Employees with any respiratory infection symptoms should not be at work.
  - Consider screening employees for respiratory infection symptoms before they start their shift.

## **Prevent the spread of respiratory germs WITHIN your facility.**

- Keep residents and employees informed.
  - Describe what actions the facility is taking to protect them, including answering their questions and explaining what they can do to protect themselves and their fellow residents.
- Designate a time to meet with your staff to educate them on COVID-19 and what they may need to do to prepare. The following may be useful resources to share information about COVID-19:
  - How [COVID-19 spreads](#)
  - [Clinical management](#) of COVID-19 patients

- [Infection prevention and control](#) recommendations for COVID-19
- Ensure your employees are prepared and are taking all necessary precautions, including:
  - Employees with a fever should not work.
  - Facility employees who are ill should be excluded from work for at least 24 hours after a flu-related fever is gone and follow federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or local health department guidelines for returning to work.
  - Once facility employees return to work, reinforce the importance of performing frequent hand hygiene,
  - Exclude employees, students, and volunteers who are not critical to providing care from working in areas experiencing outbreaks of COVID-19.
- To stop transmission of this virus to your residents:
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
  - Employees should stay home when they are sick.
  - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipes.
- Monitor residents and employees for fever or respiratory symptoms.
  - Restrict residents with fever or acute respiratory symptoms to their room. If they must leave the room for medically necessary procedures, have them wear a facemask (if tolerated).
  - In general, for care of residents with undiagnosed respiratory infection use Standard, Contact, and Droplet Precautions with eye protection unless suspected diagnosis requires Airborne Precautions (e.g., tuberculosis).
  - Facilities should monitor their local and state public health sources to understand COVID-19 activity in their community. If there is transmission of COVID-19 in the community, in addition to implementing the precautions described above for residents with acute respiratory infection, facilities should also consult with local public health authorities for additional guidance.
- Support hand and respiratory hygiene, as well as cough etiquette by residents, visitors, and employees.
  - Ensure employees clean their hands according to [CDC guidelines](#), including before and after contact with residents, after contact with contaminated surfaces or equipment, and after removing personal protective equipment (PPE).
  - Make sure tissues are available and any sink is well-stocked with soap and paper towels for hand washing.

- Minimize congregate living activities and outside programming.
  - Ensure that residents are eating their meals in their rooms instead of in congregate settings.
  - Minimize the number of congregate activities especially if your county has community-transmission cases.
- Have a plan in place, and ample supplies, to respond to a COVID-19 outbreak in their area. Follow plans for sheltering in place in circumstances where you may need to quarantine.
  - Create a staffing contingency plan and ensure registry contracts are in place and ready to be mobilized.

### **Steps to take with a suspect or possible case of COVID-19 in your facility.**

- Immediately contact the resident's health care provider for an evaluation and for guidance.
- If a resident shows symptoms of COVID-19, the individual should be isolated from other residents and employees who are in contact with the individual should ensure they are wearing appropriate personal protective equipment, including a mask.
- If the resident tests positive for COVID-19, please immediately contact your local health department. In addition, please immediately contact your local Adult and Senior Care Regional Office, and the persons' in care authorized representative, as required by applicable regulations (California Code of Regulations, Title 22, section 80061(b)(1)(H), Title 22, section 81061(b)(1)(G), Title 22, section 82061(a)(1)(F), and Title 22, section 87211(a)(2)).
- Residents with confirmed COVID-19 should remain in isolation, either at your facility or in a healthcare facility as determined by clinical status, until they are determined by state or local public health authorities in coordination with CDC to be no longer infectious.

### **Additional Resources**

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [California Department of Public Health](#)

If you have any questions regarding this PIN, please contact your local [Adult and Senior Care Regional Office](#).