Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities Protocol for Case and Outbreak Reporting to RIDOH Center for COVID-19 Epidemiology

Nursing home and assisted living residents and staff are among the highest risk groups for infection and transmission of COVID-19. In accordance with COVID-19 reporting regulations, facilities should report all cases and outbreaks to the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) following the procedures outlined in this document.

NOTE: Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF) must also follow the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) guidelines for reporting COVID-19 information to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) via the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN). This document covers requirements for reporting to RIDOH only. Please see the References section at end of this document for further information on CMS guidance, CDC guidance, and reporting outbreak information through NHSN.

Facility Response and Reporting

Nursing homes and assisted living facilities are expected to report the following COVID-19-related information to RIDOH:

I. **Reporting a Case**: Cases diagnosed via PCR or antigen test should be reported within 24 hours of identification.

II. **Reporting an Outbreak**: This is required within 24 hours of an initial case and on a weekly basis until the outbreak is resolved.

III. **Reporting a Suspected Outbreak**: A suspected outbreak is defined as three or more symptomatic staff and residents presenting with COVID-19-like symptoms.

I. Reporting a Case

1. Within 24 hours of identifying a case of COVID-19 in a Resident, Staff, Vendor, or Visitor, the facility must report each case to RIDOH.

   The following are the data points which the facility should provide. Methods for providing are below the table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sheet Header</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reporter Name (top of list)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporter Phone (top of list)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data points for Positive Tests</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role (Resident, Employee/Staff, Visitor, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Facility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case First Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Last name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Birth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Number (Staff only)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Address (Staff only, prepopulates for Residents)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City (Staff only, prepopulates for Residents)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State (Staff only, prepopulates for Residents)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zip (Staff only, prepopulates for Residents)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data points for Positive Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Test Report</th>
<th>Test Type (PCR or Rapid Antigen)</th>
<th>Date of Test</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Symptom Status (Symptomatic or asymptomatic)</td>
<td>Date of Symptom Onset (Symptomatic only)</td>
<td>Up to Date with Vaccines? (Yes/no/unknown)</td>
<td>Immunocompromised? (Yes/no/unknown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Occupation at Facility (Staff only)</td>
<td>Last Day Worked (Staff only) or Date of Discharge to Hospital/Home (Resident)</td>
<td>Was Positive Case Masked?</td>
<td>COVID-19 Treatment Received or Planned?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVID-19 Treatment Type?</td>
<td>If Treatment Received or Planned, First Treatment Date</td>
<td>If Treatment not Received or Planned, provide reason</td>
<td>Date of LTCF Admission (Resident - if admitted in the last 30 days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Death</td>
<td>Notes/Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Methods for reporting COVID-19 case information to RIDOH:

- **Facility Administered Point-of-Care (POC) Rapid Tests**
  - Tests performed at the facility should be reported through the POC portal ([POC portal](#)).

- **Laboratory Processed or Tests Conducted by a Traditional Healthcare Partner (for example: primary care physician, pharmacy)**
  - Facilities should complete the COVID-19 Positive Cases Line List spreadsheet template. Email to the RIDOH long-term care facilities (LTCF) group at [RIDOH.COVID19LTC@health.ri.gov](mailto:RIDOH.COVID19LTC@health.ri.gov).
    - The sheet is used to provide positive case information for Residents, Staff, Vendors, Volunteers, Visitors, and others.
    - Line lists should contain all individuals with positive test results cumulatively for the current outbreak. Add any new cases for the current outbreak to the existing line list. Only start a new line list when a new outbreak has been identified.
    - Templates can be found [here](#).

- **Self-Tests**
  - Positive results from tests performed at home (for example by nursing home/assisted living Staff) should be reported through the self-reporting portal.
    - When nursing home or assisted living Staff have performed a home test with a positive result, they are encouraged to schedule a confirmatory POC or PCR test as soon as possible within 48 hours.
    - Once confirmed through a CLIA-certified POC or PCR lab test, the positive case should be included in the [COVID-19 Positive Cases Line List](#) spreadsheet template referenced above. Templates can be found [here](#).
3. If infection control/outbreak mitigation guidance is needed for an outbreak, contact RIDOH at 401-222-8022 and request a follow up from the LTCF team.

- Note that reporting cases using the templates and tools described in this document is still required. RIDOH needs the information requested in the COVID-19 Positive Cases Line List spreadsheet template (or POC portal). Templates can be found here.

II. Reporting an Outbreak

Within a nursing home or assisted living facility, a COVID-19 outbreak is defined as:

- One or more facility-acquired (confirmed via testing) COVID-19 Resident, healthcare personnel (HCP), or other non-resident case. Do not report results of self-tests.

If you identify that your facility has a COVID-19 outbreak, within 24 hours, report the following to RIDOH:

1. **Report Cases:** Report the identified positive case(s) with case information (diagnosed with positive POC or PCR test) via the steps above and;
2. Report the outbreak using the **Outbreak Summary Form** found here.
   a. Submit the first two pages of the form within 24 hours of an initial case.
   b. Provide weekly updates until close of outbreak (Submit the third page the following week and each subsequent week with updates). Counts in the weekly updates should be cumulative.
3. Templates can be found here.
   - Complete the Outbreak Summary Form and then email the completed document to the LTCF team at RIDOH.COVID19LTC@health.ri.gov.

III. Reporting a Suspected Outbreak

When you have three or more symptomatic Staff or Residents presenting COVID-19-like symptoms within 72 hours but have not been verified via positive tests, please call RIDOH at 401-222-8022 and request a follow up from the LTCF team.

Outbreak Testing

1. When a COVID-19 outbreak is identified, the facility should perform contact tracing to identify individuals who have had close contact. Test all Residents and personnel who are symptomatic or who have had close contact to the positive case. ([Click here to view the Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations to Prevent SARS-CoV-2 Spread in Nursing Home](#)).
   - For testing individuals who are symptomatic or who have had higher risk exposure to the case, POC or PCR testing is acceptable. Follow all instructions included in the specimen collection kits.
2. Submit specimens of exposed or symptomatic Residents or Staff to your contracted lab (see details below).
   - When using POC tests, provide results via the RIDOH congregate POC portal.
   - When using PCR tests, complete your contracted lab’s requisition form for each specimen as applicable.
3. Use of the State Health Laboratories requires pre-approval from the RIDOH LTCF team. No specimen should be sent to State Health Lab without PRIOR APPROVAL. If approved by the Center for COVID-19 Epidemiology, RIDOH State Health Lab will be available to assist with sample processing as needed.
When approved, use of the State Health Lab is engaged for outbreak confirmation and case investigation, submit specimens to State Health Lab at:
50 Orms Street
Providence, RI 02908
Submit in accordance with the specimen submission instructions in the collection kit.

4. Response after initial testing results:
   - If test sample results are negative, test individuals again in 5 to 7 days from initial date of test.
   - If test sample results are positive, RIDOH Center for COVID-19 Epidemiology will advise.
     - As directed by RIDOH Center for COVID-19 Epidemiology, engage in focused or broad-based outbreak testing which includes testing of identified staff and residents at least once every 3 to 7 days with POC or PCR tests until there have been no new positives for 14 days.
     - Please see CDC testing guidance in the References section.

**Reporting COVID-19 Associated Deaths**

All COVID-19-associated deaths should be reported to RIDOH per your standard reporting mechanisms.
- In addition, report COVID-19 associated death on the positive line list as applicable.

**Outbreak Conclusion**

An outbreak is concluded when there have been no new cases for residents or staff after 14 days from the most recently identified positive case’s illness onset or date of test if asymptomatic.

Send the following summary documents to RIDOH.COVID19LTC@health.ri.gov at the end of the outbreak. Please see links in the earlier sections for forms/templates.
- **Outbreak Summary Form** (include third page)
- Final cumulative COVID-19 **Positive Cases Line List** for the **current outbreak which just concluded**
  - Residents or Staff who tested positive on a facility-conducted POC test will not appear on the Positive Cases Line List because those test results were submitted via the POC portal.

**References**

2. CDC COVID-19 Nursing Home and LTCF Guidance:
   (CMS requires SNF to report COVID-19 info via NHSN weekly)
6. RIDOH Nursing Home FAQs (including required reporting of positive cases): 
   https://covid.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur176/files/2022-04/NH%20FAQ_En_04122022_FINAL.pdf
7. RIDOH Assisted Living FAQs (including required reporting of positive cases): 
   https://covid.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur176/files/2022-04/ALR%20FAQ_En_04122022_FINAL.pdf
9. COVID-19 Treatment Option and Therapy Information:
   - National Institutes of Health (NIH) Treatment for Nonhospitalized Adults: 
   - NIH Treatment for Hospitalized Adults: 
   - COVID-19 Therapeutics Locator. This website is updated every 24 hours.
   - MABS (Monoclonal Antibodies) Infusion Centers & Services | RI COVID-19 Information Portal
10. RIDOH Congregate Point of Care Testing Portal for Reporting POC Results: 
    https://portal.ri.gov/reportcovidresult