

2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS ILLNESS (COVID-19) GUIDANCE

TITLE: Reporting Guidance for Nursing and Long-Term Care Facilities Concerning 2019 Novel Coronavirus Illness

DATE: April 28, 2020

TO: Nursing Facilities and Long-Term Care Facilities in Kansas

FROM: Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services

SUMMARY: Guidance for Reporting to Residents and Family Members about COVID-19 Positive Patients and Staff Members in NFs and LTCFs

GUIDANCE:

KDADS directs that nursing facilities, long-term care facilities, and other adult care homes do everything possible to notify residents and responsible parties of positive COVID-19 cases in their facilities. That includes patients, residents and staff that have confirmed COVID-19. This recommendation is consistent with directives issued by CMS to nursing facilities on April 19, 2020, to provide increased transparency around COVID-19 cases.

National trade associations for nursing facilities and assisted living facilities recommended that their members report to residents and family members about COVID-19 positive patients and staff members in their facilities. This recommendation is consistent with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations on the need for transparency and coordination of reporting efforts with local public health authorities.

KDADS will provide more guidance as the federal agencies release regulations. Current federal regulations (42 CFR 483.80) and CDC guidance specify that nursing homes must notify State or Local health departments about residents or staff with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, residents with severe respiratory infection resulting in hospitalization or death, or 3 or more residents or staff with new-onset respiratory symptoms within 72 hours of each other. CMS and CDC will soon provide nursing homes with specific direction on standard formatting and frequency for reporting this information through the CDC's National Health Safety Network (NHSN) system. The required collection of this information will be used to support surveillance of COVID-19 locally and nationally, monitor trends in infection rates, and inform public health policies and actions.

Current state regulations in Kansas require that suspected COVID-19 cases be reported to KDHE via phone call to the KDHE Epidemiology Hotline (1-877-427-7317) or via a faxed Kansas Notifiable Disease Form (available at https://www.kdheks.gov/epi/download/Kansas_Reportable_Disease_Form.pdf) within four hours of suspicion. State regulations also require that all outbreaks should also be reported

within four hours by telephone to the KDHE Epidemiology Hotline. An outbreak of COVID-19 is defined as two or more cases associated with the same exposure which includes two or more cases associated with the same facility. Reporting via the NHSN system does not substitute for reporting directly to KDHE.

In addition to reporting COVID-19 positive cases to state and local health departments, facilities must report positive cases in residents and/or staff to the KDADS hotline at 800-842-0078.

Until the new CMS regulations on standard reporting are published, CMS is requiring that facilities notify its residents and their representatives to keep them informed of the conditions inside the facility. At a minimum, nursing homes must inform residents and their representatives:

- within 12 hours of the occurrence of a single confirmed infection of COVID-19;
- or three or more residents or staff with new onset of respiratory symptoms that occur within 72 hours.

The CMS guidance also directs weekly updates to residents and their representatives, or each subsequent time a confirmed infection of COVID-19 is identified and/or whenever three or more residents or staff with new onset of respiratory symptoms occurs within 72 hours.

Facilities will include information on mitigating actions implemented to prevent or reduce the risk of transmission, including if normal operations in the nursing home will be altered. This information must be reported in accordance with existing privacy regulations and statutes.

The [CDC](#) and [CMS](#) have guidance documents for facilities to describe when and how information should be shared with residents and family members.