



# County of Santa Cruz

## Health Services Agency

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## Interim Guidance for Long Term Care and Skilled Nursing Facilities in Santa Cruz County

### **Prevent 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.
- Upon admission, assess residents symptoms of respiratory infection and implement appropriate infection prevention practices for incoming symptomatic residents.

### **Prevent spread of respiratory germs WITHIN your facility**

**Keep residents and employees informed**— This helps to reassure and calm.

- Post visual alerts ( signs & posters) at entrances and in strategic places providing instruction on hand & respiratory hygiene.
- Monitor local and state public health resources to understand COVID-19 activity in your community.
- Discuss stigma with your employees.

**Monitor residents and employees for fever or respiratory symptoms.**

- Consider limiting visitors to the facility.
- Observe newly arriving patients for development of respiratory symptoms.
- In general, for care of residents with undiagnosed respiratory infection use Standard, Contact, and Droplet Precautions with eye protection unless suspected diagnosis requires Airborne Precautions (e.g., tuberculosis).

**Take steps to prevent known or suspected COVID-19 patients from exposing other patients.**

- Limit the movement of COVID-19 patients (e.g., have them remain in their room).
- Identify dedicated employees to care for COVID-19 patients and provide infection control training.
  - \* Guidance on implementing recommended infection prevention practices CDC's free online course — [The Nursing Home Infection Preventionist Training https://www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/training.html](https://www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/training.html)— which includes resources checklists for facilities and employees to use.

**Support hand and respiratory hygiene, as well as cough etiquette by residents, visitors, and employees.**

- Ensure supplies are available (tissues, waste receptacles, alcohol-based hand sanitizer) 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 face masks, 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.
- 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), and make sure tissues are available and any sink is well-stocked with soap and paper towels for hand washing.
- Implement Environmental Infection Control: (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/control-recommendations.html>)
- Dedicated medical equipment should be used for patient care.
- All non-dedicated, non-disposable medical equipment used for patient care should be cleaned and disinfected according to manufacturer's instructions and facility policies.
- Ensure that environmental cleaning and disinfection procedures are followed consistently and correctly.

## **Prevent 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 local health department at (831) 454-4114.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

For more detailed guidance on how to implement the above, please reference:

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

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/prevent-spread-in-long-term-care-facilities.html>

### **CDC's Interim Guidance for All Healthcare Facilities: For strategies to reduce morbidity and mortality; minimize disease transmission; protect healthcare personnel; and preserve healthcare system functioning:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/guidance-hcf.html>

### **Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of N95 Respirators:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy/index.html>

### **Stigma and Resilience:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/related-stigma.html>

### **Print resources for staff, patients, and visitors:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html>

Symptoms of respiratory infection, including COVID-19:

- ⇒ Fever
- ⇒ Cough
- ⇒ Shortness of

Concerned that a resident, visitor, or employee may be a **COVID-2019 patient under investigation?**

Contact the Santa Cruz County Communicable Disease Unit at (831) 454-4114

## **Key Considerations for Healthcare Facilities:**

Currently there are no medications to treat or vaccines to prevent COVID-19. Community approaches to slowing transmission are needed to reduce the number of people who get sick.

In each healthcare facility, the primary goals are to:

- ◇ **Prepare for a potential surge** in patients with respiratory infection
- ◇ **Protect healthcare personnel and non-COVID-19 patients** accessing healthcare from infection
- ◇ Provide appropriate levels of care
- ◇ **Prepare for shortages** in personal protective equipment supply and staff

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