

May 6, 2021

Re: Updated Testing Guidance

Dear Nursing Home Administrator:

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued new guidance April 27, 2021 for long-term care facility testing requirements during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Revised QSO memorandum 20-38-NH updates guidance last issued August 26, 2020 and can be accessed [here](#).

It is important to note that while CMS guidance represents the minimum testing expected, the [Director's Amended Order for the Testing of the Residents and Staff of All Nursing Homes](#) has been updated and we encourage you to review the document in its entirety. The Order specifies the following:

- Fully vaccinated staff do not have to be routinely tested. Fully vaccinated refers to a person who is  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series or  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine.
- All unvaccinated staff shall be tested at least twice per week. Unvaccinated refers to a person who does not fit the definition of fully vaccinated, including people whose vaccination status is not known.
- Regardless of vaccination status, staff and residents with symptoms or signs of COVID-19 shall be tested.
- Regardless of vaccination status, all staff and residents shall be tested upon identification of a single new COVID-19 case in any staff or resident. Exposed residents and staff should be retested every 3 to 7 days until testing identifies no new cases for a period of 14 days.

To support a smooth transition, facilities participating in the state-supported testing program are encouraged to view the upcoming testing schedule at <https://testingschedule.age.ohio.gov> and prepare to receive supplies beginning this week.

Finally, the Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Maintenance Program makes it possible for new staff, new residents, and those earlier hesitant, to be vaccinated at all licensed nursing homes and assisted living facilities in Ohio. Currently, 1,581 facilities are participating in the program along with 36 partner pharmacies. More than 1,600 clinics have been completed with an estimated 90% of the residents vaccinated. For details about this program, please visit [www.aging.ohio.gov](http://www.aging.ohio.gov).

Sincerely,



Ursel J. McElroy  
Director



Stephanie McCloud  
Director