

COVID-19: Suspected Case

Communication Checklist

Identify a member of your leadership team to serve as the designated contact person for all communication regarding COVID-19

The following list of contacts, in order of priority, should be considered if a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified

1

Resident

Explain the isolation process; what to expect, etc. and arrange for ongoing contact with loved ones via Skype, FaceTime, texting, email, etc.

2

Public Health Department

Notify appropriate health departments per state requirements (e.g., local, county, state)

3

Attending Physician

Initiate "Visitor Screening" protocol for all physicians and physician extenders

4

DPOA or Guardian

If applicable

5

Staffing Considerations

*Designate specific staff on each shift to provide care for the resident per CDC guidelines
Provide information for preventing the spread
Re-in-service staff on each shift
Provide PPE*

6

Direct Care

*Communicate the importance of following precautions
Provide PPE*

7

Housekeeping

*Communicate the importance of following precautions
Provide PPE*

8

Dietary

*Use of disposable utensils and in-room service
Importance of following precautions
Provide PPE*

9

Maintenance

*Limit access
Provide PPE*

10

Therapy

Discontinue non-essential services

11

Activities

*Provide in-room activities based on resident's interests
Provide PPE
Assist residents with family contact*

12

Social Services

*Support and assist in preventing depression
Importance of following precautions*

*Provide PPE
Assist residents with family contact*

13

Ancillary Support

Discontinue services

14

Agency Staff

Discontinue if possible

15

Volunteers

Discontinue services

16

"Essential" Vendors and Visitors

Initiate visitor screening protocol, this could include:

- Laboratory service providers
- Physician extenders
 - Podiatry
 - Dental
- Clergy
- Hospice providers
- Dietary and DME providers

PRESS RELEASE
CONFIRMED POSITIVE COVID-19
March 17, 2020

A resident of a senior care community, has been diagnosed with COVID-19. The resident is in the hospital and [FACILITY NAME] is working closely with public health officials to determine who may have come into contact with the resident. A number of healthcare staff are at home in self-quarantine.

Starting at the beginning of March, a Coronavirus Task Force comprised of staff from various departments, including an RN Infection Preventionist, met to review existing policies and procedures related to infectious diseases and make a plan for other concerns. Our existing infection control policies and procedures guide us as we work to prevent the spread of infection and control it as necessary.

As soon as COVID-19 was diagnosed for the hospitalized resident, [FACILITY NAME] took additional steps, including requiring all residents to remain in their apartments/rooms and resident needs will continue to be attended to by staff.

The state and local health departments will be involved throughout the process and we remain committed to protecting the health and safety of those we have the privilege to serve, and to the staff who are working diligently on our residents' behalf.

LETTER TO RESIDENT AND/OR FAMILY
CONFIRMED POSITIVE COVID-19
March 17, 2020

As you may have heard by now, a resident of [FACILITY NAME] has been diagnosed with COVID-19. The resident is in the hospital. [FACILITY NAME] is working closely with public health officials, to determine who may have come into contact with the resident and a number of healthcare staff are at home in self-quarantine.

Starting at the beginning of March, a Coronavirus Task Force comprised of staff from various departments, including an RN Infection Preventionist, met to review existing policies and procedures related to infectious diseases and make a plan for other concerns. Our existing infection control policies and procedures guide us as we work to prevent the spread of infection and control it as necessary.

As soon as COVID-19 was diagnosed for the hospitalized resident, [FACILITY NAME] took additional steps, including requiring all residents to remain in their apartments/rooms and all needs of residents will continue to be attended to by staff.

Although [FACILITY NAME] had robust infection control policies already in place due to the threat from seasonal influenza, we have reviewed our infection control policies and updated them as necessary to specifically address our current circumstances along with what is known today about the Coronavirus. We anticipate additional changes may occur as more becomes known about the Coronavirus.

Our staff members have been trained on these policies and have implemented them throughout our community. Our staff is reviewing changing conditions or presence of respiratory illness in our community daily on each shift. Staff are also participating in daily calls with our governmental and healthcare partners to understand the latest updates and current information related to this issue.

While we have taken these steps to prepare our staff and community, we need your help to minimize our residents' and building's exposure to this virus. **The Centers for Disease Control has directed "Older persons" to stay home.** https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/03.16.20_coronavirus-guidance_8.5x11_315PM.pdf. **The state and local health departments have also directed our residents to stay in their apartments.** Our staff will be bringing meals to you three times a day. Additionally, should there be an issue that ordinarily would require you leave your apartment, our staff will do what we can to address the issue so you can remain in your apartment.

Please continue to observe appropriate infection control practices:

- Wash your hands;
- Cover your cough and sneezes;

- Maintain an appropriate social distance of at least six (6) feet;
- Do not shake hands or otherwise have physical contact with others;
- If you are ill or feeling under the weather, please let us know immediately. Also, please stay in your apartment/room and do not visit with others;

We understand that it is difficult not to visit your loved ones. If you need assistance visiting with a loved one by phone, FaceTime, Skype, etc., let staff know and we will work to assist you. Protecting your health and wellbeing, and that of our staff, remain our highest priority. We appreciate your help and understanding during this unprecedented time and situation.

LETTER TO STAFF
CONFIRMED POSITIVE COVID-19
April 17, 2020

As you may have heard, a resident of _____ has tested positive for COVID-19. The resident [is in the hospital _____ or is in isolation] and our management team is working to identify individuals who may have come into contact with the resident. As soon as we learned of the positive test results, _____ took additional steps, including enhancing our existing social distancing protocol to require all residents to remain in their apartments/room. All needs of our residents will continue to be attended to by staff in the residents' room.

Although _____ had robust infection control policies already in place due to the threat from seasonal influenza, we also reviewed our infection control policies and updated them as necessary to specifically address our current circumstances along with what is known today about the Coronavirus. We anticipate additional changes may occur as more becomes known about the Coronavirus and we will continue to provide you with training on any updates.

We know you may be concerned about the spread of COVID-19 (the new coronavirus.) Please be assured that your health and safety, along with that of your dedicated co-workers and our residents is our greatest concern. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the [State] Department of Health have recommended a variety of steps that we implemented back in March to help reduce the spread of this virus. However, we continue to need your help in battling the COVID-19 virus. Below are some examples of how you can help protect yourselves and our residents as well as prevent the spread throughout the community:

1. **Sick employees should stay home.** At this time, we request that you stay home if you have any symptoms of respiratory illness. Those symptoms include: cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose, and/or shortness of breath.
2. **Notify your supervisor immediately if you develop respiratory symptoms while at work.** These include: cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose, and/or shortness of breath.
3. **Practice proper hand washing hygiene.** Clean their hands before and after interaction with residents and their environment with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol, or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty. You can never wash your hands enough!
4. **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.** Please review the [CDC's information on coughing and sneezing etiquette](#).
5. **Perform routine environmental cleaning.** Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label. No special cleaning is necessary for COVID-19.
6. **Wear appropriate PPE** as outlined in our infection control policy, including facemask (at all times in resident care areas), gloves, eye protection and/or gowns per policy.

You are a very important member of our healthcare team and you have been and will continue to be provided with training on infection control policies based on CDC recommendations. For your own safety, it is imperative that you continue to follow this guidance consistently during the provision of care in our community. We will continue to monitor for the presence of respiratory illness in our community daily on each shift. We will also continue to screen everyone before they are allowed in to our community.

While we have taken these steps to prepare you and our community, we need your help to minimize our residents' and building's exposure to this virus. We understand this is a difficult, unprecedented time and appreciate your ongoing commitment to our residents and our community. We are here if you have any questions or need additional support. Thank you, stay well!

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PREVENTING COVID-19

[Community Name]

To Our Employees:

We know some of you may be concerned about the spread of COVID-19 (the new coronavirus) being reported in the media and how it may impact us here at [Facility Name]. Ensuring our staff and residents are in a safe and healthy environment is our greatest concern. At this time, we do not believe we have any cases of COVID-19 in our Community.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended a variety of steps that we are implementing to help reduce the potential for the virus to enter our building. Please allow this to serve as a reminder, we need your help in battling COVID-19. Below are some examples of how you can help protect yourselves and our residents, as well as prevent the spread throughout the community.

1. **Sick employees should stay home.** At this time, we request that you stay home if you have any symptoms of respiratory illness. Those symptoms include: cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose, and/or shortness of breath.
2. **Notify us if you develop respiratory symptoms while at work.** These include: cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose, and/or shortness of breath.
3. **Practice proper hand washing hygiene.** All employees should clean their hands before and after interaction with residents and their environment with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol, or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.
4. **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.** Please review the [CDC's information on coughing and sneezing etiquette](#).
5. **Perform routine environmental cleaning.** Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label. No special cleaning is necessary for COVID-19.
6. If you develop signs and symptoms of a respirator infection while on –the-job you should immediately stop work, put on a facemask, and self-isolate at home and inform the DON.
7. If you have traveled in the last 14 days, please notify _____ prior to returning to work.

Our Community is following the recommendations of the CDC on using basic contact precautions to prevent the spread which includes wearing gowns and gloves when interacting with residents who are sick as we always do. We also are staying up-to-date with the CDC recommendations as they are updated.

We will continue to keep you informed if any residents or staff are diagnosed with COVID-19. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact _____.

For additional information, please visit the CDC's website:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Sincerely,

I have read and been informed about the content and expectations of the COVID-19 prevention guidelines for employees at the Community. I have received a copy of the guidelines and I agree to adhere to the guidelines outlined above.

I understand that if I have questions, at any time, regarding the COVID-19 prevention guidelines as outlined above, I will contact my direct supervisor immediately.

I have been advised to, and have read and understand the COVID-19 prevention employee guidelines carefully to ensure that I understand these guidelines before signing this document.

Employee Signature: _____ **Date:** _____