**COVID-19 Testing**

**Leaders Guide**

**(12.05.2022)**

**COVID-19 Testing**

**Leader’s Guide**

Testing for SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) is essential to identify positive cases as soon as possible to implement mitigation efforts to prevent the spread of infection in the facility. Testing is also required for regulatory compliance.

There are multiple factors to consider when addressing COVID-19 testing and the role in the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 in the Long-Term Care Setting.

Policies and procedures following the guidelines provided through CMS, CDC, and State specific guidance will enable the facility to consistently implement strategies to maintain the health, safety, and welfare of residents and staff.

A solid testing plan, consistent with CMS and State guidance, identifying equipment and supply needs and acquisition, staff education and verification of competency for COVID-19 testing, reporting and documentation is essential for quality to prevent the spread of infection and compliance. Through an established policy and procedure, testing of residents and staff in accordance with guidance will be an essential component to the COVID-19 Pandemic Plan and reopening process.

Some areas to be considered for COVID-19 Testing may include:

* Staff Resources:
* Infection Preventionist
* Licensed Nurses
* All Staff
* Administrator
* Director of Nursing Services and designee
* Education:
* Infection Control Practices and Prevention of Transmission
* Policies and Procedures for Infection Control, including COVID-19
* COVID-19 testing policies and procedures
* Proper use and application of Personal Protective Equipment
* Hand hygiene procedures
* Specimen Collection
* Use of Point-of-Care COVID-19 Antigen Testing Device
* Cleaning and Disinfection
* Reporting
* Prompt Action for positive results
* Documentation Considerations:
* CLIA Certificate of Waiver
* Employee education and competency demonstration outcomes
* COVID-19 Testing Plan
* Risk Assessment
* COVID-19 Test Results
* Resident Refusals
* COVID-19 Test Results Reporting
* Reporting (NOTE: Monitor for all updates and requirements related to the end of the Public Health Emergency in relation to reporting of COVID-19 testing)
	+ NHSN Reporting- COVID-19 Module for LTCF. <https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/covid19/index.html>
	+ CLIA requirement to report the results of positive COVID-19 testing: <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/covid-19-laboratory-data-reporting-guidance.pdf>
	+ CMS How to obtain a CLIA Certificate: <https://www.cms.gov/regulations-and-guidance/legislation/clia/downloads/howobtaincliacertificate.pdf>
	+ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. How to Report COVID-19 Laboratory Data. Updated Apr. 4, 2022: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/reporting-lab-data.html>
* Monitoring and Evaluation
* Observation of staff performance with coaching as needed
* Staff interview regarding availability and use of PPE and face masks
* Observation of specimen collection
* Observation of testing performance
* Medical Record Audit for documentation of test results
* COVID-19 tracking and trending
* QAPI review and reporting

**References and Resources:**

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Interim Final Rule (IFC), CMS-3401-IFC, Additional Policy and Regulatory Revisions in Response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency related to Long-Term Care (LTC) Facility Testing Requirements. August 26, 2020, Revised 09/23/22: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-38-nh-revised.pdf>

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. QSO-20-38-NH, Revised, 09/23/2022, Interim Final Rule (IFC), CMS-3401-IFC, Additional Policy and Regulatory Revisions in Response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency related to Long-Term Care (LTC) Facility Testing Requirements: <https://wwwlcms.gov/files/documents/qso-20-38-nh-revised.pdf>

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Interim Final Rule (IFC), CMS-3401-IFC, Updating Requirements for Reporting of SARS-CoV-2 Test Results by Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA) Laboratories, and Additional Policy and Regulatory Revisions in Response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. QSO-20-37-CLIA, NH. August 26, 2020: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-37-clianh.pdf>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic), Updated Sept. 23, 2022: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Guidance for SARS-CoV-2 Rapid Testing Performed in Point-of-Care Settings. Updated Apr. 4, 2022: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/point-of-care-testing.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. How to Report COVID-19 Laboratory Data. Updated Apr. 4, 2022: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/reporting-lab-data.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) LTCF COVID-19 Module: <https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/covid19/index.html>

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA): <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Legislation/CLIA>

United States Health & Human Services. COVID-19 Pandemic Response, Laboratory Data Reporting: Cares Act Section 18115: <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/covid-19-laboratory-data-reporting-guidance.pdf>