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Novel Coronavirus Update for Health Care Facilities and Providers

Pursuant to Governor Desantis' Executive Order 20-51 and the direction of State Surgeon General Rivkees regarding 2019 Coronavirus (COVID-19), the Agency directs nursing homes and residential healthcare facilities to immediately review facility protocols including visitor screening to ensure precautions are in place to limit introduction of the virus. The CDC has provided guidance to facilities to screen patients and visitors for symptoms of acute respiratory illness (e.g., fever, cough, difficulty breathing) before entering your healthcare facility. Keep up to date on the recommendations for preventing spread of COVID-19 on [CDC's website](#).

The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidance for Steps Healthcare Facilities Can Take Now to Prepare for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) to all healthcare facilities can also be found online at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/steps-to-prepare.html>.

The Florida Department of Health also provides significant resources including frequently asked questions at: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/COVID-19/index.html>, including what to do if you suspect a person may have COVID-19.

Healthcare personnel caring for patients with confirmed or possible COVID-19 should adhere to CDC recommendations for [infection prevention and control](#) (IPC):

- Assess patients with acute respiratory symptoms and risk factors for COVID-19 to minimize exposure, including placing a facemask on

the patient and isolating them in an Airborne Infection Isolation Room (AIIR), if available.

- Use [Standard Precautions](#), [Contact Precautions](#), and [Airborne Precautions](#) and eye protection when caring for patients with confirmed or possible COVID-19.
- Perform hand hygiene with alcohol-based hand rub before and after all patient contact, contact with potentially infectious material, and before putting on and upon removal of PPE, including gloves. Use soap and water if hands are visibly soiled.
- Practice how to properly [don, use, and doff PPE](#) in a manner to prevent self-contamination, and be aware of [conservation guidelines for appropriate use of PPE](#)
- For diagnostic facilities - perform aerosol-generating procedures, including collection of diagnostic respiratory specimens, in an AIIR, while following appropriate IPC practices, including use of appropriate PPE. Additionally, it is essential that personnel who develop respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) should be instructed not to report to work. Ensure that your sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies.
- Residential providers should also review: [Strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Long Term Care Facilities](#).

The Agency encourages you to visit the Department of Health's dedicated COVID-19 webpage at www.FloridaHealth.gov/COVID-19. This remains the best and most up-to-date resource for information and guidance regarding COVID-19 in Florida.

For any other questions related to COVID-19 in Florida, please contact DOH's dedicated COVID-19 Call Center by calling **1-866-779-6121** or [emailingCOVID-19@flhealth.gov](mailto:oremailingCOVID-19@flhealth.gov).

The Agency for Health Care Administration is committed to better health care for all Floridians. The Agency administers Florida's Medicaid program, licenses and regulates more than 44,000 health care facilities and 53 health plans, and publishes health care data and statistics at www.FloridaHealthFinder.gov. Additional information about Agency initiatives is available via [Facebook \(AHCAFlorida\)](#), [Twitter \(@AHCA_FL\)](#) and [YouTube \(/AHCAFlorida\)](#).