



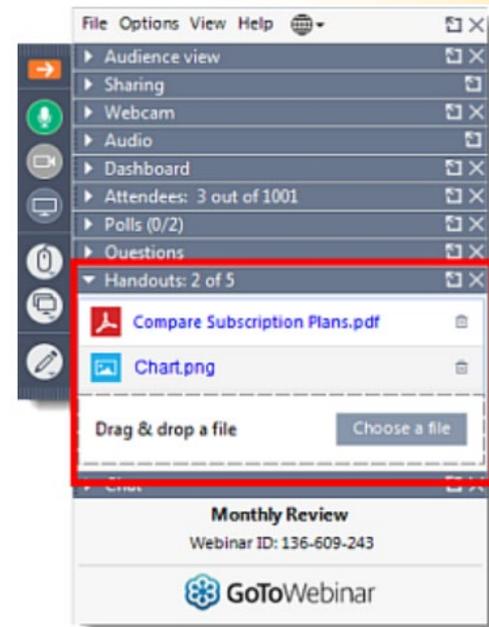
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**Welcome to the
ALF Provider
COVID-19 Webinar
with LTCR**

June 23, 2021

Handout

A pdf version of this presentation is available in the **Handout** section of your control panel. Save the file to your computer to view or print later.



ALF Portal

[ALF Provider Portal](#) - Find answers to most common questions

Resources and tools for ALFs:

- [COVID-19 Response Plan](#)
- COVID-19 Emergency Rules
 - [§553.2001](#)
 - [§553.2003](#)
 - [§553.2004](#)
- Frequently Asked Questions
 - [ALF FAQ](#)
- [Provider Letters](#)



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Upcoming Webinars

Starting in July, ALF webinars will be once a month.

The next webinar is scheduled for:

- July 14, 2021



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Webinar Recordings and PDFs

Access recordings and PDFs of previous ALF webinars from the [ALF Portal](#).

Click on COVID-19 Resources to expand the accordion to access resources and webinars.

- [May 19, 2021 – ALF COVID-19 Q&A Webinar Slides \(PDF\)](#)
- [May 19, 2021 – ALF COVID-19 Q&A Webinar Recording](#)



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Informal Comment – Permanent Rules

HHSC is accepting informal comments from stakeholders on the LTCR Contagious Outbreak, Epidemic, or Pandemic Draft Rules. The comment period ends **June 25, 2021**.

[Read the draft rules here.](#)

ALF section – Ch. 570 Subchapter B

Email questions or comments to [HHSC Long-Term Care Regulation Policy and Rules.](#)



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Executive Order GA-36

On Tuesday May 18, Governor Abbott issued [Executive Order GA-36](#), which prohibits governmental entities, such as HHSC, from mandating face coverings in response to the COVID-19 disaster.

LTC providers, are not required to comply with any requirement in HHSC rule that mandates face coverings in response to the COVID-19 disaster.



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Executive Order GA-36

Effective immediately, long-term care providers, including home and community support services agencies, are not required to comply with any requirement in HHSC rule that mandates face coverings in response to the COVID-19 disaster.

Providers must continue to comply with applicable infection control rules, including those addressing compliance with CDC and CMS guidance.



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Executive Order GA-36

Note that this order does not take the place of Executive Order GA-34, paragraph 4.

Businesses, including long-term care providers, may require employees or customers to follow additional hygiene measures, including wearing face coverings.



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Executive Order GA-36

HHSC continues to strongly encourage the use of face coverings to prevent the spread of COVID-19, particularly in settings involving vulnerable populations or individuals who are unvaccinated or of unknown vaccination status.

HHSC is developing new emergency rules in response to this order and will notify long-term care providers by provider letter when the new rules are adopted.



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CDC Guidance

CDC guidance for healthcare settings (including ALFs):

- [Updated Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations in Response to COVID-19 Vaccination](#)



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CDC Guidance for Communal Dining

Fully vaccinated residents can participate in communal dining without using source control or physical distancing.

If unvaccinated residents are dining in a communal area then:

- all residents should use source control when not eating ([GA-36](#))
- unvaccinated residents should remain at least 6 feet from others



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CDC Guidance for Group Activities

If all residents participating are fully vaccinated:

- may choose to have close contact
- may choose to not wear source control

If unvaccinated residents are present:

- all participants should wear source control ([GA-36](#))
- unvaccinated residents should physically distance from others



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Facility Transportation

Use of facility transportation should follow the same CDC guidance for group activities.

Vaccinated residents may ride in facility transportation without wearing source control or physical distancing.

If unvaccinated residents are present, then physical distancing should be maintained.



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Visitor COVID Test and Vaccination Status

REMINDER

A facility **may not** require a visitor to provide documentation of a COVID-19 negative test or COVID-19 vaccination status as a condition of visitation or to enter the facility

A personal visitor may refuse to provide information about his/her vaccination status. These visitors may be treated as unvaccinated and subject to all necessary precautions for unvaccinated individuals.



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Cleaning between Visits

REMINDER

Visitation must allow time for cleaning and sanitization of the visitation area between visits to ensure infection prevention and control measures are followed.



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Providers of Essential Services

REMINDER - An ALF **must** allow persons providing critical assistance to enter the facility if they pass screening.

Persons providing critical assistance include providers of essential services such as:

- Contract doctors or nurses,
- home health and hospice workers,
- health care professionals,
- contract professionals, and
- clergy members and spiritual counselors.



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Hospice Provider Visits

REMINDER

- ALFs **must** allow hospice providers and their staff to conduct visits.
- ALFs must not base hospice service delivery on vaccination status for hospice staff.

Refer to [§553.2003](#) and [ALF FAQ](#).



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Update Emergency Plan

REMINDER

- Review the emergency plan at least annually
- Document all reviews and updates of emergency plan

See [§553.44](#) for Emergency Preparedness and Response requirements.



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Emergency Rule Extended

The emergency rule related to COVID-19 vaccination data reporting in ALFs (§553.2004) has been extended.

The extension took effect on May 11 and will expire on July 9, 2021.

[Read the ALF Vaccination Data Reporting Emergency Rule \(PDF\)](#)



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Screening Logs

Q: How long do we have to keep the screening logs?

A: Retain until you have a regular survey.



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Vaccination Reporting

Providers **must** report COVID-19 vaccination data for residents and staff to HHSC within 24 hours of the vaccinations.

HHSC expects providers to report **all** known data, no matter where the vaccine was administered or who administered it.



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Vaccination Reporting

<Continued>

Report vaccination data via Survey Monkey tool:

- <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SRDM2GY>
- Report vaccination data for residents and staff, not essential caregivers



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Test Kits - Abbott ID NOW

Test Kits Available for LTC Providers with Abbott ID NOW Machines

COVID-19 test kits for the Abbott ID NOW machine are available. There is no charge for long-term care providers that request them.

[Contact the LTCR regional director for your facility's region](#) if you need COVID-19 test kits for the Abbott ID NOW machine.



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Test Kits - Abbott ID NOW

Test Kits Available for LTC Providers with Abbott ID NOW Machines

This initiative is separate from the [BinaxNOW initiative described in PL 2020-49 \(PDF\)](#).

LTC providers in need of BinaxNOW test supplies should continue to follow the BinaxNOW initiative process.



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GovDelivery

Go to:

<https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/TXHHSC/subscriber/new>

- Enter your email address.
- Confirm your email address, select your delivery preference, and submit a password if you want one.
- At a minimum, select ALF or your preferred topics.
- When done click "Submit."

Provider Alerts

- Assisted Living Facilities (ALF) Resources
- Assisted Living and Residential Care (ALRC) Resources
- Community Living Assistance and Support Services (CLASS) Resources
- Consumer Directed Services (CDS) Resources
- Consumer Managed Personal Assistance Services (CMPAS) Resources
- Electronic Visit Verification
- Local Authorities Resources
- Texas Minimum Data Set (MDS) Resources
- Day Activity and Health Services (DAHS) Resources
- Deaf-Blind with Multiple Disabilities (DBMD) Program Resources
- Employment First
- Family Care (FC) Resources



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LTC Ombudsman



Patty Ducayet

State Long-term Care Ombudsman

Telework Phone: (737) 704-9075

https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/news_info/ombudsman/

Statewide Contact for an LTC Ombudsman:

Phone: (800) 252-2412 or

Email: ltc.ombudsman@hhs.texas.gov

Facebook Live Events

Bi-weekly Facebook Live Q&A for Families of LTC Residents:

Every Other Wednesday, 12:15 to 12:45

<https://www.facebook.com/texasltcombudsman?fref=ts>



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LTC Ombudsmen



Have legal authority to access residents and facilities, which applies to **both** volunteer and staff ombudsmen. Volunteer ombudsmen are not facility volunteers.

LTC ombudsmen:

- Are subject to screening for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure.
- Will wear a facemask, if the facility policy requires a facemask for any person entering the facility.
- Will supply their own PPE and will **not** use a facility's PPE.
- Are **not** required to be tested by the facility or provide a test result to the facility.
- Are **not** required to provide the ombudsman's vaccination status.



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FAQ

How to Contact

Jennifer Morrison, Manager

Jennifer.morrison@hhs.texas.gov

LTCR Policy Mailbox

LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov

COVID-19 Page

<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/health/coronavirus-covid-19>

ALF Provider Portal

<https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/long-term-care-providers/assisted-living-facilities-alf>



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Thank you!
