

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH
Acting Commissioner

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Governor
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Lt. Governor

HEALTHCARE QUALITY AND SAFETY BRANCH

BLAST FAX 2020-69

TO: Urgent Care Facilities, Nursing Homes, Assisted Living Services Agency, Residential Care Home, Managed Residential Community, and Licensed Practitioners

FROM: Commissioner Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH 

CC: Deputy Commissioner Heather Aaron, MPH, LNHA
Adelita Orefice, MPM, JD, CHC, Senior Advisor to the Commissioner
Barbara Cass, RN., Branch Chief, Healthcare Quality and Safety Branch
Donna Ortelle, Section Chief, Facility Licensing and Investigations Section

DATE: June 25, 2020

SUBJECT: Covid-19 Testing Requirements

As we are all aware, the COVID 19 pandemic and the need to Re-Open Connecticut is our top priority. The need to increase testing across the state plays a major role in the endeavor.

At this time, the Department of Public Health (DPH) is requiring the use of nucleic acid COVID-19 testing for staff in Nursing Home Facilities, Managed Residential Communities, and Assisted Living Services Agencies as required under Executive Order No. 7AAA. COVID-19 testing by an antigen test (ie. Quidel Sofia) or antibody testing is not appropriate for the above populations and would be considered noncompliant with the Executive Order.

DPH is also not recommending the antigen test for testing of individuals in congregate living settings or other high-risk populations. Antigen testing is known to have a lower sensitivity than nucleic acid testing and a negative antigen result needs to be treated as presumptive negative. FDA states that negative results from antigen testing should be confirmed with an FDA-authorized molecular assay, if necessary, for patient management.

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Negative results do not rule out COVID-19 and should not be used as the sole basis for treatment or patient management decisions, including infection control decisions.

Nursing Homes will be assigned a "Care Partner" or nursing home testing contractor. The Care Partner will contact you, if not already done, within the next 7-10 days to schedule staff testing.

Please note that Licensed Practitioners/entities adding COVID-19 testing to their current CUA certification, please contact the laboratory unit of the Facility Licensing & Investigations Section at dph.flislab@ct.gov before you begin testing for information regarding regulatory requirements.