



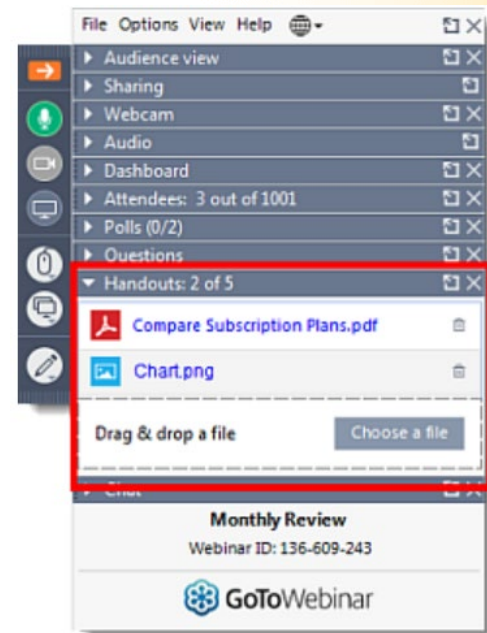
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**Welcome to the  
ALF Provider  
COVID-19 Webinar  
with LTCR**

**August 11, 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

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

Resources and tools for ALFs:

- [COVID-19 Response Plan](#) Ver. 3.9
- COVID-19 Emergency Rules
  - §553.2001 (eff. 8/6/21, pending posting)
  - [§553.2003](#)
  - [§553.2004](#) (eff. 7/9/21)
- Frequently Asked Questions
  - [ALF FAQ](#)
- [Provider Letters](#)



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# ALF Response Plan

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HHSC Long-term Care Regulation has published an updated version of the [COVID-19 Response Plan for Assisted Living Facilities \(PDF\)](#).

Make sure it is Version 3.9 revised 08/09/2021. Clear browser cache if needed.



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# Vaccination Reporting

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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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# Termination of Rule Suspensions

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## **HHSC Ends Suspension of Certain LTCR Requirements Related to the COVID-19 Outbreak**

At the start of the COVID-19 outbreak the Office of the Governor granted HHSC's request to suspend certain rules and statutes during the disaster.

HHSC is now ending the suspension of these rules and statutes as of the dates provided on the attached document.

[Read HHSC Suspension End Dates \(PDF\).](#)



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# Rule Suspensions

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Suspensions end **effective immediately** (8/4/21):

## **Resident Rights Related to Visitors**

- [26 TAC §553.125\(a\)\(3\)\(J-K\)](#)
- [HSC §247.064\(b\)\(7-8\)](#)



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# Rule Suspensions

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Suspensions end in **30 days**  
(9/03/2021):

## **Waiver of Assisted Living Facility Licensure Requirement Related to Resident Policies**

- [26 TAC §553.41\(d\)\(5\)](#)



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# Rule Suspensions

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Suspensions end in **60 days**  
(10/03/2021):

## License Timeframes

- [26 TAC §553.13, §553.15 \(a\) and \(e\)](#)
- [HSC §247.023](#)



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# Rule Suspensions

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Suspensions end in **90 days**  
(11/02/2021):

## **Fire Marshal Approval for Submission of Application**

- [26 TAC §553.18\(c\)](#)



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# Upcoming Webinars

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ALF COVID webinars are currently held once a month.

Upcoming webinar schedule:

- September 8



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# Webinar Recordings and PDFs

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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.

A recording of the July 24, 2021, ALF Provider COVID-19 Webinar with LTCR is available for those unable to attend.

- [Webinar Slides \(PDF\)](#)
- [Webinar Recording](#)



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# LTC Provider COVID-19 Resource Contacts

[Federal COVID-19 Local Fiscal Recovery Funds](#) are being distributed to cities and counties throughout Texas. HHSC urges long-term care providers in need of COVID-19 resources to use the following resources:

- Contact your city, county or [regional advisory council](#) to find out if resources or funds will be available for health care staffing support, testing services, resident or site assessment, and disinfecting services as these resources are no longer available through HHSC.
- For mobile COVID-19 vaccination needs, call 888-90-TEXAS to ask for a Mobile Vaccination Team to come out to your facility.



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# LTC Provider COVID-19 Resource Contacts

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Contact DSHS:

- [To become a COVID-19 vaccinator.](#)
- [To ask for COVID-19 vaccine.](#)

Reach out to the [HHSC Long-Term Care Regulation Regional Director](#) in your region to ask for:

- BinaxNow testing kits. [Review PL 2020-49 \(PDF\)](#) for details.
- Health care-associated infection and epidemiological support.
- COVID-19 vaccine. Providers should go through all other options before this one.

LTC providers can now [order COVID-19 therapeutics directly.](#)



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# DSHS COVID-19 Dashboard

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<https://txdshs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/ed483ecd702b4298ab01e8b9cafc8b83>

- Confirmed Cases
- Probable Cases
- Fatalities
- Active Cases
- Recovered

The dashboard is updated by 4PM daily.



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# DSHS COVID-19 Resources

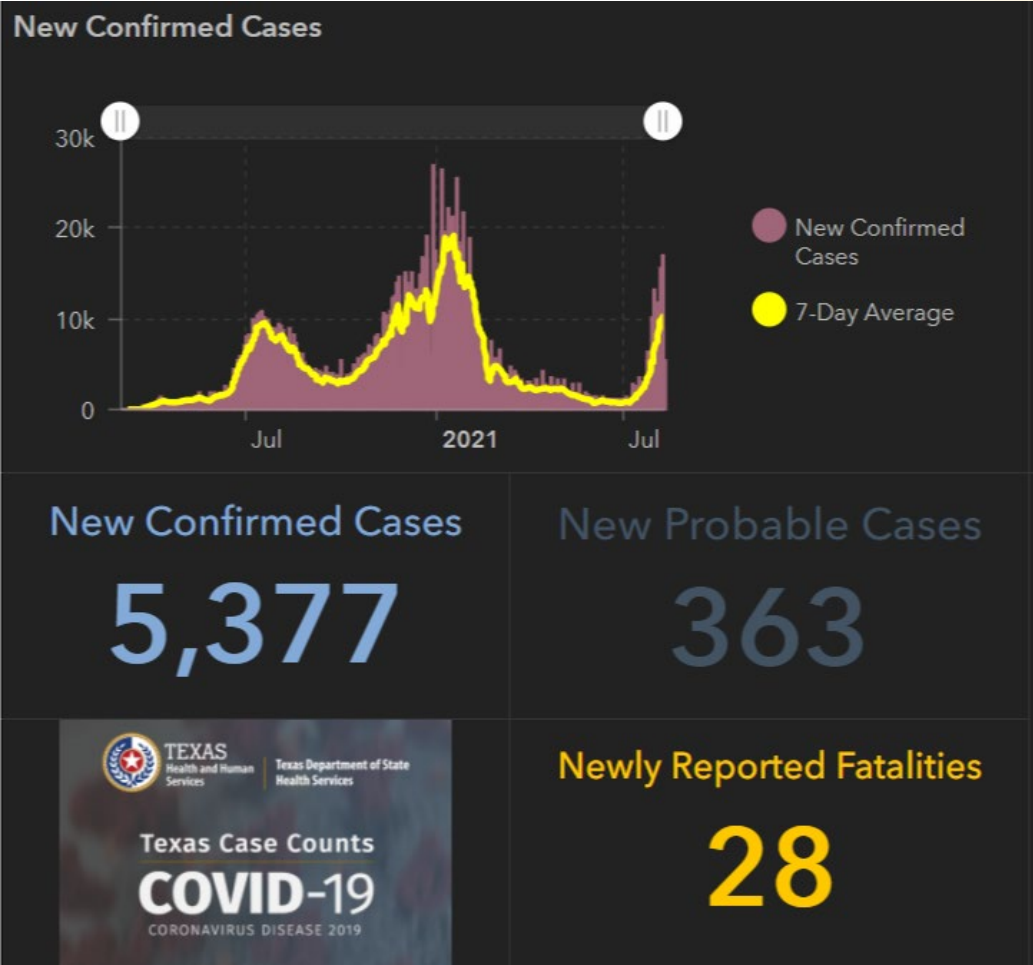
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- [COVID-19 Home Page](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Information](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Webinars](#)
- [Delta Variant FAQs](#)



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# Texas Case Counts\*



\*As of 8/9/21



# Visits during Outbreak

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**Reminder:** During an outbreak or a rise in county cases, ALFs **must** continue to allow all general visitation.

If an ALF experiences an outbreak general visitation must be cancelled for that area of the ALF, but closed window, critical assistance, EC and EOL visits must continue.



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# Infection Control

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## Disinfectants

Facility providers must:

- Be Aware of guidance and regulations from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) on cleaning and disinfecting; and
- Use all disinfectants and cleaning products according to manufacturer's guidelines.



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# Infection Control

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Per [CDC](#), COVID-19 is spread in three main ways:

- Breathing in air when close to an infected person who is exhaling small droplets and particles that contain the virus.
- Having these small droplets and particles that contain virus land on the eyes, nose, or mouth, especially through splashes and sprays like a cough or sneeze.
- Touching eyes, nose, or mouth with hands that have the virus on them.



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# Infection Control

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To protect yourself and others against COVID-19, practice:

- source control (use of face masks, face coverings, N95 respirators),
- frequent hand hygiene, and
- frequent cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces

See the CDC's [How to Protect Yourself & Others](#)



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# Infection Control

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- There is no evidence to suggest that spraying people with disinfectant eliminates or reduces their chance of spreading COVID-19.
- Current [research](#) indicates that spraying people with disinfectant is likely to cause more harm than good.



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# Infection Control

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## FAQs and Resources on Disinfectants:

From the CDC's [Cleaning Your Home: When Someone is Sick: Disinfect Safely](#)

- Do not eat, drink, breathe, or inject cleaning and disinfection products into your body or apply directly to your skin as they can cause serious harm.
- Do not wipe or bathe people or pets with any surface cleaning and disinfection products.



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# Infection Control

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## FAQs and Resources on Disinfectants:

From the [EPA's FAQs on Disinfectants and COVID-19](#):

### **Can disinfectant products be used on people?**

The products included in EPA's list of disinfectants for use against COVID-19 are for use on surfaces, not humans. Please see [this press release](#) for more information. [Read our infographic on how to use EPA-registered disinfectants.](#)



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# Infection Control

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## FAQs and Resources on Disinfectants:

From the CDC's [FAQs: Cleaning and Disinfection](#)

### **Can sanitizing tunnels be used at facility entrances or exits to prevent the spread of COVID-19?**

CDC does not recommend the use of sanitizing tunnels. There is no evidence that they are effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19. In addition, chemicals used in sanitizing tunnels could cause skin, eye, or respiratory irritation or damage.



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# DRTx Vaccine Hotline

Disability Rights Texas is assisting Texans with disabilities who are having trouble getting their COVID-19 vaccine:

- Are you having trouble signing up for the vaccine on your computer – or you don't use computers?
- Do you need a ride to the place giving the shots?
- Is it hard to leave your home and you need the vaccine brought to you?
- Do you want to learn more about the vaccine before you get it?

**For help, call the DRTx Vaccine Hotline for People with Disabilities at 1-800-880-8401 or email at [vaccine@DRTx.org](mailto:vaccine@DRTx.org).**

Hotline hours M-F, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This hotline is for vaccine access issues only. For other disability rights issues, the main line is 1-800-252-9108.



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# Quarantine Guidance Review

ALFs will have to determine whether the resident is fully-vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days (Recovered).

Scenario	Vaccinated or Recovered	Unvaccinated
Newly Admitted/Readmitted	<b>No Quarantine</b>	Quarantine
Left Overnight	<b>No Quarantine</b>	Quarantine
Known Exposure or close contact	Quarantine	Quarantine
Symptomatic while Awaiting Test Results	Quarantine	Quarantine



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# Quarantine Guidance Review

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Per CDC guidance, ALFS should not use COVID-19 testing as a basis for quarantine decisions.

Residents who meet the criteria for being quarantined must be quarantined even if the resident has a recent COVID-19 negative test result.

ALFs also should not quarantine residents who do not need to be quarantined per CDC guidance. Doing so could be considered unnecessary isolation of a resident.



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# Quarantine Guidance Review

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For residents who require quarantine:

The CDC still endorses the 14-day quarantine period, but has also provided alternate options:

- 10-day quarantine, without testing
- 7-day quarantine, with a negative COVID-19 test result **on or after day 5**

See CDC guidance:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html>



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# Executive Order GA-36

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On 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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# May 21 Mask Guidance

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<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/about-hhs/communications-events/news/2021/05/new-guidance-long-term-care-facilities-hcssas-patient-hospices-masks>

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.



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# May 21 Mask Guidance

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

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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# May 21 Mask Guidance

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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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# Executive Order GA-38

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On July 29, Governor Abbott issued [Executive Order GA-38](#), relating to COVID-19 vaccines, hospital capacity and reporting, occupancy limits, and mask guidelines.

GA-38 combines several existing COVID-19 executive orders for the stated purpose of promoting statewide uniformity and certainty in the state's COVID-19 response.



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# CDC Guidance

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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

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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
- unvaccinated residents should remain at least 6 feet from others



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# CDC Guidance for Group Activities

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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
- unvaccinated residents should physically distance from others



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# Facility Transportation

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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

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## REMINDER

A facility **must 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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# Volunteers

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## **REMINDER**

Volunteers are allowed in situations where they are performing essential tasks.



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# Cleaning between Visits

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## 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

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**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

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## 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

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## 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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# Vaccinated and Unvaccinated Residents

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**Q:** Regarding facemask and physical distancing requirements for unvaccinated residents, how do residents know who is vaccinated?

**A:** A resident can choose to disclose their vaccination status to other residents. However, a facility cannot require a resident disclose their vaccination status to other residents. A facility also cannot prohibit a resident from partaking in certain activities (i.e. communal dining or group activities) based on a resident's vaccination status.



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# Test Kits - Abbott ID NOW

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## 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

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## 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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# QLTC Conference

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## **2021 Quality in Long Term Care Conference** – Navigating the New Normal in Texas Long-Term Care

Free virtual conference Aug 30-31.

HHS and DSHS host an informative two-day, free conference on quality in long-term care. Continuing education credit for multiple disciplines will be provided.

For more information: email [QLTCC@hhs.Texas.gov](mailto:QLTCC@hhs.Texas.gov)



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# Hurricane and Flooding Readiness Webinars for LTC Providers

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These [Emergency Preparedness webinar recordings](#) cover requirements for the development of emergency preparedness plans. There are separate webinars for each program. The focus is on hurricanes and flooding. Topics include:

- Risk assessment
- Phases of emergency preparedness
- The eight core functions required for an emergency plan

[Email Joint Training](#) with any questions.



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# Chapter 553

## Reorganization

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[PL 2021-28](#) Description of Upcoming Key Changes to 26 TAC Chapter 553, Licensing Standards for Assisted Living Facilities

[Crosswalk](#) for New Chapter 553 Licensing Standards for Assisted Living Facilities

The new rule and amendments become effective August 31, 2021.



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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/](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](mailto: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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# FAQ

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# How to Contact

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## **Jennifer Morrison, Manager**

[Jennifer.morrison@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:Jennifer.morrison@hhs.texas.gov)

## **LTCR Policy Mailbox**

[LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov](mailto: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!**

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