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Welcome Nursing Facility Providers!

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

December 2, 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

- Reminders



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New Webinar Agenda

Mini-trainings will be included every-other week to allow additional time for live Q&A.

No mini-training this week, but will be included on next week's webinar.



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COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

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

- Introduction and overview
- Updates



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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."



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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.



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NF Webinar: Managing COVID-19

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

Managing the COVID-19 Crisis:

1. Dallas/Fort Worth Area
Dec. 4, 1:30 p.m.
[Register for the webinar.](#)
2. Harris County and Surrounding Areas
Dec. 7, 2:00 p.m.
[Register for the webinar.](#)
3. Bexar County and Surrounding Areas
Dec. 14, 1:30 p.m.
[Register for the webinar.](#)



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NF Webinar: Managing COVID-19

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

Managing the COVID-19 Crisis:

4. El Paso and Surrounding Areas
Dec. 17, 2:00 p.m.
[Register for the webinar.](#)



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DSHS COVID-19 Training Video

DSHS published a video training specific to long-term care providers on COVID-19 precautions and how to accomplish them.

The video training can be viewed [here](#).

HHSC [issued an alert](#) on November 23rd informing providers of this free training video from DSHS.



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PL 20-37 & PL 20-46: Reporting Requirements

HHSC LTCR Revised [PL 20-37](#) & [PL 20-46](#)

PL 20-37 & PL 20-46 now include up-to-date reporting requirements for COVID-19 test result reporting.

As a reminder, NFs conducting COVID-19 point-of-care (POC) tests must report test result information to:

- NHSN
- Local health department



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NHSN POC Test Reporting Tool Defects

NHSN is working to resolve two defects in the NHSN Point-of-Care Test Reporting Tool. NFs may use a workaround until a resolution is installed.

- Defect may result in exclusion of staff POC data from “Line Listing-LTC Staff COVID-19 Testing” option. NHSN expects a resolution by Dec. 12
- Defects are occurring for those who enter a date into the ‘Test Date’ field. NFs are advised to use the calendar option for this field until this defect is fixed.

See the [November 23rd alert](#) for additional information



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PL 20-53: Holiday Activities & Volunteers

HHSC LTR Published [PL 20-53](#) which covers guidelines for:

- Facility-coordinated group activities
- Communal dining and delivering outside food to residents
- Volunteers
- Residents who leave the facility



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Volunteers

NFs may use volunteers for:

- Supplemental Tasks, such as
 - monitoring visits between residents and family members,
 - escorting essential caregivers,
 - Assisting with cleaning and sanitizing.
- Hosting or assisting with a facility-coordinated group activity*, such as
 - bingo for residents,
 - high school choir for holiday event,
 - book club.

*See [PL 20-53](#) for infection and prevention control protocol for group activities.



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Volunteers

Volunteers must:

- Receive infection prevention and control (IPC) training
- Receive other trainings typically provided to volunteers (e.g. identifying abuse, neglect, and exploitation)
- Be monitored by staff
- Be tested according to CMS testing requirements outlined in [QSO-20-38](#)
- Adhere to all screening, PPE, and IPC requirements

See [PL 20-53](#) for additional requirements. ¹⁴



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CDC Holiday Activity Guidance

As we continue through the holiday season, NFs can use CDC guidance to help facilitate discussions with residents and resident families regarding the risks and necessary protocols associated with attending holiday gatherings outside of the facility.

CDC recently published [Holiday Considerations and Small Gatherings](#) with tips and guidance related to holiday family gatherings.



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PL 20-50: Influenza Vaccines

HHSC LTCR Published [PL 20-50](#) which covers:

- DSHS' [Adult Influenza Vaccine Initiative](#)

DSHS is providing a one-time-only allocation of adult influenza vaccine doses to target high risk populations disproportionately affected by or at risk for COVID-19.

- Guidance for administering influenza vaccine to residents and staff with/without COVID-19



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Requesting Emergency Staffing

HHSC LTCR offers emergency staffing for facilities facing severe critical shortages.

Emergency staffing is:

- Only approved for facilities that can't provide necessary care to residents due to staffing shortages
- Temporary – only available while NFs obtain alternate staffing resources.

NFs must exhaust **all** staffing mitigation strategies before requesting emergency staffing (*see next slide*)



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Requesting Emergency Staffing

Staffing mitigation strategies:

- Share staff between unknown COVID-19 status and positive COVID-19 cohorts ([see CDC guidance](#))
- Contact staffing agencies, nearby health care facilities, partners, or local colleges or health care centers to identify supplemental staff
- Identify alternate facilities with adequate staffing to care for residents with COVID-19.

(Cont. on next slide)



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Requesting Emergency Staffing

Staffing mitigation strategies:

- Use of asymptomatic staff who have had unprotected COVID-19 exposure
- Use of staff with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, who are well enough and willing to work, but have not met all Return to Work Criteria
 - NFs **must** contact their [LTCR Regional Director](#) and [local health department](#) before using staff who had unprotected exposure to COVID-19, or suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
 - This is generally only allowed in emergencies.
 - Implement or attempt all other staffing contingency strategies listed above before this step.



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Requesting Emergency Staffing

If staffing shortages continue after all mitigation strategies are implemented, contact your [LTCR Regional Director](#).

NFs approved for emergency staffing must submit a transition plan that includes:

- Forecasted timeline for when COVID-19 positive staff will return to work, using the [CDC's Return to Work criteria](#), and when emergency staff can be released.
- Acquiring temporary staff or recruiting new hires.
- All other strategies for ensuring critical staffing shortages are fulfilled as soon as possible.



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DSHS Survey: Bamlanivimab Allocation

U.S. HHS is shipping limited supplies of bamlanivimab – a monoclonal antibody treatment for COVID-19 to states.

DSHS is surveying LTC facilities to identify candidates for potential distributions of bamlanivimab, or other future treatments.

Interested NFs are encouraged to complete the [survey](#)

Please read the bamlanivimab [EUA](#) and [healthcare provider fact sheet](#) prior to completing the survey to ensure that your facility will meet product use requirements.



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Reminder: Binax NOW Tests

State BinaxNOW Initiative

- Available for qualified NFs
- Must submit attestation to be approved
- **Only to be used for testing essential caregiver visitors**

See [PL 20-49](#) for additional information

Federal BinaxNOW Initiative

- To be distributed to qualifying NFs
- Does not require application
- **Intended to be used for CMS staff testing requirements**

See [US HHS Webpage](#) for additional information

POC Test Reporting

Per [CMS updated requirements](#), all NFs conducting antigen tests within their facility, must report antigen test result information through NHSN.

Governor Abbott's [Executive Order GA-10](#) still requires all facilities to report testing result information to DSHS and local health departments.

However, NFs reporting test result information to NHSN will no longer have to report to DSHS



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POC Test Reporting

NFs conducting antigen tests must report test data, within 24 hours of each test conducted, to the following entities

CMS-Certified NFs and other NFs reporting POC test results through NHSN:*

- NHSN
- Local Health Department

NFs not reporting POC test results through NHSN:

- DSHS
- Local Health Department

**Non-CMS-certified facilities may report through NHSN, if they choose*

COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

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



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COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

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



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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

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

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



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COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

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

TeamSTEPPS® Master Trainer
INTERACT® Certified Champion

Healthcare Quality Improvement Specialist
TMF Health Quality Institute



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NHSN – SAMS Level 3 Access

- Required for Point of Care Testing data submission
- Requires identity proofing by each individual requesting access
- See TMF resources here: [NHSN Resources](#)
- See CDC resource here: [SAMS Level Three Access](#)
- Reach out to us at nhnetwork@tmf.org to submit requests for assistance with NHSN reporting problems.



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NHSN – SAMS Level 3 Access

Please allow up to 7-9 business days for NHSN to reply to any email concerning SAMS.

- Prior to reaching out to NHSN, please check spam folders and trash folders for an invitational email from SAMS.
- It is possible that you have a SAMS level 3 invitation email from NHSN that is awaiting action.
- Look for an email with the subject line **“SAMS Partner Portal – Identity Verification Request Form”** from SAMS-no-reply@cdc.gov



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Effective November 23, 2020

The CDC made changes to the Resident Impact and Facility Capacity Module

- Find the new Resident Impact and Facility Capacity Pathway form here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/pdfs/covid19/lctcf/57.144-res-blank-p.pdf>
- Find the new Instructions for Completion of the COVID-19 Long-term Care Facility (LTCF) Resident Impact and Facility Capacity Form here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/pdfs/covid19/lctcf/57.144-toi-508.pdf>



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Effective November 23, 2020

The CDC made changes to the Resident Impact and Facility Capacity Module

- Office Hours to review November changes:
Date: Thursday, Dec 3, 2020
Time: 1:30 – 2:15 PM ET
- **Register in advance for this webinar:**
https://cdc.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_Br5VVvVmSdmym0Ezhswr6w



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CDC COVID-19 Module Website

<https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/covid19/index.html>



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Join Project ECHO

Nursing Home COVID-19 Network Now

- Funded through the CARES Act - Participants may be eligible for financial compensation
- We have assembled an experienced team of experts to help facilitate this community of practice and support participating nursing homes in areas of safety and quality improvement (QI).
- The curriculum, which will be updated weekly, covers a wide scope of topics related to COVID-19 response and preparedness, as well as QI methods to support ongoing testing and learning by staff.
- Minimum of two staff members of your institution must participate on your team and attend the weekly meeting. Prefer that one staff member be a CNA.

More info: ProjectECHO@tmf.org
**** deadline is this week!****



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COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

David Gruber
Associate Commissioner for Regional and
Local Health Operations
DSHS



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Register to be a COVID-19 Vaccine Provider

NF are encouraged to enroll in DSHS Immunization program to be eligible to administer COVID-19 vaccines, once available.

To enroll register at EnrollTexasIZ.dshs.texas.gov. To review all provider requirements and for more information, see the DSHS [Provider Vaccine Information](#) page.

COVID-19 Registration Support email: COVID19VacEnroll@dshs.texas.gov

COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Hotline: 877-835-7750, Monday-Friday 8am-5pm



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COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

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

- Questions from last week



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COVID Q&A

Question:

Does my facility still need to report COVID-19 POC test results to DSHS while we are awaiting SAMS Level-3 approval?

Answer:

Yes. NFs must continue to report POC test result data to DSHS until they are able to submit daily test result data to NHSN.



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COVID Q&A

Question:

What is the deadline for being set up for POC test reporting through NHSN? We have been waiting for weeks to receive SAMS Level 3 access?

Answer:

CMS added the [requirement for NFs to report test data through NHSN](#) on October 19th. CMS is working to determine a date to begin enforcement activities. The enforcement date is expected to occur sometime after the beginning of 2021. NFs are advised to begin the process to obtain SAMS Level 3 access as soon as possible.



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Questions?

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Thank you!

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