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

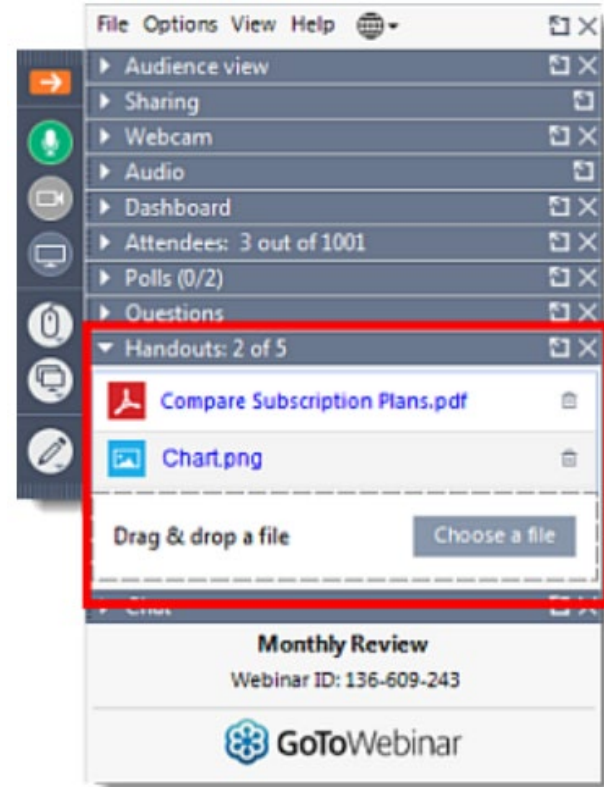
**September 15, 2021**



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# 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. 4.0
- COVID-19 Emergency Rules
  - [§553.2001](#) (eff. 8/6/21)
  - [§553.2003](#) (eff. 8/21/21)
  - [§553.2004](#) (eff. 7/9/21)
- Frequently Asked Questions
  - [ALF FAQ](#)
- [Provider Letters](#)

# Delta Variant Surge

## CDC Recommendations

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### CDC Guidance: Delta Variant

The Delta variant is the most common variant of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, spreading in the United States.

- The Delta variant spreads more easily than prior variants.
- The COVID-19 vaccination is the most effective way to prevent infection and severe disease among LTC residents and staff.

Get answers to your vaccine questions at [CDC's Vaccinate with Confidence.](#)

# CDC Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Guidance

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## Infection Control: COVID-19

Key changes for ALFs:

- No changes to the PPE recommended for the care of residents with suspected or confirmed COVID infection.
- Quarantine no longer recommended for fully vaccinated residents with exposure to COVID or those residents who have had COVID infection in the prior 90 days.

# CDC Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Guidance



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Several of the IPC measures are influenced by levels of COVID transmission in the community. To determine the level of COVID transmission, visit the CDC's [COVID-19 Data Tracker](#). If the two indicators suggest different transmission levels, the higher transmission level is used.

## Determining Transmission Risk



	Low	Moderate	Substantial	High
New cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days*	<10	10-49.99	50-99.99	≥100
Percentage of positive NAATs tests during the past 7 days**	<5%	5-7.99%	8-9.99%	≥10.0%



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# Reminders

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## Reporting New Positive Cases

ALFs are **only** required to report to HHSC Complaint and Incident Intake (CII) within 24 hours:

- a facility's first positive case of COVID-19 in a resident/staff member, **or**
- a new positive case of COVID-19 in a resident/staff member after a facility has been without a new case 14 days or longer.

Review [PL 2021-04 HHSC COVID-19 Reporting Process](#) for full policy details, provider responsibilities, and a decision tree on when to report.



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# Reminders

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ALF visitation rules were revised August 21. See PL 2021-31 for all of the key changes.

[Provider Letter 2021-31 \(replaces PL 2021-22\), COVID-19 Response – Expansion of Reopening Visitation and Mitigation Response Rules \(PDF\)](#).





# Reminders

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## Key changes include:

- All ALFs **must** offer a complete series of a one- or two-dose COVID-19 vaccine to residents/staff and document each resident's choice to vaccinate or not.
- ALFs no longer submit attestation form or receive approved visitation designation and plexiglass barriers or booths no longer required for indoor visits.
- ALFs **must** develop and enforce policies/procedures that ensure infection control practices, including whether visitor/resident must wear a mask.



# Reminders

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ALF **must** offer a complete series of a one- or two-dose COVID-19 vaccine to residents and staff and document each resident's choice to vaccinate or not vaccinate.

"Offer":

Administer  
**or**  
Arrange/Assist  
**or**  
Educate/Give  
Info

**AND**

Document the  
resident's  
choice to  
vaccinate or  
not vaccinate.



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# Reminders

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- Visits no longer required to be scheduled in advance
- ALF can allow both scheduled and unscheduled visits
- Use of scheduled visits must not prohibit or limit visitation
- All visits must allow time for cleaning and sanitization



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# Reminders

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An ALF may ask about a visitor's COVID-19 vaccination status but **must not** require a visitor to provide documentation of his/her 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.



# Reminders

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Fully vaccinated:

Received the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine

**OR**

Received one dose of a single-dose COVID-19 vaccine

**AND**

At least 14 days have passed since the person received the dose.

# Entry into LTC Facilities

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## [Provider Letter 2021-33, Authority to Enter Long-term Care Facilities \(PDF\)](#)

This letter reminds providers that they must allow persons providing critical assistance and providers of essential services to enter the facility if they pass the facility's COVID-19 screening.

This includes allowing HCSSA providers and their staff to conduct service delivery with residents.



# Reminders

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- ALF must screen residents upon admission or readmission and at least once a day in accordance with HHSC guidance.
- Visitors must be screened in accordance with HHSC guidance.
- HHSC guidance follows the most current CDC guidelines for screening.



# Reminders

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At this time, screening includes:

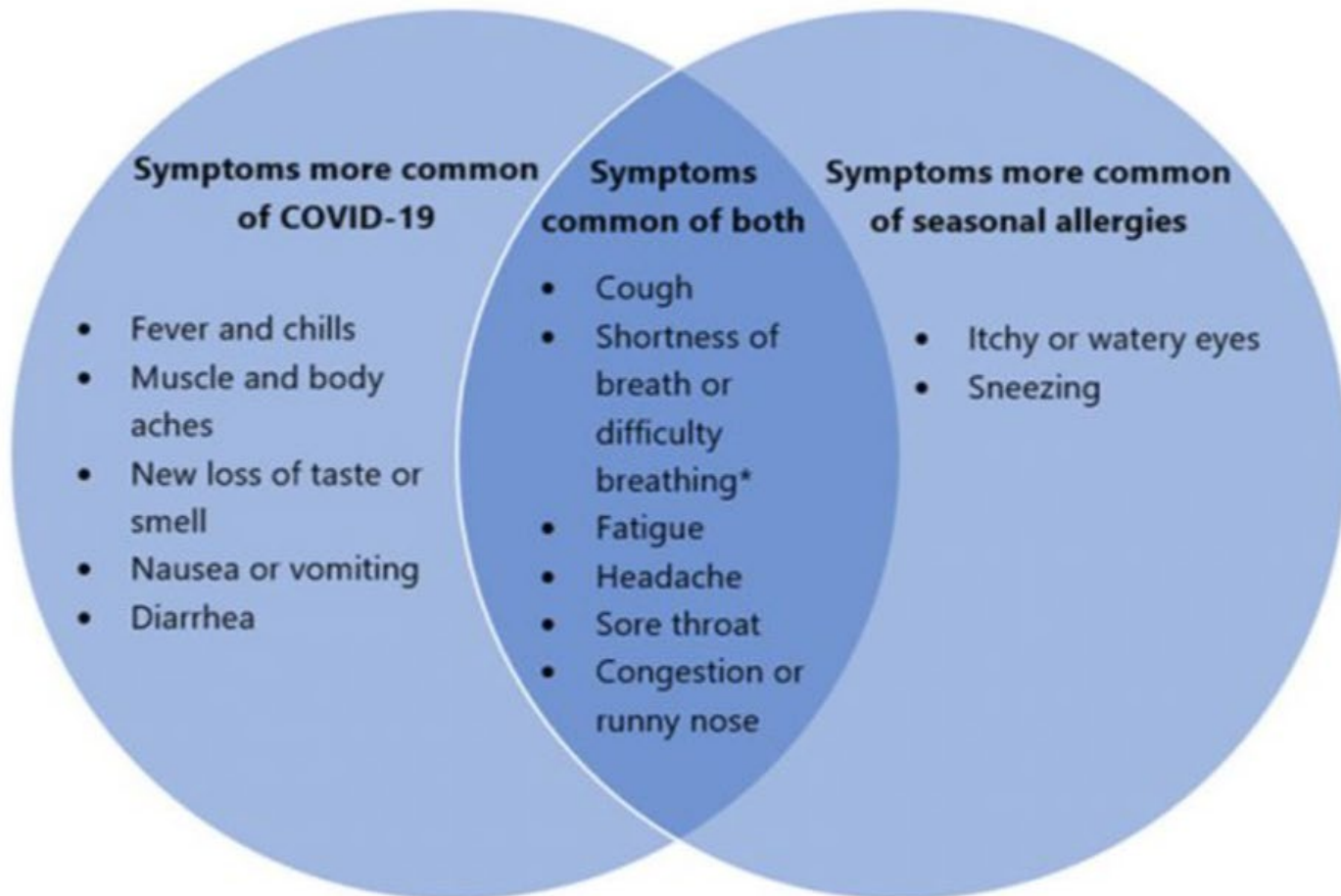
- Fever, defined as 100.4° F and above
- Signs or symptoms of COVID-19 including chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea
- Any other signs and symptoms as outlined in [Symptoms of COVID-19](#)
- Close contact with someone who has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, is under investigation for COVID-19, or is ill with a respiratory illness, regardless of vaccination status
- Has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 10 days



# Reminder: COVID-19 and Allergy Symptoms



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# Reminder: COVID-19 and Allergy Symptoms

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What do you do if a person has a symptom listed in the screening criteria but claims it is due to allergies?

- Does the person have a history of allergies, asthma, or other respiratory condition?
- Is there someone the screener can contact if they have questions regarding symptom evaluation?
- What constitutes a screening failure?

Document the results of the screening.



# Reminders

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HHSC has published [Provider Letter 2021-29 \(replaces PL 2020-21 and 2020-26\) - End of Temporary Suspension of Certain LTCR Requirements During COVID-19 Outbreak \(PDF\)](#).

The letter describes the rule suspensions that ended, the rule suspensions that are still in place, and the rule suspensions that will be ended in the future.



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# Mobile Vaccination Clinics

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ALFs can contact the [HHSC LTCR Regional Director](#) in the region where the facility is located. Request a mobile vaccination clinic at your facility.

The mobile vaccination clinic can administer first, second, or third doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to residents and staff.

Facilities may need to make alternate arrangements for staff and residents to receive any more doses after the vaccination clinic.



# Reminders

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## PL 2021-01

ALFs must continue to report vaccination data to HHSC via [survey](#).

- Within 24 hours of completing a round of vaccinations
- Aggregate number of staff (employees, contractors, volunteers)
- Aggregate number of residents
- Report vaccinations administered by facility or pharmacy partner
- Include additional dose vaccinations administered

# Capacity Increases During Severe Gulf Coast Weather

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If your facility is impacted by severe weather such as wind or flooding, or is in an area under mandatory evacuation orders, [contact the HHSC LTCR Regional Director](#) in the region where the facility is located.

If your facility is projected to exceed its licensed capacity because it is accepting residents who have been evacuated from another facility, [email Renee Blanch-Haley](#) and include State Capacity Increase Request in the subject line.

If you have any questions, contact your HHSC LTCR RD, [email LTCR Policy and Rules](#) or call 512-438-3161.

# LTC Providers May Request COVID-19 Emergency Support

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For Emergency Staffing Support, the Office of the Governor directed DSHS to use staffing agencies to provide medical personnel from out-of-state to Texas health care facilities to assist in COVID-19 operations.

Providers must demonstrate that they have exhausted all other options and have an urgent need for assistance before requesting emergency staffing support.

To initiate a request, [contact the HHSC LTCR Regional Director](#) in the region where the facility is located.

HHSC LTCR staff are responsible for initiating a State of Texas Assistance Request on behalf of the LTC provider. HHSC LTCR staff may request supporting documentation to verify need.



# DSHS COVID-19 Resources

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- [DSHS Dashboard](#)
  - Confirmed Cases
  - Probable Cases
  - Fatalities
  - Active Cases
  - Recovered
- [COVID-19 Home Page](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Information](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Webinars](#)
- [Delta Variant FAQs](#)





# 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 September 1, 2021, ALF Provider COVID-19 Webinar with LTCR is available for those unable to attend.

- [Listen to the webinar recording here](#).
- [Read the webinar slide presentation \(PDF\)](#).

# October ALF Provider COVID-19 Webinar

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## ALF Provider COVID-19 Webinar

- October 13

# Understanding the HMA Rules for ALFs

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This joint training webinar examines the Health Maintenance Activity rules for Assisted Living Facilities and reviews what tasks may be performed with or without RN delegation.

- Monday, Sept. 20  
1:30-2:30 p.m.  
[Register for the webinar.](#)
- Tuesday, Sept. 28  
10-11 a.m.  
[Register for the webinar.](#)

[Email Joint Training](#) with questions about these webinars.



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# COVID-19 Webinars for LTC

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View recorded webinars from Texas HHSC Joint Training on COVID-related topics in LTC:

<https://www.gotostage.com/channel/covid-19webinarsforltc>

- Stop the Spread of COVID-19 in Texas ALFS-DAHS
- Creating a Culture of Normalcy within COVID-19
- Meaning Activities in ALFs within COVID-19 Regulations



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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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