



HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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To: Skilled Nursing Facilities/ Other Congregate Living Settings in Stanislaus County

From: Thea Papasozomenos, MD, MPH, Assistant Public Health Officer

Subject: Clearance from Isolation for COVID-19 for Residents and Staff of Congregate Living Settings, including Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF)

SNF/ other Congregate Living Residents with Positive COVID-19 Tests:

SNFs/congregate living settings can clear their COVID-19 positive residents from isolation using the criteria below. For questions or assistance with clearing COVID-19 positive residents:

- For SNF, assisted living, and memory care facilities, please contact:
CovidHealthcareFacilities@schsa.org
- All other congregate living facilities, please call: (209) 558-5678

Residents who test positive for COVID-19 are considered non-infectious in the following situations and can be removed from the COVID-19 designated cohort area:

1. If asymptomatic throughout their infection and not severely immunocompromised (time-based strategy):

- At least **10 days** from the testing date

If the resident develops symptoms, the isolation period would restart from the date of symptom onset. Use symptom-based strategy for discontinuing isolation based on the first date of symptoms rather than the test date.

2. If symptomatic, but not severely ill or severely immunocompromised (symptom-based # 1):

- At least **24 hours** have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath, etc.); **AND**
- At least **10 days** have passed since symptoms first appeared

3. If resident was severely ill (required hospitalization and/or supplemental oxygen) or if severely immunocompromised* (symptom-based # 2):

- At least **24 hours** have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath, etc.); **AND**
- At least **20 days** have passed since symptoms first appeared

**Severely immunocompromised includes people who: are on chemotherapy for cancer; being within one year out from receiving a hematopoietic stem cell or solid organ transplant; have*

untreated HIV with CD4 T lymphocyte count < 200; have a combined primary immunodeficiency disorder; or receive ≥ 20 mg/day prednisone for more than 14 days.

4. Per CDC guidance, a test-based strategy is no longer recommended, except in certain situations, because in the majority of cases, it results in prolonged isolation of patients who continue to have viral shedding of SARS-COV-2 but are no longer infectious. A test-based strategy could be considered in certain situations, such as for those who are severely immunocompromised or other situations where it might allow the resident to be cleared from isolation sooner than if the symptoms-based strategy were used. In those situations, residents may be removed from isolation:

- After testing negative twice using FDA-authorized molecular viral testing to detect SARS-COV-2 obtained at least 24 hours apart, **AND**
- If they were symptomatic, are clinically improving and without fever for at least 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications

For residents of SNFs/ other congregate living setting who have been cleared from isolation:

- If the resident's symptoms have resolved, no further restrictions are required, based upon their history of COVID-19
- If the resident has persistent symptoms from COVID-19 (e.g. persistent cough), they should be placed in a single room (or cohabit with other COVID-19 positives) and wear a facemask (if tolerated) during care activities until all symptoms are completely resolved or at baseline.

Staff with Positive COVID-19 Tests:

- Staff who test positive are to be excluded from work until criteria have been met for clearance from isolation.
- If there are staffing shortages, discuss with PH the possibility of asymptomatic COVID-19 staff working exclusively with COVID-19 residents. This needs prior approval from PH.
- Stanislaus County Public Health (PH) does not clear staff from home isolation.
- At a minimum, staff working in SNFs/congregate living settings must meet criteria described in Stanislaus County PH Information for Employers: Clearance to Return to Work after COVID-19: <http://schsa.org/PublicHealth/pages/corona-virus/pdf/return-to-work-en.pdf>

Additional Information:

Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Disposition of Patients with COVID-19 in Healthcare Settings (Interim Guidance): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-hospitalized-patients.html>