



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Infection prevention precautions and restrictions put in place at long-term care facilities (LTC) to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and protect residents should be balanced against residents' COVID-19 fully vaccinated status, the need for increased socialization and visitation and their physical and mental well-being. **Immunocompromised healthcare personnel (HCP) and residents should follow guidance for the unvaccinated.**

**Key Community Indicators:** Community COVID-19 status indicators

- County positivity rate based on CDC tracker: <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>
- Community spread mitigation as directed by CMS NH testing guidelines QSO 20-38. [QSO-20-38-NH REVISED \(cms.gov\) 04.27.21.](https://www.cms.gov/medicare/long-term-care-and-post-acute-care-for-the-elderly/nursing-homes/qso-20-38-nh-revised)

**Key Facility Indicators:**

- New facility-onset cases and positive staff cases
- Percent vaccinated staff and residents

**Facility-onset SARS-CoV-2 infections** refers to SARS-CoV-2 infections that originated in the nursing home. It does not refer to the following:

- Residents who were known to have COVID-19 on admission to the facility and were placed into appropriate transmission-based precautions to prevent transmission to others in the facility.
- Residents who were placed into transmission-based precautions on admission and developed SARS-CoV-2 infection within 14 days after admission.

**Residents Guidance:**

Fully vaccinated residents in healthcare settings should continue to [quarantine](#) following close contact (within 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with someone with COVID-19 infection.

**Staff Guidance:**

- The new staff positive will be contact traced by the local health department (LHD) or the Indiana Department of Health for outside the facility contacts. For exposure control within the facility, the infection preventionist will use the tools in the COVID IP Toolkit for assisting with potential risk for exposure and control for outbreak surveillance.
  - Long-term Care (LTC) Respiratory Surveillance Line List
  - Long-term Care (LTC) Respiratory Surveillance Outbreak Summary
  - Staffing assignment sheets that correspond with LTC Line Lists



- If any of the close contacts of the HCP or resident within the facility tests positive for COVID-19, then this would be considered facility-onset due to outbreak exposure control, and the 14-day quarantine would start at the time of the last contact with the positive HCP or resident.
- If more than one staff member tests positive in the same shift and/or unit, this would be considered a “[New Facility-Onset COVID-19 Case](#),” and 14-day quarantine would start.
- Unvaccinated HCP will need to be restricted from work for 14 days following their exposure. Fully vaccinated HCP with [higher-risk exposures](#) who are asymptomatic do not need to be restricted from work. Work restrictions for the following fully vaccinated HCP populations with higher-risk exposures should still be considered for:
  - HCP who has underlying immunocompromising conditions. However, data on which immunocompromising conditions might affect response to the COVID-19 vaccine and the magnitude of risk are not available.
  - Unvaccinated HCP who have traveled should continue to follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC’s) [travel recommendations and requirements](#), including restriction from work, when recommended for any traveler.
  - Fully vaccinated asymptomatic HCP who have traveled both domestic and internationally should follow the CDC current guidance for travelers at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html>.
  - Fully vaccinated travelers should still follow CDC’s recommendations for traveling safely including:
    - Wear a mask over your nose and mouth
    - Stay 6 feet from others and avoid crowds
    - Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer

**New Admissions or Readmissions:** The CDC recommends managing the unknown COVID-19 status for all new admissions or readmissions to the facility. The CDC allows for options that may include placing the resident in a single-person room in the general population area or in a separate observation area so the resident can be monitored for evidence of COVID-19. Examples of readmissions are those who are readmitted after hospitalization over 24 hours, or those who have gone on family visits that are greater than 24 hours.

- **Fully Vaccinated Resident Status: Quarantine is no longer recommended** for residents who are being admitted to the facility if they are fully vaccinated **and have not** had prolonged close contact with someone with COVID-19 infection in the prior 14 days.
  - **Fully vaccinated** status begins 14 days post final vaccination for a two-dose series or after the single dose vaccine.
  - **Close contact is defined as** someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period\* starting from two days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, two days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.  
\*Individual exposures are added together over a 24-hour period (e.g., three 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes) for determination of close contact duration. Data are limited, making it difficult to precisely define “close contact;” however, 15 cumulative minutes of exposure at 6 feet or fewer can be used as an operational definition for contact investigation.



- **Unknown COVID-19 Status:** The CDC recommends facilities create a plan for managing new admissions and readmissions whose COVID-19 status is unknown. The CDC allows for options that may include placing the resident in a single-person room in the general population area or in a separate observation area so the resident can be monitored for evidence of COVID-19.
  - Residents can be transferred out of the observation area to the general population area of the facility if they remain without a fever and without symptoms for 14 days after their exposure (or admission).
  - Testing at the end of this period could be considered to increase certainty that the resident is not infected but is not required.
  - If an observation area has been created, residents in the facility who develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 could be moved from their rooms to this location while undergoing evaluation.
  - All [recommended PPE](#) should be worn during care of newly admitted or readmitted residents under observation for unknown COVID status; this includes use of face mask, eye protection is to be worn by all unvaccinated HCP; vaccinated HCP may choose to not wear eye protection for these residents unless they become symptomatic. (i.e., goggles or a disposable face shield that covers the front and sides of the face), gloves and gown. **Cloth face coverings are not considered PPE and should not be worn by healthcare providers when PPE is indicated.**
- Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of the vaccination status, should receive a viral test (i.e., PCR or antigen test) immediately. This includes both HCP and residents. HCP should adhere to the CDC's Return to Work Criteria, and residents should be placed in transmission-based precautions. Further guidelines regarding testing as it related to vaccination status are as follows:
  - Asymptomatic HCP with a higher risk exposure (i.e., without a mask) and residents with prolonged contact (whether wearing a mask or not), greater than 15 min cumulative over a 24-hour period, with someone with SARS-CoV2 infection should have a viral test immediately and 5-7 days after exposure. This is regardless of vaccination status.
  - People with SARS-CoV-2 infection within past 90 days do not need to be tested if asymptomatic, including after contact with someone with SARS-CoV-2 infection.
  - HCP who are fully vaccinated and asymptomatic are not required to be included in routine testing screening based on the county positivity rate. However, HCP who are fully vaccinated should still be tested in outbreak testing, following a higher risk exposure, or if they are symptomatic.
  - Unvaccinated HCP should continue routine testing based on the county positivity rate as recommended by QSO-20-38 updated 04.27.21. <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-38-nh.pdf>
- **Known COVID-19 Positive Status:** Readmitted residents who are known positive for COVID-19 and who have not met the CDC guidance for removal of transmission-based precautions should be placed in the COVID-19 unit and continue (droplet-contact) precautions until recovered.
- **COVID Recovered Residents within 90 days:** COVID recovered residents have met the criteria for discontinuation of transmission-based precautions; 10 days from onset of symptoms for mild to moderate illness; or up to 20 days for severe illness or immunocompromised state/ + 24 hours fever free. If the resident tested positive and was asymptomatic, transmission-based precautions are for 10 days since the date the



positive test was taken. **These residents do not need to be in 14-day quarantine upon admission or readmission to the facility if within the 90 days of COVID onset.**

- New residents requiring 14-day quarantine could be transferred out of the observation area or from a single to a multi-resident room if they remain afebrile and without symptoms for 14 days after their last exposure (e.g., date of admission). Testing at the end of this period could be considered to increase certainty.  
(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/nursing-homes-responding.html>) (updated 10/5/20).
  - If a new admission develops signs and symptoms of COVID-19, the facility should test the resident for COVID-19. As stated above, the time frame after admission will determine whether a COVID-19 positive result is considered new facility onset.

### CORE PRINCIPLES OF INFECTION PREVENTION

As long-term care facilities move to a reopened phase in resident care, it is expected that COVID-19 infection prevention and control core principles be always adhered to and remain in place as long as the virus is present in epidemic levels. Facilities **must** be mindful of the core principles of infection prevention for COVID-19 when implementing visitation or conducting any activity for the residents:

**Screening must** occur for all who enter the facility; (e. g. visitors, vendors, and staff) for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., temperature checks, questions about and observations of signs or symptoms), and denial of entry of those with signs or symptoms or those who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 infection in the prior 14 days (regardless of the visitor’s vaccination status).

**A visitor reentering the facility does not need to be rescreened if within the calendar day.** Screening should occur based on the following risk assessment:

- **Tier 1-** Low county positivity rates  $\leq 5\%$  **and** resident and LTC staff vaccination status  $\geq 75\%$ 
  - Signage at entrances indicating “Respiratory/Cough Etiquette” and “CDC current COVID-19 Symptoms” should be posted. (See COVID [symptoms of COVID-19](#).)
  - Self- screening for visitors and staff may be by COVID-19 screening paper forms or kiosk screening for every entrance to the facility in a calendar day.
    - Screening questions ask about being afebrile in last 24 hours (temperatures are not required to be physically taken).
- **Tier 2-** Moderate/high county positivity rates  $> 5\%$  **and/or** resident and LTC staff vaccination status  $< 75\%$ 
  - Signage at entrances indicating Respiratory/Cough Etiquette and COVID Symptoms.
  - Active monitoring of visitors and staff by COVID-19 screening by use of nonlicensed personnel to be present.
    - Screening includes physically taking temperatures for \*HCP (\*temperatures required as HCP (unvaccinated) are at highest risk for transmission with  $<75\%$  vaccination rates). See CDC Screening for HCP Guidance in Nursing Homes: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html>).
    - Screening questions ask about being afebrile in last 24 hours for visitors (physical temperatures are not required to be taken).



## Long-term Care Facilities Guidelines in Response to COVID-19 Vaccination

- While a fever is one criterion whereby HCP should not report to the facility for work, facilities should be vigilant to not allow staff with runny nose and sore throats, as one example, to work without first testing for COVID-19 and improved symptoms. All staff should adhere to the CDC's <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html> if symptoms are present or the staff member is confirmed COVID-19 positive. However, those facilities with active COVID-19 cases can continue to employ COVID-positive staff who are asymptomatic in the COVID-dedicated areas of the facility. The Indiana Department of Health asks that asymptomatic COVID-positive staff who do not have a COVID-19 unit in the facility stay off duty for minimum of 10 days and 24 hours fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications, and with improvement in other symptoms before returning to work. HCP should follow the return-to-work criteria as designated by CDC updated guidance for fully vaccinated HCP: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-after-vaccination.html#anchor\\_1619116602537](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-after-vaccination.html#anchor_1619116602537).
- **Hand hygiene** (use of alcohol-based hand rub is preferred)
  - Adherence to strict hand hygiene must continue for all, particularly staff, including when entering the facility and before and after resident care. Alcohol Based hand rubs >60% are preferred unless hands are visibly soiled or when handwashing is advocated by CDC guidance.
- **Face covering or mask** (covering mouth and nose)
  - Continue universal mask use by all staff (medical grade masks) and visitors (cloth is acceptable) and eye protection for staff when delivering care within 6 feet of the resident for all unvaccinated staff. Vaccinated staff may choose to not wear eye protection unless resident is in TBP for symptomatic COVID exposure or positive diagnosis.
  - [CDC Guidance dated 05.13.21](#) regarding masking options for vaccinated staff **does not apply for HCP** in the facility providing direct resident care.
  - Residents should wear mask (cloth is acceptable) when they leave their rooms, as tolerated, unless otherwise outlined below.
- Continue to maintain **social distancing** of at least 6 feet between residents, staff, and visitors as much as possible. Be mindful of the close contact definition and consider less than 15 minutes of close contact over the 24 hour period when possible.
- If a fully vaccinated resident or fully vaccinated HCP are participating in **outdoor activities**, they may choose to not wear a facemask if that activity is not in medium or large crowds.
- Fully vaccinated HCP should continue to wear a mask while indoors at work. However, fully vaccinated HCP could dine and socialize together in breakrooms without masks or physical distancing, so long as residents are not present. If **any unvaccinated HCP are present**, all HCP in the room should wear mask and the unvaccinated should physically distance.



## Long-term Care Facilities Guidelines in Response to COVID-19 Vaccination

- As HCP become vaccinated, the following are examples whereby mask removal during working hours is acceptable:
  - ~~HCP who are fully vaccinated may choose to unmask when delivering one-on-one care to a fully vaccinated resident:~~
    - ~~Must keep mask on if visitors are present.~~
    - ~~Must keep mask on if other, unvaccinated HCP enter the room.~~
    - ~~Must re-mask in hallways and common areas. (deleted 7.1.21)~~
  - HCP who are fully vaccinated may choose to unmask when at the nursing stations with other fully vaccinated HCP:
    - Must re-mask when residents are within 6 feet of distance.
    - Must re-mask when other unvaccinated HCP are within 6 feet of distance.
  - HCP who are fully vaccinated working in non-direct resident care areas such as private office, conference rooms, kitchens and laundry may choose to unmask with other fully vaccinated HCP:
    - Must re-mask when residents enter the area or the HCP enters a common area--e. g., the dining room.
    - Laundry HCP must re-mask and use full PPE required for TBP for contaminated laundry.
  - HCP who are fully vaccinated may choose to not use eye protection in green and yellow zones (new resident monitoring area) irrespective of the county positivity rates.
    - All HCP must wear eye protection when caring for residents symptomatic for COVID-19 in red and yellow zones in TBP.
  - ~~Outdoor activities – vaccinated staff may unmask~~
- Maintain **instructional signage** throughout the facility and proper visitor education on COVID-19 signs and symptoms, infection control precautions, other applicable facility practices (e.g., use of face covering or mask, specified entries, exits and routes to designated areas, hand hygiene).
- When caring for residents with immunocompromised conditions, even if they are fully vaccinated, continue to follow infection prevention principles and follow quarantine, testing guidance for unvaccinated.
- Continue focused **cleaning and disinfecting** high frequency touched surfaces in the facility with approved EPA disinfectants. Assure use of manufacture guidance for disinfection and perform this often, and in designated visitation areas after each visit.
- Continue to use appropriate **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** for all staff according to CDC current guidance and the IDOH Standard Operating procedures. ([https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/files/IN\\_COVID-19%20IP%20Toolkit%20ISDH\\_6.3.2020.pdf](https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/files/IN_COVID-19%20IP%20Toolkit%20ISDH_6.3.2020.pdf)).
- Continue effective **cohorting of residents** (e.g., separate areas dedicated to COVID-19 care) that are marked clearly with signage and allow for dedicated staff according to CDC current guidance and the IDOH Standard Operating procedures. ([https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/files/IN\\_COVID-19%20IP%20Toolkit%20ISDH\\_6.3.2020.pdf](https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/files/IN_COVID-19%20IP%20Toolkit%20ISDH_6.3.2020.pdf)).
- **Resident and staff testing** conducted as required by CMS. 42 CFR § 483.80(h) (see QSO-20-38-NH)
- **Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGPs) in Red/ Yellow zones:** Limit performance of aerosol-generating procedures (AGPs) on confirmed or presumed COVID-19 positive residents unless medically necessary. For any AGP that is performed on a resident with COVID or suspected COVID they should be performed in a **private room** with full Transmission-Based Precautions (TBP) with the door closed for duration of procedure and 1 hour after the



procedure ends. This includes N-95 mask, eye protection, gown and gloves and keeping the door closed throughout the procedure and disinfecting all surfaces following the procedure.

- **AGPs in Green zones:** Make every effort to not place an unvaccinated resident in the same room when a resident is expected to need AGP in semi-private rooms. During low community positivity (under 5%), and when the facility is not in outbreak testing: While **fully vaccinated resident is receiving AGP, room door may be left open if the roommate also is fully vaccinated.** If the roommate is unvaccinated, curtain must be closed.
  - Staff providing direct care within six feet of the resident while AGP is in progress should wear full PPE including N-95 mask and eye protection for all types of scenarios.
  - Fully vaccinated staff may elect to not wear eye protection during direct care of fully vaccinated residents in green zone with CPAP/BiPAP, if the facility is in low community positivity rate (<5%) at that time. However, must wear eye protection if performing suction of the tracheostomy or performing any other procedure where splash/spill of secretions could occur.
- For unvaccinated residents or AGP on anyone during moderate or high community positivity; > 5% or if facility is in outbreak testing: CDC guidance for aerosol-generating procedures should be followed for infection control measures for the duration of the AGP and one (1) hour after the procedure in positive pressure rooms. Resident is placed on transmission-based precautions: both contact and droplet precautions for the duration of the procedure and 1 hour post procedure. This includes N-95 mask, eye protection, gown and gloves and keeping the door closed throughout the procedure and one hour after, and disinfecting all surfaces following the procedure.
  - When possible, a private room is preferred with AGPs with the door shut for the duration of the procedure including 1 hour after the procedure ends.
  - When possible, with semi-private rooms, cohort green zone residents who use CPAP/BIPAP or Nebulizers.
  - Otherwise, for use of CPAP/BIPAP/Nebulizers with COVID naïve residents (green zone) the roommates can continue to stay in the same room with the curtains closed and doors closed.

SOURCE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/faq.html#Transmission>

### VISITATION REQUIREMENTS

#### Federal regulation regarding visitation:

Facilities shall not restrict visitation without a reasonable clinical or safety cause, consistent with 42CFR 483.1(f) (4). A nursing home must facilitate in-person visitation consistent with the applicable CMS regulations, which can be done by applying guidance stated above. **Failure to facilitate visitation, without adequate reason related to clinical necessity or resident safety, would constitute a potential violation of 42 CFR 483.10 (f) (4) and the facility would be subject to citation and enforcement of actions.**



### 42 CFR § 483.10 - Resident rights:

**(f) Self-determination.** The resident has the right to, and the facility must promote and facilitate resident self-determination through support of resident choice, including but not limited to the rights specified in paragraphs (f)(1) through (11) of this section.

The resident has a right to receive visitors of his or her choosing at the time of his or her choosing, subject to the resident's right to deny visitation when applicable, and in a manner that does not impose on the rights of another resident.

### State Regulation regarding visitation:

- **Comprehensive Care: Nursing Homes:**

410 IAC 16.2-3.1-8 Access and visitation rights Authority: IC 16-28-1-7 Affected: IC 16-28-5-1

Sec. 8. (a) Residents have the right to choose with whom they associate. The facility shall provide reasonable visiting hours which should include at least nine (9) hours a day. The hours shall be posted in a prominent place in the facility and made available to each resident. Policies shall also provide for emergency visitation at other than posted hours. (b) The resident has the right and the facility must provide immediate access to any resident by the following: Immediate family or other relatives of the resident, subject to the resident's right to deny or withdraw consent at any time.

- **Residential Care: Assisted Living:**

410 IAC 16.2-5-1.2 Residents' rights Authority: IC 16-28-1-7 Affected: IC 4-21.5; IC 12-10-5.5; IC 12-10-15-9; IC 16-28-5-1(cc) Residents have the right to choose with whom they associate. The facility shall provide reasonable visiting hours, which should include at least twelve (12) hours a day, and the hours shall be made available to each resident. Policies shall also provide for emergency visitation at other hours. The facility shall not restrict visits from the resident's legal representative or spiritual advisor, except at the request of the resident.

Unless noted otherwise, this guidance is to be followed by all long-term care facilities (nursing homes and licensed residential facilities). All resident visits should be conducted following the above core principles of infection prevention. Facilities must continue to promote vaccination for all HCP and all new admissions. **Full vaccination for visitors is preferred, when possible; however, visitation may not be denied based on vaccination status.** Irrespective of vaccination status, visitors should be restricted from visiting based on their screening if they have current COVID infection, symptoms of COVID-19 or prolonged contact with someone with COVID in the past 14 days or in quarantine for any other reason.

### Outdoor Visitation

- Facilities should create accessible and safe spaces for outdoor visitation.
- Outdoor visits **must** continue except during inclement weather or resident health status (medical condition or COVID-19 status). Outdoor visits are not permitted for residents with confirmed COVID-19 infection or in quarantine.





- **Facility COVID-19 outbreak status is not considered a reason to suspend outdoor visitation.**

### Indoor Visitation

- **Indoor visitation must be allowed at all times.**
- **Length of visitation should not be limited.** (The number of visitors can be restricted to allow social distancing to no less than two visitors at a time per resident if in semi-private rooms.) In semi-private room, more than one visitor/per resident must be allowed if desired but must be able to ensure social distancing. The privacy curtain should be pulled. In a private resident's room, a vaccinated resident may have any number of vaccinated visitors at one time as space allows. Additionally, there should be no limit on the number of visits a resident can have per day or per week, including if it is the same visitor coming daily.
- **Facilities must always allow indoor visitation and for all residents (regardless of vaccination status), except for a few circumstances when visitation should be limited due to a high risk of COVID-19 transmission.** These scenarios include limiting indoor visitation for:
  - Unvaccinated residents, if the LTC facility's COVID-19 county positivity rate is >10% **and** <70% of residents in the facility are fully vaccinated.
  - Residents with confirmed COVID-19 infection, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated until they have met the criteria to discontinue Transmission-Based Precautions; or
  - Residents in quarantine, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, until they have met criteria for release from quarantine.
- QSO-20-39 NH Revised 4/27/21: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf>

### Indoor Visitation during an Outbreak (this section only pertains to facilities required to conduct outbreak testing SNF/NFs):

When a new case of COVID-19 among residents or staff is identified, a facility should begin outbreak testing and suspend all indoor visitation immediately (except that required under federal disability rights law), until at least one round of facility-wide testing is completed. Visitation can resume based on the following criteria:

- If the first round of outbreak testing reveals **no additional COVID-19 cases in other areas (e.g., units) of the facility**, then visitation can resume for residents in areas/units with no COVID-19 cases. However, the facility should suspend visitation on the affected unit until the facility meets the criteria to discontinue outbreak testing. For example, if the first round of outbreak testing reveals two more COVID-19 cases in the same unit as the original case, but not in other units, visitation can resume for residents in areas/units with no COVID-19 cases. Visitors who resume visitation in the unaffected areas of the facility should be notified of potential exposure, and signage should be placed in the facility regarding the outbreak in the particular unit.
- If the first round of outbreak testing **reveals one or more additional COVID-19 cases in other areas/units of the facility** (e.g., new cases in two or more units), then facilities should suspend visitations for all residents (vaccinated and unvaccinated), until the facility meets the criteria to discontinue outbreak testing, meaning every 3-7 days until no new COVID-19 case is identified in a 14-day period.



### Privacy:

- Long-term care facilities should enable visits to be conducted with an adequate degree of privacy. Privacy will inherently be limited when the visit is occurring in an open visitation space within the facility. Visitation within resident rooms, when feasible under this guidance, offers a greater degree of privacy.
- Long-term care facilities are not required to perform continuous observation/supervision of each visitor and visitation to maintain compliance with core principles of infection control. If a long-term care facility has reason to believe that a visitor may not adhere to core principles of infection control then the facility may choose to employ periodic and frequent, or continuous, observation/supervision of the visitor and visitation as necessary to protect the health and security of residents and staff. Communication by the long-term care facility to the visitor(s) and resident(s) concerning the reasons for observation/supervision of the visitor and visitation is strongly encouraged.

### Visitors:

- Visitors should be able to adhere to the core principles. Visitors that do not adhere to the core principles should be asked to leave the facility.
- Facilities should limit movement of the visitors in the facility. For example, visitors should not walk around different halls of the facility, unless taking a resident on a walk around the facility for less than 15 minutes. It is encouraged to have walks outside as much as possible and avoid any other visitors with using > 6 feet social distancing when possible.
- Visitors should go directly to the resident's room or designated visitation area. Visits for residents who share a room should not be conducted in the resident's room, if possible, unless the roommate is moved to another area of the long-term care facility during the in-room visit. While visits in designated visitation areas are still encouraged, in-room visits may occur in long-term care facilities for any reason while adhering to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention.
- If resident and all of resident's visitors are fully vaccinated: While alone in the resident's room or the designed visitation room, residents and their visitors can choose to have close contact including touch and to not wear facemasks if simultaneous visits are not occurring. However, the visitors should wear mask, and physically distance if interacting with HCP and other residents in the facility.

If resident or visitor is not fully vaccinated, ideally both should wear facemask and physically distance. If the resident is fully vaccinated and would like to have close contact (physical touch) with their visitor, that can be allowed after both resident and visitor perform hand hygiene and wear well-fitting facemasks.

### Compassionate Care Visitation including Essential Family Caregiver (EFC):

Visitation **must** be allowed in compassionate care circumstances regardless of the resident's vaccination status, including during outbreak testing and when the positivity rate is more than 10%, even if the resident is in transmission-based precautions (Yellow or Red Zone). Such circumstances include but are not limited to:

- End-of-life situations



- A resident, who was living with his/her family before recently being admitted to a nursing home, is struggling with the change in environment and lack of physical family support
- A resident who is grieving after a friend or family member recently died
- A resident who needs cueing and encouragement with eating or drinking, previously provided by family and/or caregiver(s), is experiencing weight loss or dehydration
- A resident, who used to talk and interact with others, is experiencing emotional distress, seldom speaking, or crying more frequently (when the resident rarely cried in the past)
- A resident's relative or other loved one is an essential caregiver for the resident

### PERSONAL SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES INSIDE THE FACILITY Q&A

The core principles of infection prevention should be the guiding principles for any activity that directly relates to the health and safety of the individual residents as we move toward more activities as a response to vaccinations in the communities. For services and activities that have all fully vaccinated residents involved, residents may remove facemasks and are not required to physically distance. HCP will continue to wear **source controls so long as they are indoors**, i.e., facemask and/or eye protection as noted for county positivity rates > 5% when providing direct care within 6 feet of the resident based on vaccination status of HCP (as noted above): If any **one person congregates** during a group activity or service area and they are **not fully vaccinated**, everyone should wear facemask during the activity and **unvaccinated persons must physically distance > 6 feet. If the attending HCP involved in the service or activities listed below is unvaccinated, the residents should remain masked and unvaccinated persons must maintain > 6 feet of social distance. The unvaccinated HCP should continue to wear source controls and physically distance if they are not needed to assist the residents in any activity.**

Examples are:

- **Salon: Can a hairdresser come in if the person wears a mask and serves only one customer at a time with environmental cleaning of the chair and instruments between clients?**  
**Yes**, using the IDOH Guidance for [Personal Services](#) in Long-Term Care. **IF the resident is fully vaccinated and chooses to remove the facemask this is acceptable.** The hairdresser should wear a well-fitting procedure mask that covers their mouth and nose. Eye protection should be used when there is risk of splash or spray for the hairdresser. The residents may have a towel over eyes when hair is washed. Consider fans uses to blow air away from the hairdresser and resident when blow dryer is in use. It is recommended to have 1 resident at a time have these services in the salon. **If space allows, more than one fully vaccinated resident may get salon services at the same time; however, all individuals in the room must wear a mask and residents should socially distance. Blow dryers should be blowing away from any other person in the room.**
- **Pools and Gyms: Can residents use exercise pools and have swim therapy activities, use gyms, and have OT/ PT as directed?**  
**Yes.** Exercise is both important for the physical and mental health and well-being of individuals and should be allowed if can be done safely.



- The facility needs to limit the use to **one individual at a time on each piece of equipment or therapy pool that is designed for one person usage**, has stationary or supportive equipment in place, and must wipe down equipment with approved antiviral disinfectants after each individual use.
- In the larger fitness centers or gyms, facilities may allow **more than one individual at a time** if they maintain >6 feet apart on equipment or area, continue wearing a mask, performing hand hygiene, and disinfecting equipment and surfaces between resident use. Facilities must assure that they provide 6 feet for physical distance in the therapy gym with resident/residents and staff wearing masks. The equipment must be wiped down with approved antiviral disinfectants after each use. IF all residents are **fully vaccinated** during this session, they may choose to remove facemasks. **HCP will continue to wear source controls as noted above.** If any **one person congregates** during a group activity or service area and they are **not fully vaccinated**, everyone should wear facemask during the activity and **unvaccinated persons must physically distance > 6 feet.** If the resident is in rehabilitation status upon admission to the facility and is in 14-day quarantine transmission-based precautions due to **not being fully vaccinated**, then one resident at a time is allowed in the therapy gym for medical rehabilitation. HCP should be in TBP PPE; full gown, N95 mask, eye protection and gloves. Resident should wear surgical mask and gloves. Equipment must be disinfected with compatible SARS-CoV-2 disinfectants after use and the **room remain empty for an hour afterward before allowing another resident in the gym for therapy.**
- If residents in rehabilitation units are in 14-day quarantine in TBP for asymptomatic COVID-19 and need to get to the skilled therapy gym, they may go when there is one HCP and one resident: both in full gown, glove, surgical mask for resident and HCP N95 mask and eye protection. Equipment must be disinfected with compatible SARS-CoV-2 disinfectants after use and the **room remain empty for an hour afterward before allowing another resident in the gym for therapy.**
- If the facility has free standing swimming pools that are used for exercise classes consider the CDC guidance and follow the core principles of infection control and social distancing including masking when appropriate while in the water: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/aquatic-venues.html>
  - Masking is not required when swimming laps.
  - Masking and 6 feet social distancing (length of typical pool noodle l) when doing stand- up exercise classes. IF all residents in the class are fully vaccinated then they may choose to remove facemask. If any **one person congregates** in group activity or swim area is **not fully vaccinated**, all residents should wear facemask during the activity and **unvaccinated persons must physically distance > 6 feet.**
  - Discard worn or wet mask and use clean mask.
  - Wear masks to and from the pool area at all times. Encourage staff and residents to have extra masks in case of getting the first mask wet.
- **Dentist/Podiatry Visits:** In-facility routine and preventive visits can resume in addition to the emergent and urgent care that has already being provided. Dentists and podiatrists, like any outside visitor, should be screened for symptoms and wear appropriate PPE while in the facility.



## Long-term Care Facilities Guidelines in Response to COVID-19 Vaccination

- **Construction or Maintenance Vendors:** If a facility needs construction or maintenance, an infection preventionist must review and approve the proposed work before it starts to ensure proper use of infection control environmental controls. Infection preventionist in the building will use the relevant policies and provide written guidance for these controls.
- **Therapy Pets:** Therapy pets can be brought to the facility. COVID-19 positive residents should not pet or hold the therapy pets, but the residents not in COVID-19 precautions can be allowed to pet. Residents should use hand sanitizer before and after contact with therapy pets. Pet therapy for a resident's own pet(s) can be ok too if they are limited to the resident's pet in the same household. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html>

**Entertainers and Church Activities:** Facilities can allow church services and entertainers outdoors with social distancing and masks according to the core principles of infection prevention. IF all residents in the services or entertainment are fully vaccinated then they may choose to remove facemask. If any **one person congregates** in group activity or service is **not fully vaccinated**, all residents should wear facemask during the activity and **unvaccinated persons must physically distance > 6 feet**. When conducting church services or entertainers indoors anything with shouting or singing should be avoided due to potential aerosol and droplet projection.

If all individuals are fully vaccinated, it is recommended to mask and socially distance if singing indoors. If any unvaccinated individuals are present, avoid singing indoors. If all individuals in the room are fully vaccinated, you may allow a fully vaccinated outside performer to sing indoors after verifying the vaccination documentation. **Fully vaccinated residents may choose to remove their mask if all persons are fully vaccinated.** It is recommended for residents to mask when singing, and the singer must still wear a mask and be distant from the residents. Singing is higher aerosol generating; hence, an outdoor venue is still preferable. [Considerations for Events and Gatherings | CDC.](#)

**Communal Dining/ Activities and Volunteers:** Residents in outbreak testing, yellow and red zones may not participate in communal activities.

- In recognition of the impact and increased staffing requirement for social isolation, communal dining/activities and volunteers can occur under these conditions:
  - No new facility-onset cases of COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
  - COVID-19 recovered residents can resume communal dining despite facility outbreak status if able to cohort these residents. Proper social distancing precautions still need to be in place.
  - Facilities can adhere to physical distancing, such as being seated at least 6 feet apart.
  - Dining area is environmentally cleaned before and after each group comes to the area.
  - Residents should be offered hand hygiene before dining and after returning to their room.
  - Residents should not share food, drinks, or other personal items during dining.
  - Caregivers in the dining area should wear masks and perform hand hygiene before assisting residents with eating and between each resident that they assist.
  - Caregivers should perform hand hygiene after leaving the dining area or the resident's room if assisting him/her there.



- Fully vaccinated residents may choose to have physical contact and not wear facemasks during group activities. Fully vaccinated residents can participate in communal dining without facemask or maintaining physical distance of > 6 feet.  
If any **one person congregates** in group activity or communal dining, and is **not fully vaccinated**, all residents should wear facemask during the activity and **unvaccinated persons must physically distance > 6 feet.**
- **Excursions: (leaving the facility for less than 24 hours in duration e. g. family home, church, wedding, funeral etc.)**  
Independently mobile residents may leave the facility provided they take proper precautions with physical distancing, hand hygiene and mask wearing. They do not require transmission-based precautions (TBP) upon return if the excursion was less than 24 hours in duration, but they should still be monitored for symptoms. Residents who are not independently mobile may be escorted on outdoor excursions if all precautions are taken (i.e., social distancing of at least 6 feet, masks, and hand hygiene) they do not require transmission-based precautions (TBP) upon return if but should be monitored for symptoms. Excursions should not occur during outbreak testing.
  - **For a resident that is not fully vaccinated:** When reviewing the core principles of infection prevention with residents and family member review that assists for transfers should be kept in mind to limit to < 15 minutes cumulative over the course of the 24-hour period for the excursion. Include review of social distancing and masking in the community to cover both nose and mouth and frequent hand hygiene. Encourage outdoor activities as much as possible. Avoid crowded places and poorly ventilated spaces.
  - If fully vaccinated residents going on excursions for over 24 hours do not need to be in TBP for 14 days if asymptomatic and has not had a high- risk exposure.
  - If all residents on this excursion are fully vaccinated then they may choose to remove facemask. If any **one person** in group activity or service area is **not fully vaccinated**, all residents should wear facemask during the activity and **unvaccinated persons must physically distance > 6 feet.**
- **Medical Appointments:** Residents can attend medical appointments both routine and preventive outside of the facility. Telehealth should still be used in appropriate situations. Should residents go to doctor appointments outside the facility, emergency department (ED) visit, a community vaccine site, or dialysis visits, the following is recommended for infection control:
  - For those residents leaving for a necessary appointment, including dialysis three times per week, facilities should take infection control precautions to minimize the risk of transmission of COVID-19 (e.g., giving the resident a surgical mask to wear while attending the appointment and performing hand hygiene before and after the appointments).
  - Based on these infection control precautions provided for the residents' transport, as well as the infection control precautions in place in the physician offices, ED, community vaccine sites, and dialysis centers, it is **not recommended to place resident in transmission-based precautions (Contact-Droplet) be initiated upon return to the facility.** Facilities will continue to monitor these residents for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 per protocols for all other COVID naive residents in the facility and consider frequent COVID testing for screening for residents who go in and out of the facility frequently.
- **Dialysis residents** who frequently leave the facility may be offered a private room, if possible, or a semiprivate room with a roommate who has not had high exposure risk for COVID-19. (e. g. waiting on test results from an exposure or



symptomatic for COVID-19). **Note: A private room is not required but may be recommended as added infection control, should the facility have this space.** These residents do not require transmission-based precautions; however, due to being at high risk, these residents should be monitored closely for symptoms and consider COVID testing for screening for residents who go in and out of the facility frequently.

### Resources:

1. For additional details on the updated nursing home visitation guidance released 04.27.21, visit here: <https://www.cms.gov/medicareprovider-enrollment-and-certificationsurveycertificationgeninfopolicy-and-memos-states-and/nursing-home-visitation-covid-19-revised>
2. Read the CDC's expanded [Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#), corresponding [Science Brief](#) and [recommendations for healthcare providers](#).