Long-Term Care Facility and Assisted Living Residence Protocol for Case and Outbreak Reporting to RIDOH Center for COVID-19 Epidemiology

Long-term care facility (LTCF) and assisted living residence (ALR) residents and staff are among the groups at highest risk 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: **This document covers requirements for reporting to RIDOH only**. In addition, Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF) must follow the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) guidelines for reporting COVID-19 information to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) through the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN).

Facility Response and Reporting

LTCF and ALR settings are expected to report the following COVID-19-related information to RIDOH:

I. Case: Report cases diagnosed by PCR or antigen test within 24 hours of identification.
II. Outbreak: Defined as one or more facility-acquired positive cases confirmed by testing in a resident, healthcare worker, or other non-resident. Report within 24 hours of an initial case and on a weekly basis until the outbreak is resolved.
III. Suspected Outbreak: Defined as three or more symptomatic staff and residents presenting with COVID-19-like symptoms. Report within 24 hours of identification.
IV. Hospitalizations: Report emergency room (ER) visits or hospital admissions occurring within 30 days of a positive PCR or antigen test as soon as possible.
V. Deaths: Report deaths occurring within 30 days of a positive PCR or antigen test as soon as possible.

I. Directions for Reporting a Case

1. Point-of-Care (POC) Tests

   Facilities should report all required case information to RIDOH within 24 hours of identifying a case of COVID-19 in a resident, staff, vendor, or visitor. Ideally, facilities should submit reports through the RIDOH COVID-19 Long-Term Care Reporting Portal.

   When facilities have a positive POC test result, they should report the following data to RIDOH through the portal:

   - Name of facility
   - Case first name

- Case last name
- Case date of birth
- Phone number (staff only)
- Street address (staff only)
- City (staff only)
- State (staff only)
- ZIP (staff only)
- Test type (PCR or rapid antigen)
- Date of test
- Date of test report
- Symptom status (symptomatic or asymptomatic)
- Date of symptom onset (symptomatic only)
- Up to date with COVID-19 vaccines? (yes/no/unknown)
- Immunocompromised? (yes/no/unknown)
- Role (resident, employee/staff, visitor, etc.)
- Primary occupation at facility (staff only)
- Last day worked (staff only)
- Resident-facing (staff only)
- Unit (where positive resident lives/where positive staff primarily works)
- Was positive case wearing a mask?
- COVID-19 treatment received or planned
- COVID-19 treatment type
- If treatment received/planned, first treatment date
- If treatment not received or planned, provide reason

2. Laboratory-processed Tests

RIDOH automatically receives all lab-processed test results ordered by your facility and adds these results to the COVID-19 Long-Term Care Reporting Portal. RIDOH also requires facilities to add the following information for each positive test result:

- Date of birth (if not provided by lab or not already on your census)
- Phone number (staff only, if not already on your census)
- Street address (staff only, if not already on your census)
- City (staff only, if not already on your census)
- State (staff only, if not already on your census)
- ZIP (staff only, if not already on your census)
- Symptom status (symptomatic or asymptomatic)
- Date of symptom onset (symptomatic only)
- Up to date with COVID-19 vaccines? (yes/no/unknown)
- Immunocompromised? (yes/no/unknown)
- Role (resident, employee/staff, visitor, etc., if not already on your census)
- Primary occupation at facility (staff only)
- Last day worked (staff only)
- Resident-facing? (Staff only)
- Unit (where positive resident lives/where positive staff primarily works)
- Was positive case wearing a mask?
- COVID-19 treatment received or planned
- COVID-19 treatment type
- If treatment received/planned, first treatment date
- If treatment not received or planned, provide reason

3. POC Rapid Test or Laboratory-processed Tests Performed in the Community

When residents or staff get tested at primary care, urgent care, pharmacies, or other healthcare settings in the community, RIDOH requests that facilities report the following information by sending an email to RIDOH's Center for COVID-19 Epidemiology (CCE) team at RIDOH.COVID19LTC@health.ri.gov. Please include the following data in the email:

- First and last name
- Date of birth
- Test date
- Test location
- Test type (rapid or PCR)

RIDOH will link the record so it appears in the COVID-19 Long-Term Care Reporting Portal. The facility will then add required information to the test result as described under #2 above.

4. Self-tests

Facilities should also report all positive self-tests to RIDOH by sending the following information in an email to RIDOH's CCE at RIDOH.COVID19LTC@health.ri.gov:

- First and last name
- Date of birth
- Test date

The facility should **not** enter self-tests in the COVID-19 Long-Term Care Reporting Portal.

- If the facility chooses to confirm a reported positive self-test with an onsite POC test, add the information outlined in #1 above to the portal.
- If the facility chooses to confirm a reported positive self-test with a facility-affiliated laboratory processed test, add the information outlined in #2 above to the portal.
  - If a staff member chooses to get confirmatory POC- or laboratory-processed testing in the community, follow the steps outlined in #3 above.

II. Directions for Reporting an Outbreak

Definition of a COVID-19 Outbreak: Within an LTCF or ALR, a COVID-19 outbreak is defined as one or more facility-acquired COVID-19 case, confirmed through testing, of a resident, healthcare personnel, or other non-resident case.

All outbreaks are monitored closely by RIDOH until there are no more reported cases for 14 days from the last positive case.

In addition to reporting information for all positive test results as outlined above, all facilities should report and provide updates using the **Outbreak Summary** option in the COVID-19 Long-Term Care Reporting Portal. Starting February 15, 2024, **facilities should submit all Outbreak Summaries electronically through the portal.**

- Submit the first Outbreak Summary within 24 hours of an initial case
- Provide weekly updates until close of outbreak
  - Counts in the weekly updates should be cumulative
  - Final Outbreak Summary will be entered once 14 days have elapsed since last facility positive
  Note: the COVID-19 Long-Term Care Reporting Portal will keep track of whether the Outbreak Summary report is the first report or a weekly update. It will display the questions accordingly.
- To retain an outbreak record, facilities should **print** their Outbreak Summaries before submitting them.
- Outbreak Summaries are communicated electronically through the portal to RIDOH's CCE team.

Help from RIDOH

If facilities need infection control/outbreak mitigation guidance, contact RIDOH:

- By email: Email RIDOH.COVID19LTC@health.ri.gov
- By phone: Call 401-222-8022, choose option #3, and ask for long-term care

Find training and guidance about how to report to RIDOH in the RIDOH COVID-19 Long-Term Care Portal Training and Reference folder.

If facilities need technical assistance for the COVID-19 Long-Term Care Reporting Portal, email RIDOH at RIDOH.COVID19LTC@health.ri.gov. Note Portal in the subject line.

III. Reporting a Suspected Outbreak

When a facility has three or more symptomatic staff or residents with COVID-19-like symptoms within 72 hours but has no verified diagnoses with COVID-19 tests, **call RIDOH at 401-222-8022**, choose option #3, and ask for long-term care.

IV. Reporting COVID-19 Hospitalizations

Facilities should report hospitalizations to RIDOH by emailing the following information to RIDOH's CCE team at RIDOH.COVID19LTC@health.ri.gov:

- First and last name
- Date of birth
- Date of discharge
- Hospital discharged to
- Symptoms/reason for transfer
- Date of return (if returned to facility)

V. Reporting COVID-19 Associated Deaths

Facilities should report COVID-19-associated deaths to RIDOH by emailing the following information to RIDOH's CCE team at RIDOH.COVID19LTC@health.ri.gov:

- First and last name
- Date of birth
- Date of death

Facilities should also report all COVID-19-associated deaths through their standard reporting mechanisms.

Resources

- Training and guidance for reporting to RIDOH:
  RIDOH COVID-19 Long-Term Care Portal Training and Reference folder
- Rhode Island information for LTCFs and ALRs: posted under "Long-Term Care Settings" at covid.ri.gov/information-healthcare-professionals
- CDC Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Health Care Personnel: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html