



## Strategies to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 in Long-Term Care Facilities (LCTF)

A new respiratory disease – coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) – is spreading globally and there have been instances of COVID-19 community spread in the United States. Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness. Symptoms can include fever, cough and shortness of breath. The general strategies CDC recommends to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in LCTF are the same strategies these facilities use every day to detect and prevent the spread of other respiratory viruses like influenza.

Long-term care facilities concerned that a resident, visitor or employee may be a [COVID-2019 patient under investigation](#) should contact the Louisiana Infectious Disease Epidemiology (IDEpi) Hotline at **1 (800) 256-2748** immediately for consultation and guidance. IDEpi's Healthcare-Associated Infections/Antibiotic Resistance Team is also available to address COVID-19 infection control questions and assist long-term care facilities with COVID-19 preparedness planning: [InfectionControl@la.gov](mailto:InfectionControl@la.gov).

### Prevent the introduction of respiratory germs INTO your facility:

- Post signs at the entrance instructing visitors not to visit if they have symptoms of respiratory infection.
- Ensure sick leave policies allow employees to stay home if they have symptoms of respiratory infection.
- Assess residents symptoms of respiratory infection upon admission to the facility and implement appropriate infection prevention practices for incoming symptomatic residents.

### 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.
- 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).
  - Healthcare personnel should monitor their local and state public health sources to understand COVID-19 activity in their community to help inform their evaluation of individuals with unknown respiratory illness. If there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in the community or facility, when evaluating unknown respiratory illness, refer to CDC's [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) or Persons Under Investigation for COVID-19 in Healthcare Settings](#).
- 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).
  - Put alcohol-based hand rub in every resident room (ideally both inside and outside of the room).
  - Make sure tissues are available and any sink is well-stocked with soap and paper towels for hand washing.
- Identify dedicated employees to care for COVID-19 patients and provide infection control training.
  - Guidance on implementing recommended infection prevention practices is available in CDC's free online course — [The Nursing Home Infection Preventionist Training](#) — which includes resources checklists for facilities and employees to use.



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- Provide the right supplies to ensure easy and correct use of PPE.
  - Post [signs](#) on the door or wall outside of the resident room that clearly describe the type of precautions needed and required PPE.
  - Make PPE, including facemasks, eye protection, gowns, and gloves, available immediately outside of the resident room.
  - Position a trash can near the exit inside any resident room to make it easy for employees to discard PPE.

### Prevent the spread of respiratory germs BETWEEN facilities

- Notify facilities prior to transferring a resident with an acute respiratory illness, including suspected or confirmed COVID-19, to a higher level of care.
- Report any possible COVID-19 illness in residents and employees to the Louisiana Infectious Disease Epidemiology Hotline at **1 (800) 256-2748** immediately for consultation and guidance.

For the most up-to-date information, visit [www.cdc.gov/covid19](http://www.cdc.gov/covid19).

For more information about COVID-19 in Louisiana visit: [Http://www.ldh.la.gov/coronavirus](http://www.ldh.la.gov/coronavirus)

For questions from the general public about COVID-19 call: (855)-523-2652