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DHS, OHA introduce COVID-19 testing plan for long-term care facilities

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DHS, OHA introduce COVID-19 testing plan for long-term care facilities

Salem, OR—The Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) and Oregon Health Authority (OHA) today finalized a comprehensive, statewide COVID-19 testing plan for long-term care facilities with more than five residents.

Implementation of the plan will occur in two phases. In the first phase, every facility will test all staff and offer testing to all residents. This phase begins on June 24, 2020, and concludes by Sept. 30, 2020. It will cover more than 680 large, long-term care facilities statewide, which combined provide care for an estimated 31,000 residents and employ 29,000 staff. Residents and staff at nursing facilities in Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, Yamhill, Marion and Polk counties will be prioritized as these counties account for the majority of outbreaks in long-term care facilities to date. Testing will then commence at assisted living and residential care facilities with memory care units in those counties, followed by facilities without memory care. This same sequence will then roll out in other counties statewide.

In the second phase, facilities will develop and implement plans for ongoing monitoring. Plans will detail how they will monitor and test residents and staff, including testing all staff at least once per month. Plans will be approved by the DHS Office of Aging and People with Disabilities, with implementation required to begin within 30 days of completing the first round of testing.

The plan contains a strong focus on equity and trauma-informed testing practices, based on recognition of the presence of historical trauma among marginalized communities. To address these issues, the plan calls for testing services to be provided in a linguistically and culturally sensitive manner, and for the people administering the tests to understand the history of sources of trauma on marginalized communities.

Gov. Kate Brown [announced](#) June 9 that she was directing DHS and OHA to develop and implement a comprehensive coronavirus testing plan to protect residents and staff of long-term care facilities, starting with facilities at highest risk.

Long-term care facilities will be required to report results to their local public health authority and the DHS Office of Aging and People with Disabilities. Facility staff participation is required; residents who decline a test, and are symptomatic, will need to be quarantined.

To ensure individuals' privacy, the only publicly released information from the testing will be aggregate data on cases and deaths at for facilities with outbreaks. Positive test results at facilities with three or more cases will be added to the OHA COVID-19 Weekly Report, which is updated every Wednesday. In addition, lists of facilities reporting current or suspected cases of COVID-19 will continue to be available to the public on the DHS website. These lists are updated every Tuesday and Friday.

"We anticipate that comprehensive testing will help improve prevention efforts by providing us with more information on how the virus is spreading in long-term care facilities," said DHS Director Fariborz Pakseresht. "Completing the first round of tests statewide represents a significant undertaking. We appreciate the support we have received from long-term care facilities in partnering with us to take this important step forward."

Statewide testing in long-term care is an essential first step that will allow the state

Statewide testing in long-term care is an essential first step that will allow the state to examine how visitation policies can be safely and incrementally eased.

Resources:

A copy of the long-term care testing plan may be found at [this link](#).

For the DHS lists of state-licensed long-term care facilities reporting COVID-19 cases or tests pending on suspected cases visit:

<https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/COVID-19/Pages/LTC-Facilities.aspx>.

For the most recent OHA COVID-19 Weekly Report, which includes cases at long-term care facilities, visit:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASESCONDITIONS/DISEASESAZ/Emerging%20Respiratory%20Infections/COVID-19-Weekly-Report-2020-06-10-FINAL.pdf>

Other COVID-19 resources and information is available at these links:

- [Oregon Health Authority | COVID-19 Updates](#)
- [Oregon Department of Human Services COVID-19 Information and Resources](#)



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