



Covid-19 Testing
Handbook for Assisted Living Facilities
updated as of April 5, 2021

NB: Some of the links in this document no longer work because the information has been removed. However, the text of this document still contains useful information so we have made the decision to leave it up on our website.

Preface

This handbook provides information to support COVID-19 testing in Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs) in King County. It is a resource to inform ongoing recommended screening testing of staff as well as diagnostic testing for symptomatic residents and outbreak response testing. Please note that the Department of Health (DOH) recently posted a [Q&A for testing in Nursing Homes and Memory Care units](#). This handbook is meant to be used in conjunction with the DOH Q&A document and contains King County specific information.

On April 23, 2020, Public Health Seattle & King County (PHSKC) Health Officer Jeff Duchin issued a [memo](#) that long-term care facilities take all steps to identify infections early. This includes, when possible, testing all residents and staff of long-term care facilities on a voluntary basis even before a case has been confirmed in the facility in order to identify unrecognized cases and facilitate disease control measures.

Subsequently, on May 28, 2020 Washington State Department of Health Director John Wiesman issued an [order](#) for all ALFs with memory care units to offer and administer a baseline test of all ALF memory care residents and staff for COVID-19. The order clarifies that the responsibility for testing rests with facilities themselves, not their local health jurisdictions. The role of public health is to provide technical assistance and support.

Subsequently ongoing screening testing of staff in LTCFs has been shown to identify outbreaks earlier in LTCFs and help limit transmission in these settings. Because of this King County issued a further [memo](#) in the fall of 2020 recommending at least weekly testing of all LTCF staff when feasible through the 2020-2021 flu season and was subsequently updated to recommend this practice until further notice in March 2021.

Below are tips for getting an infrastructure set up in you facility for testing, completing testing and follow up activities. If you have questions about testing, contact [REDACTED].

1. CDC Guidelines for Testing in Nursing Homes

PERFORM VIRAL TESTING OF ANY RESIDENT WHO HAS SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

- CDC has issued a testing guidance for nursing homes and can be found [HERE](#). Although this guidance is focused on nursing homes, these recommendations should be considered strongly in other LTC settings including Assisted Living Facilities.
- This guidance includes a recommendation for routine ongoing screening testing for all staff.
- Routine testing of staff is also required by [CMS](#) for nursing homes. While CMS recommends monthly testing of all staff when the jurisdictions positivity rate is <5%, CDC and [King county recommend](#) continuing weekly testing until further notice as it provides substantially increased benefit for quickly identifying outbreaks and limiting transmission as opposed to monthly testing.

Routine Testing for ALL STAFF			
Facility Type	Required/recommended	County Positivity**	Minimum Frequency*
SNF	Required by CMS QSO-20-38-NH	<5%	Once a week [#]
		5-10%	Once a week
		>10%	Twice a week
All other licensed LTCFs	Recommended, if resources are available	<5%	Once a week [#]
		>5%	Once a week

*This frequency presumes availability of Point of Care testing on-site at the nursing home or where off-site testing turnaround time is <48 hours.

**County positivity for SNF: [CMS](#)

[#][Note this is a King County recommendation and differs from CMS mandates which recommend monthly testing at this positivity rate.](#)

- Testing for all staff and all residents when a case has been identified

Testing ALL STAFF and ALL RESIDENTS if one staff or facility-onset case* is identified			
Facility Type	Required/recommended	Frequency	Duration
SNF	Required by CMS QSO-20-38-NH	Every 3-7 days	Until no positives are identified 14 days from most recent positive
All other licensed LTCFs	Recommended, in coordination with the LHJ		

*Long-term care facilities and agencies-acquired COVID-19 infection in a resident or patient is defined as a laboratory positive (PCR or antigen) case diagnosis 14 days or more after admission for a non-COVID condition, without an exposure during the previous 14 days to another setting where an outbreak was known or suspected to be occurring. It does not refer to the following:

- Residents or patients 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 or patients who were placed into Transmission-Based Precautions on admission, had no other more likely facility-source of exposure, and developed COVID19 infection within 14 days after admission.

2. Getting Ready for Testing

DETERMINE WHO WILL ORDER THE TESTS

- Determine who the ordering provider will be for tests for residents and staff. Orders may be secured from each person's primary care provider; however, this can be time-consuming. Alternate options for obtaining an order for all residents and staff may include:
 - A contracted clinician (such as MD/ARNP/PA).
 - Pharmacists with whom your facility already has established relationship or another local pharmacist.
 - Clinicians affiliated with Home Health Agencies, including those who have clients who live in your facility.
 - Contact Department of Health if you need assistance finding an ordering provider at [REDACTED]

ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH LABORATORY

For PCR tests:

- If your facility does not have one already, set up an account with a lab.
 - See the list of potential labs at the end of this handbook.
- When selecting a lab partner consider the following:
 - Will the lab bill Medicare/Medicaid and other insurance programs?
 - Determine what type of test kits can be processed by your contracted lab. Make sure your test kits match the type that can be processed by your selected lab. If you have any questions, please contact your lab directly. *You may want to consider anterior nasal swab testing for residents with dementia or mental*

health conditions who may be unwilling to withstand a nasopharyngeal swab test.

- Questions to consider when setting up a process with your lab partner:
 - Will the lab company pick up the kits, or will you be responsible for getting them to the lab?
 - If you are working with an out of state lab, who finances the postal service fees?
 - What lab forms (virology requisitions) will need to be completed before testing, and what other documents will the lab need in order to complete the tests?
 - What is their turnaround time (TAT) for producing results?
 - How do you retrieve the results?
 - Are the results reported to Washington State DOH?

For Rapid Point of Care (POC) testing:

- Rapid POC testing, such as Abbott's BinaxNOW, requires a CLIA waiver
- These can be obtained directly from the manufacturer and at the time of last update to this document free of charge through King County Public Health and WA DOH.
- Check to see if your facility has a CLIA waiver
- Be prepared to organise and report results manually.

SECURE SUPPLIES: PCR and Rapid POC Test Kits and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PCR & PPE

- For PCR testing order test kits through laboratories that your facility is already contracted with and PPE through regular distribution channels.
- If not feasible, order test kits and PPE through the King County Office of Emergency Management. Request test kits and PPE on this [REDACTED]
- Email the completed form to our [REDACTED] Request what you need for the following week (Monday-Sunday) *by noon each Wednesday.*
- For PPE, assume the following:
 - For one tester: 1 gown, 1 N95, 1 face shield/eye protection, 1 set of gloves per test (more if they get soiled)

- For support staff: 1 surgical mask, 1 face shield/eye protection, and 1 set of gloves (more if they get soiled)
- Adequate hand sanitizer for cleaning hands between all patients
- Disinfectant for testing area

Rapid POC Test Kits

- For Rapid POC test kits, email [REDACTED] is in King County
- For all other counties email [REDACTED] to order test kits

IDENTIFY WHO WILL PERFORM THE TESTING (Collect the Specimen)

- Determine if specimen collection can be completed by existing staff at your facility or corporate entity, or if your facility needs assistance from a partner to provide training and assistance. If working with a partner discuss specifics, including PPE availability for the testers (will you provide it or will the testing agency), length of time it will take to test all residents and staff, and what additional assistance will be needed to complete the testing.
- In King County, Public Health can connect you with partners who may be willing to assist your facility with testing on a voluntary basis. To connect with these partners, contact [REDACTED].
- Consider how your organization will manage on-going testing. Other potential partners include:
 - Visiting doctors/nurse practitioners
 - Contracted nurses
 - Home health agencies
 - Pharmacists
 - Delegated caregivers
 - Post-acute program partners
 - Community health clinics
 - Contracted lab

PREPARE RESIDENTS AND STAFF FOR TESTING

- Explain the process and obtain consent to testing. Written consent is preferred but verbal consent is adequate. Please follow your organization's informed consent process. Obtain consent from the resident's durable power of attorney for healthcare or legal guardian if the person is not able to give consent. Use translators to explain to residents and staff, whose preferred language is not English, what to expect with testing. This can be obtained once for ongoing potential future testing needs and kept on file.
- Work with staff to determine the best approach for ongoing testing such as having testing on specific days or at the beginning of specific shift, etc. Have a plan to test staff who are not able to attend specific testing events.
- If you are using Rapid POC testing, put a place an algorithm for when confirmation testing is appropriate.

PREPARE FOR SPECIMEN COLLECTION

- Develop a response plan. Be ready with plans and procedures if a staff person or resident tests positive and review the [CDC guidance](#) for your response as needed.
- Testing each resident in their own room is recommended to preserve infection control protocols.
- For staff testing, identify a room or area no less than 15' x 20' with adequate ventilation, tables and chairs, lighting, and access to bathroom facilities. Other ideal locations for testing are well-ventilated, covered outdoor areas adjacent to the facility.
- Ensure the testing location does not require residents and/or staff to crowd together; social distancing should remain in place as well as everyone wearing masks/face coverings.
- Provide the following for testers:
 - Hand hygiene stations, alcohol-based hand sanitizer
 - Trash cans, liners
 - Cooler to store samples
- Be prepared to isolate staff and residents for a positive rapid POC test and outline a process for confirmation testing with PCR
- CDC recommends this following algorithm for rapid POC testing; [Considerations for Interpretation of Antigen Tests in Long-Term Care Facilities \(cdc.gov\)](#)

3. Conducting the Testing Event

ORGANIZE PAPERWORK

- Prepare a list of staff and residents who will be tested using the Public Health line list format. (Template is included in the resources section below)
- Ensure each person tested has a valid order for the test from a qualified medical practitioner.
- Ensure each person tested has a completed virology lab requisition form per specimen collected.
 - Organize virology forms alphabetically into two stacks—one for staff and one for residents.

Rapid POC reporting is a manual process and the facility is responsible for sending results to DOH and their LHJ if appropriate.

SPECIMEN COLLECTION

- Identify an onsite point of contact (and/or translator, if needed) for each testing team. This is someone familiar with the residents and their personal needs (i.e. translation, mood management, etc). This person is ideal to assist with registration and/or, in cases of room to room operations, to work ahead of the team to prepare residents for testing.
- Coordinate the order of testing: off-going staff, on-coming staff, and residents so that as many people as possible can be tested in a practical timeframe. A break of at least 15 minutes must be schedule every 1.5 to 2 hours to allow for PPE change out. Please also ensure those conducting testing receive a lunch break.
- Specimen collection will be either nasopharyngeal (NP) swab or nasal swab. The [CDC states no preference](#) any longer between these two collection methods so for ongoing testing nasal specimens are likely preferred.
- Provide for waste collection of PPE and waste material from testing process.
- Track names of individuals tested on a line list. (link and instructions are below)
- Keep specimens cool and transport to lab within 72 hours.
- For rapid POC testing, have a timer in place to read results within the appropriate time limit and a place to record the results for each person tested. This may be require more than one person.

4. Follow-Up After the Testing

RECEIVE AND REPORT RESULTS

For PCR results:

- Results will be sent to the ordering provider or designee (which can be a staff member at the facility); this should be set up with the lab prior to submitting specimens.
- It is the responsibility of the ordering provider or designee to communicate results to individual residents and to staff who do not have access to their own results.
- The facility is required to report all (positive and negative) results via the provided linelist, to Public Health Seattle & King County through the [REDACTED]
- Positive results should be reported to the Department of Social and Health Services (at [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED])
- Implement your response plan, including cohorting residents ([CDC guidance](#)) and excluding any staff who test positive. Any staff with positive results should follow [CDC return to work guidelines](#) for health care workers.
- If any residents or staff test positive and are reported, the facility will receive a call from a Public Health disease investigator within 72 hours of report. The disease investigator will provide infection control guidance (including cohorting guidance) and offer additional testing as indicated. If you already have an assigned Public Health investigator, please contact them directly with any questions or call [REDACTED]

For Rapid POC results:

- All positive results get reported to DOH. Please see instructions [here](#)
- All non-positive results stay with the facility until further notice.
- Currently rapid POC reporting is a manual effort, be prepared to fill out the spreadsheet to securely send to DOH.

5. Key Facility & Government Agency Roles

ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

- Identify clinician to order tests for residents
- Conduct testing on a regular cadence whenever possible
- Send specimens to lab or report to DOH for rapid POC results
- Facilitate reporting of results to residents and staff
- Report results to Local Health Jurisdiction and DSHS

PUBLIC HEALTH SEATTLE KING COUNTY

- Provide technical support
- Support facilities in connecting with a community partner to provide training and assist with specimen collection
- [King County Toolkit for Long-Term Care Providers](#)
- Support facilities in obtaining test kits for PCR and rapid POC, and PPE if neither are available through regular distribution channels / supply chains
- Rapid POC tests are available for King County facilities while supplies last by emailing [REDACTED]
- For non-King County facilities, POC tests can be requested [here](#)
- Provide infection control assessment and guidance, including cohorting recommendations, and additional testing as indicated

DOH

- Distribute Test Kits, PPE to facilities
- Manage relationships with Labs
- Field questions on any of the above
- Provide remote technical assistance, including webinar on specimen collection
- Assist with staffing shortages - [Emergency Volunteer Health Practitioners](#)

DSHS

- Address questions regarding consent and non-compliance
- Receive report on positives (residents and staff)
- If necessary, manage transfers for safe isolation

Stay up to date

- [Current COVID-19 situation in Washington](#)
- [Governor Inslee's proclamations](#)
- [Frequently asked questions](#)

Resources



[REDACTED]

- Linelist template:



- Instructions for completing RedCap survey – Attachment 1
- [PHSKC infection control toolkit](#)
- DOH contact for questions, PPE and toolkits [REDACTED].
- PHSKC Covid-19 Call Center for health care [REDACTED]
- PHSKC Covid-19 Call Center for non-medical questions – [REDACTED]
- [PHSKC Covid-19 website](#)
- [Department of Health Covid-19 information](#)
- [DSHS Covid-19 Information](#)

****Disclaimer- This is not intended to be a comprehensive list of Lab Venders in King County****

****Public Health does not recommend or endorse any Lab Vendors; this is a resource list****

LAB/WEBSITE	CONTACT	TESTS OFFERED	LOCATION
Altius www.altius.org/#home-1	206-267-1091	PCR	Seattle, WA
Atlas Atlas Genomics – Coronavirus Testing Fast COVID 19 Results in Seattle, Bellevue, Tacoma, Renton, Spokane (atlas-genomics.com)	Contact Us – Atlas Genomics (atlas-genomics.com)	PCR	Seattle, Bellevue, Renton, Tacoma, and Spokane
Discovery Health Community Testing Services (discoveryhealthmd.com)	Community Testing Services (discoveryhealthmd.com)	Multiple	Seattle, WA
University of Washington (UW Virology) SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Qualitative PCR (uw.edu)	commserv@uw.edu 206-520-4600	PCR	Seattle, WA
FidaLab FidaLab – Molecular Diagnostics for Medical and Dental Practices (fidalabus.com)	fidalab@fidalabus.com or 425-559-0680	PCR	Seattle, WA
Everlywell Everlywell - Innovative at-home Health Testing	enterprisehelp@everlywell.com	PCR	Massachusetts
Curative COVID-19 Testing & Health Services Curative	Curative Support	PCR	Multiple, Outside WA
NW Lab Northwest Laboratory – Your Local Lab Option (nwlaboratory.com)	Contact Us – Northwest Laboratory (nwlaboratory.com) or 360-527-4580	PCR	Multiple and local
Lab Corp Labcorp Global Life Sciences Leader in Diagnostics and Drug Development	General Inquiry Contact Info for Providers Labcorp	Multiple	Multiple and Local

Quest Diagnostics Quest Diagnostics : Home	Quest Diagnostics : Contact	Multiple	Multiple and local
Molecular Epidemiology Inc Molecular Epidemiology Inc.	customerservice@molecularapi.com	PCR	Lake City/Seattle, WA
US BioTek About US BioTek	COVID-19 Diagnostic Test (usbiotek.com)	Multiple	Shoreline, WA
Zebra Healthcare Technology Solutions Zebra	Contact Zebra Zebra Technologies	Multiple	
GS Labs https://gslabstesting.com/covid-19-testing-information/	Contact Us GS Labs COVID Testing Book Online Today (gslabstesting.com)	Multiple Drive through	Multiple in King County, WA
SV Diagnostic Labs https://www.svdiagnosticlab.com/	Contact Us - SV Diagnostic Lab	Multiple	Ohio
Purlab https://purlab.com/products/single	Have Questions? Purlab	PCR	New York City

Redcap Survey Instructions

You cannot save this form and return at a later time. It must be completed in a single sitting.

You will be asked the following information to confirm your identity:

1. Name of submitter
2. Name of testing organization
3. Type of facility
 - a. Long-term care facility includes Adult Family homes
4. Facility name
5. Date of testing
6. Facility address and contact information
7. Services provided
8. Total number of residents
9. Number of residents tested
10. Number of residents who tested positive or refused testing
11. Total number of staff
12. Number of staff tested
13. Number of staff who tested positive or refused testing

Note: There is skip logic built into this survey --- some questions will not become visible until you select a testing organization and facility type.

Please save your linelist as an Excel document and upload the file.


***See below for an example of the REDCap Survey .

COVID-19 Testing

Resize font:
+ | -

This form is for facilities to enter information about a testing event, once results have been collected. Please enter the following information.

Note. You cannot save this form and return at a later time. Please make sure you have all the information ready!

Name of submitter <small>* must provide value</small>	<input type="text" value="Test Tester"/>
Name of testing organization: <small>* must provide value</small>	<div><input type="text" value="Kaiser"/> ▼</div> <p>This is not the lab that performed the testing. For example, if your facility did the testing but used UW as the lab, please select "Self-tested."</p>
Type of facility <small>* must provide value</small>	<div><input checked="" type="radio"/> Long-term Care Facility (any facility/services related to long term care/senior living)</div> <div><input type="radio"/> Homeless Service Provider (any facility/services related to persons living homeless, including Permanent Supportive Housing)</div> <div><input type="radio"/> Encampment/Tiny House Village/Tent City</div> <div><input type="radio"/> Correctional facility</div> <div><input type="radio"/> Mobile/street testing</div> <div><input type="radio"/> Business/workplace</div> <div><input type="radio"/> Community testing event (sponsored by facility)</div> <div>reset</div>
Is this a Supported Living facility? <small>* must provide value</small>	<div><input type="radio"/> Yes</div> <div><input checked="" type="radio"/> No</div> <div>reset</div>
Facility name where testing occurred <small>* must provide value</small>	<div><input type="text" value="Test Assisted Living"/></div> <p>If no facility, please describe approximate location</p>
Date of testing: <small>* must provide value</small>	<div><input type="text" value="03-23-2021"/>  <input type="text" value="Today"/> M-D-Y</div>
Name of the ordering provider for residents	<input type="text" value="Dr. Provider Name"/>
Name of the ordering provider for staff	<div><input type="text"/></div> <p>If different than ordering provider for residents</p>
Was this testing event proactive testing or reactive testing? <small>* must provide value</small>	<div><input checked="" type="radio"/> Proactive Testing</div> <div><input type="radio"/> Reactive Testing</div> <div><input type="radio"/> Don't know</div> <div>reset</div>

Facility street address: <small>* must provide value</small>	<input type="text" value="123 Main Street"/> <small>If no facility, enter approximate street address</small>
Facility city <small>* must provide value</small>	<input type="text" value="Seattle"/>
Facility zip code <small>* must provide value</small>	<input type="text" value="98001"/>
Is this facility located in King County, Washington?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No reset
Which services are provided by this facility?	<input type="checkbox"/> Skilled nursing facility/nursing home <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assisted living <input type="checkbox"/> Adult family home
Facility point of contact	<input type="text" value="Insert your Name"/>
Facility point of contact phone number	<input type="text" value="123 456 6789"/>

The next section is about the number of individuals at the facility at the time of testing.


Total number of residents/clients	<input type="text" value="50"/> <small>Live/reside/stay at facility daily</small>
Number of residents/clients tested: <small>* must provide value</small>	<input type="text" value="50"/> <small>Please enter value. Enter 0 if none</small>
Number of residents/clients who tested positive: <small>* must provide value</small>	<input type="text" value="5"/> <small>Please enter value. Enter 0 if none</small>
Number of residents/clients whose test was inconclusive: <small>* must provide value</small>	<input type="text" value="0"/> <small>Please enter value. Enter 0 if none</small>
Number of residents who refused testing	<input type="text" value="0"/>

Total number of employed staff	<input type="text" value="25"/>
Number of staff tested: <small>* must provide value</small>	<input type="text" value="25"/> <small>Please enter value. Enter 0 if none</small>
Number of staff who tested positive: <small>* must provide value</small>	<input type="text" value="5"/> <small>Please enter value. Enter 0 if none</small>
Number of staff whose test was inconclusive: <small>* must provide value</small>	<input type="text" value="0"/> <small>Please enter value. Enter 0 if none</small>
Number of staff who refused testing	<input type="text" value="0"/>

Were staff trained for future testing?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Unknown reset
--	--

Please report all persons who were tested

Please prepare the facility's line list according to this template.

Attachment:  [Testing Line List Template.xlsx](#) (0.01 MB)

Please click "upload file" to upload your file to this secure server.

[click](#) [Upload file](#)

[Submit](#)

A new window will appear

Choose your Excel file and upload

[click](#)

Upload file

Please click "upload file" to upload your file to this secure server.

Select a file then click the 'Upload File' button

Choose File 2020.5.22.Tes...Kaiser.xlsx

[Upload file](#) (Max file size: 10 MB)

[click](#)

You will now see your file name here. Click Submit

Please click "upload file" to upload your file to this secure server.

2020.5.22.Tes...Kaiser.xlsx (0.1 MB)

[Upload new version](#) or [Remove file](#)

[click](#) [Submit](#)

Word documents, scanned images, PDFs, or alternative file types will not be accepted.

Click submit.