



## **CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES Office of the Secretary**

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### **CHFS Surveillance COVID-19 Testing for Long-Term Care Facilities Frequently Asked Questions June 28, 2022**

#### **WHO**

##### **Who should the Provider arrange to have tested?**

Test those described in the CMS QSO-20-38-NH-Revised, updated 4/27/21, available at:  
<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-38-nh-revised.pdf>

Work closely with both the local health department and Kentucky Department for Public Health's Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAI) staff to plan, execute and coordinate the response.

- o Local Health Departments, directory available at:  
<https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dafm/LHDInfo/AlphaLHDListing.pdf>
- o Kentucky Department for Public Health's *Healthcare Associated Infections (HAI) Team* at **(502) 564-3261**.

#### **WHAT**

##### **What testing procedure is included in the CHFS program?**

Participating clinical laboratories will provide:

1. Antigen Test Kits for ongoing surveillance test administration performed by the provider, and
2. Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) testing to detect the presence of COVID-19 infections for:
  - a. Any eligible person with a positive antigen test result, or
  - b. Any eligible person with a physician's order for a PCR test (following CDC-approved testing guidance)

#### **WHEN**

##### **When will the program take effect?**

COVID tests performed beginning July 1, 2022 can be eligible for reimbursement by CHFS, including an antigen test supplied by a CHFS-contracting clinical lab or a PCR test performed by CHFS-contracting clinical lab.

## **How frequently should testing occur?**

Follow the guidelines set forth in the CMS QSO-20-38-NH-Revised, updated 4/26//21, available at: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-38-nh-revised.pdf>

NOTE: Determining the appropriate testing frequency entails scrolling down the page to select the provider's county, as well as selecting "Community Transmission" and hovering over the county.

## **How long is the program expected to remain available?**

Financial support for COVID-19 Surveillance COVID testing will continue until federal funding for this program expires.

## **WHERE**

### **Which Long-Term Care Providers are eligible to participate?**

Congregate residential settings serving predominantly older or disabled adults, whether a Nursing Facility (NF), Nursing Home (NH), Intermediate Care Facility (ICF), Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF-IID), Personal Care Home (PCH) or Assisted Living Community (ALC).

## **WHY**

### **Why is surveillance testing for COVID-19 recommended for Long-Term Care settings?**

This program has the following critical aims:

- a. Early detection of new COVID-19 cases among residents of long-term care communities, who are the most at-risk for severe outcomes, including death, if they contract the disease;
- b. Early detection of new COVID-19 cases among those who provide care for (or come into contact with) long-term care residents;
- c. Prevention of COVID-19 community spread – intra-facility and in its surrounding community;
- d. Reduction of the COVID-19-related mortality rate among persons living or working in long-term care communities; and
- e. Universal access by the targeted populations to testing (without individual cost presenting a potential barrier to testing).

Mounting evidence suggests

- A significant percentage of people who receive a positive COVID-19 test result are asymptomatic, adding support for the potential benefits of following the baseline tests with a maintenance testing program.
- Early detection limits transmission of COVID-19 in post-acute settings

## **HOW**

### **Are individuals responsible for any testing program expenses?**

NO – the Cabinet for Health and Family Services will reimburse participating clinical laboratories directly for the specified tests and services performed.

## How are test results reported?

1. Antigen test results - (No Change) Provider continues reporting *positive results only* in the same fashion it has for the first half of 2022 to
  - a. – KHIE or NHSN,
  - b. the tested individual, and
  - c. the selected participating clinical laboratory (triggering a PCR test for validation).
2. PCR test results: The participating clinical laboratory that performs the PCR test is responsible for notifying the resident of the test result, as well as reporting the results to the Kentucky Department for Public Health, including the information listed in the CHFS contract (PON3\_728\_2200000181).

## What Clinical Laboratories can participate in this program?

A Provider can select a Clinical Laboratory that is approved by CHFS listed on the Office of Inspector General’s “List of Contracted COVID Surveillance Testing Clinical Labs beginning July 1, 2022,” which will become available at (bottom of the left column): <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/os/oig/dhc/Pages/cvltc.aspx>

NOTE: Currently participating clinical laboratories were invited to submit applications for consideration by CHFS. Most (but not all) of them did; the approved clinical laboratories beginning 7/1/22 represent 97% of the COVID PCR tests performed in LTCFs over the past two years.

## Can a Clinical Lab serving multiple LTCF sites submit a consolidated invoice?

**Yes** – Available for a participating Lab serving five (5) or more LTCF locations, indicating a separate federal tax ID number for each LTCF; the standard invoice can include all LTCF sites (sorted by location and listing residents/staff separately) with a single entity in the “remit to” space provided.

## Is the surveillance COVID-19 testing program *mandatory*?

**YES** for a Nursing Facility (NF), Nursing Home (NH), or Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) beginning September 3, 2020, consistent with CMS Interim Final Rule QSO-20-38-NH, available at: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-38-nh-revised.pdf>. Although the CHFS baseline testing initiative was voluntary (with over 99% participation), CMS has declared surveillance COVID-19 testing as a Medicare/Medicaid condition of participation for this classification of long-term care facilities. CHFS remains committed to underwriting the cost of the antigen and PCR tests in order to enhance Providers’ ability to protect the welfare of their residents, staff, families of both, and surrounding communities.

**OR**

**NO** for an Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF-IID), Personal Care Home (PCH) or Assisted Living Community (ALC), for which the program remains *available and voluntary, but strongly recommended*.

## When should a PCR test follow an Antigen Point of Care (POC) test?

Immediately arrange a verifying PCR test for a person who is either

- a) Symptomatic for COVID-19 but produces a negative POC test result, or
  - b) Asymptomatic with no known exposure but produces a positive POC test result.
- Individuals in both situations would be “presumed” positive pending results from PCR testing.

## **Have a Question or Suggestion?**

For additional support regarding Assisted Living Communities, please contact Carrie Anglin at [Carrie.Anglin@ky.gov](mailto:Carrie.Anglin@ky.gov) or call 502-385-1712

For additional support regarding other Long-Term Care settings, please contact the Provider's branch office of OIG, available at:

<https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/os/oig/Documents/RegionalMap.pdf>

<https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/os/oig/Documents/OIGDHCCContactList.pdf>

For CHFS COVID-19 Surveillance Testing program contracts and related support, please contact Marianne Johns at [marianne.johns@ky.gov](mailto:marianne.johns@ky.gov) or 502-564-3525.