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Welcome ICF Providers!

**COVID-19 Updates and Q&A with LTC
Regulation and DSHS**

September 13, 2021

For more information:

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

Email: LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov

Phone: 512-438-3161

COVID-19 Updates

Panelist

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Reminder: Sign-up for GovDelivery to receive alerts

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.**
- **Select your topics.**
- **When done click “Submit.”**



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Resources

The following resources are available on the [ICF Provider Portal](#):

- Under “COVID-19 Resources”
 - [ICF Visitation Table.](#)
 - [Infection Control Basics & Personal Protective Equipment for Essential Caregivers](#)
 - [ICF/IID COVID-19 Response Emergency Rule \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Expanded Reopening Visitation Rules](#)
 - [COVID FAQ](#)
 - [ICF COVID Response Plan](#)
 - [ICF/IID Provider COVID-19 Vaccination Data Reporting Rule](#)

- Click on “Provider Communications”
 - [PL 21-04](#) HHSC COVID-19 Reporting Process
 - [PL 21-05](#) COVID-19 Vaccination Reporting
 - [PL 21-10](#) COVID-19 Response – Expansion of Reopening Visitation (replaces PL 2020-43)

Webinar Frequency

COVID-19 Q&A Webinar Change

ICF Provider COVID-19 webinar frequency changed from every other week to once a month.

Upcoming Webinar Schedule:

- October 4, 2021

Please feel free to contact us with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Email: LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov
Phone: 512-438-3161



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CMS Adds COVID-19 Vaccination to ICF Rules (QSO-21-21-ICFIID)

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services issued [Quality Safety & Oversight Memo QSO-21-21-ICFIID \(PDF\)](#). The memo announces the addition of COVID-19 vaccine immunization related requirements.

This includes:

- New requirements for educating a person or their representatives as well as staff on the benefits and potential side effects with the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Offering the vaccine.



CMS Adds COVID-19 Vaccination to ICF Rules (QSO-21-21-ICFIID)

Noncompliance related to the new requirements for educating and offering COVID-19 vaccination to clients and staff will be cited at W-tags 500-507.

§ 483.460 Condition of participation: Health care services.

“(a)(4) The intermediate care facility for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ICF/IID) must develop policies and procedures to ensure all of the following :

- i. When the COVID-19 vaccine is available to the facility, each client and staff member is offered the COVID-19 vaccine unless the immunization is medically contraindicated or the client or staff member has already been immunized (W500)
- ii. Before offering the COVID-19 vaccine, all staff members are provided with education regarding the benefits and risks, and potential side effects associated with the vaccine (W501)
- iii. Before offering the COVID-19 vaccine, each client or the client's representative receives education regarding the benefits and risks, and potential side effects associated with the COVID-19 vaccine (W502)



CMS Adds COVID-19 Vaccination to ICF Rules (QSO-21-21-ICFIID)

- iv. In situations where the COVID-19 vaccination requires multiple doses, the client, client's representative, or staff member is provided with current information regarding each additional dose, including any changes in the benefits or risks and potential side effects associated with the COVID-19 vaccine, before requesting consent for administration for each additional doses (W503)
- v. The client, client's representative, or staff member has the opportunity to accept or refuse the COVID-19 vaccine, and change their decision (W504)
- vi. The client's medical record includes documentation that indicates, at a minimum, the following:
 - A. That the client or client's representative was provided education regarding the benefits and risks and potential side effects of COVID-19 vaccine (W505); and
 - B. Each dose of COVID-19 vaccine administered to the client (W506); or
 - C. If the client did not receive the COVID-19 vaccine due to medical contraindications or refusal (W507)

Hurricane and Flooding Readiness Webinars for LTC Providers

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](#) for questions.



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September 2021 LTCR Provider Training Opportunities

Long-Term Care Regulatory providers are invited to attend the following trainings hosted in September. [Visit the Joint Training Opportunities page](#) to register and learn more about each of these events.

Emergency Preparedness in Long-Term Care Facilities

September 13
1:30 p.m.
[Register for the webinar.](#)

September 23
1:30 p.m.
[Register for the webinar.](#)



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

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 \(PDF\)](#).

This 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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ICF/IID Leave During COVID-19 Rule Reinstated

HHSC has published [IL 2021-42 ICF/IID Services During COVID-19 \(PDF\)](#), which replaces IL 2020-43.

A resident must be discharged from the Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with an Intellectual Disability or Related Conditions, with or without a contract to hold the resident's placement in accordance with 26 TAC [Section 261.227\(j\)](#), if the resident is absent from the ICF/IID for one full day or more and the absence is not during leave described in 26 TAC [Section 261.226](#).



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COVID-19 Vaccination Reporting

HHSC Long-term Care Regulation published a revised version of the [COVID-19 Vaccination Data Reporting Rule \(PDF\)](#). The rule includes Emergency Communication System Enrollment for Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with an Intellectual Disability or Related Conditions.

The rule requires facilities to report COVID-19 vaccination data within 24 hours and enroll in an emergency communication system. HHSC will inform facilities when they can begin enrollment.

The rule became effective Aug. 11.



COVID-19 Vaccination Reporting

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

- Report all vaccinations administered on- or off-site.
- Report vaccinations administered off-site, if you have not already done so.
- Report booster doses of the vaccine.

You can access the ICF survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/95FQ52S>

COVID-19 Cases Rise - Plan for Emergencies, Staffing Shortages Related to Infectious Diseases

COVID-19 cases are increasing across Texas. Long-term care providers must ensure their emergency plan is up-to-date. Staff must be aware of what to do in the event of any sort of emergency, including an outbreak of flu or COVID-19.

LTC providers are always required to provide services to residents or clients before, during and after an emergency. The emergency plan must include:

- Planning for staff shortages.
- A back-up plan to ensure operations and care of resident or clients continue.

See program specific rules for [Intermediate Care Facilities](#) related to staffing, emergency preparedness and infection control.

A [checklist \(PDF\)](#) is available to assist you with creating a plan for dealing with an outbreak of flu or COVID-19.



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LTC Provider COVID-19 Resources

[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 844-90-TEXAS to ask for a Mobile Vaccination Team to come out to your facility.
- Contact DSHS:
 - ❖ [To become a COVID-19 vaccinator.](#)
 - ❖ [To ask for COVID-19 vaccine.](#)



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LTC Providers COVID-19 Resources

For COVID-19 Vaccination, Testing Kits, PPE, Disinfection, and HAI/EPI Support:

Long-term care providers can request:

- COVID-19 mobile vaccine clinics for residents and staff
- BinaxNow testing kits. [Read PL 2020-49](#) for details.
- PPE (providers should exhaust all other options before request)
- Facility cleaning and disinfection
- Healthcare-associated infection and epidemiological support

To Request Support:

- To initiate a request for COVID-19 support described above, [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 long-term care provider.
- HHSC LTCR staff may request supporting documentation to verify need.



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Information on Payments for Leave Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic Published (IL 2021-37)

HHSC has published [IL 2021-37](#) requirements needed for payments for leave due to COVID-19 Pandemic to ICF/IID program providers.

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services authorizes HHSC to pay an ICF/IID program provider for up to 90 days. This can happen if the program provider reserved a bed for a resident who took a temporary leave of absence during March 20, 2020 through March 1, 2021 to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. This leave, called COVID-19 therapeutic leave, includes therapeutic, extended therapeutic and special leave.

Call Provider Claims Services at 512-438-2200 for questions about a specific situation.



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Governor's Executive Order - Facemasks

Governmental entities, including HHSC, cannot mandate the use of masks. ICFs must develop and enforce policies and procedures for infection control.

Providers must continue to comply with applicable HHSC infection control rules.

[View the Governor's Executive Order](#)



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Governor's Executive Order - Facemasks

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 visitation rules and will notify long-term care providers by govDelivery alert when new rules are adopted.



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CDC Guidance

CDC guidance for healthcare settings (including ICF/IIDs) updated as of September 10, 2021.

[Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Pandemic](#)



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CDC Guidance

CDC guidance as of September 1, 2021:

- In areas with substantial and high transmission, CDC recommends that everyone (including fully vaccinated individuals) wear a mask in public indoor settings to help prevent spread of Delta and protect others.
- Fully vaccinated people might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission, particularly if they are immunocompromised or at increased risk for severe disease from COVID-19, or if they have someone in their household who is immunocompromised, at increased risk of severe disease or not fully vaccinated.

[Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#)



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COVID-19 Reporting



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ICF/IIDs are **only required** to report to HHSC within 24 hours of:

- a facility's first positive case of COVID-19, or
- a new positive case of COVID-19 after a facility has been without a new case of COVID-19 for 14 days or more.

Facilities **should not** report COVID-19 positive cases to HHSC outside of the two reportable events listed above. Additionally, the reportable events listed above **do not** include a individual that was admitted to the facility with an active COVID-19 infection or a individual that developed COVID-19 while in quarantine upon being admitted to the facility.

COVID-19 Reporting



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If a facility has a **new** reportable COVID-19 positive case, and **has not reported** a COVID-19 positive case to HHSC **within the past 14 days**, the facility must:

- report the case to HHSC Complaint and Incident Intake (CII) through the Texas Unified Licensure Information Portal (TULIP) or by calling 1-800-458-9858 within 24 hours of the confirmed positive result; and
- complete and submit Form 3613-A Provider Investigation Report within five days from the day a confirmed case is reported to CII. The provider investigation report can be submitted:
 - ❖ via TULIP
 - ❖ by email at ciiprovider@hhs.texas.gov; or
 - ❖ by fax at 877-438-5827

COVID-19 Reporting



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As a reminder, providers must contact their local health department or DSHS if they receive a positive test result for their facility.

Per DSHS, the information must be reported by the provider, regardless of whether the lab reports. This is in order to link the report to the geographical area where the person lives, which may be different than where the testing occurs. This enables accurate tracking and analysis, as well as the appropriate deployment of resources.

If providers suspect a case of COVID-19, they should contact the local health department/authority, or DSHS if a local health department is not available. Test results from the local health department do get reported to DSHS. The notification to the LHD is sufficient.

Quarantine Guidance

ICFs will have to determine whether the individual is fully-vaccinated or has recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days.

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

[CDC: Infection Control After Vaccination](#)



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Quarantine Guidance



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Per CDC guidance, individuals who meet the criteria for being quarantined must be quarantined even if the individual has a recent COVID-19 negative test result.

ICFs also should not quarantine individuals who do not need to be quarantined per CDC guidance. Doing so could be considered unnecessary isolation.

Quarantine Guidance



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For individuals 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**

CDC guidance: [Science Brief: Options to Reduce Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection Using Symptom Monitoring and Diagnostic Testing](#)



COVID-19 Vaccine Boosters

On August 12, 2021 FDA authorized an additional dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine following a primary series in immunocompromised people. Moderate to severely immunocompromised with acceptable safety profile (see the next slide) should get the booster dose.

An additional dose of either:

- Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (BNT162b2) (**≥12 years old**)
- Moderna COVID-19 vaccine (mRNA-1273) (**≥18 years old**)

after an initial 2-dose primary series of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, in immunocompromised people.

Note: This EUA amendment for an additional dose does not apply to Janssen COVID-19 vaccine or to individuals who received Janssen COVID-19 as a primary series.

The same vaccine is recommended for the third dose:

- Attempts should be made to match the additional dose type to the mRNA primary series, however if that is not feasible, a heterologous additional dose is permitted.
- The additional dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine should be administered at least **28 days** after completion of the primary mRNA COVID-19 vaccine series.



COVID-19 Vaccine Boosters

Moderately and severely immunocompromised people*

- Active treatment for solid tumor and hematologic malignancies
- Receipt of solid-organ transplant and taking immunosuppressive therapy
- Receipt of CAR-T-cell or hematopoietic stem cell transplant (within 2 years of transplantation or taking immunosuppression therapy)
- Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (e.g., DiGeorge, Wiskott-Aldrich syndromes)
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids (i.e., ≥ 20 mg prednisone or equivalent per day), alkylating agents, antimetabolites, transplant-related immunosuppressive drugs, cancer chemotherapeutic agents classified as severely immunosuppressive, TNF blockers, and other biologic agents that are immunosuppressive or immunomodulatory



COVID-19 Vaccine Resources

HHSC Long-term Care Regulation published [COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions \(PDF\)](#)

HHSC & DSHS have published [Long-term Care COVID-19 Vaccination Options \(PDF\)](#)

CDC COVID-19 vaccine resource pages:

- [COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs for Healthcare Professionals](#)
- [COVID-19 One-Stop Shop Toolkits](#)
- [Vaccine Recipient Education](#)



Delta Variant in the US

CDC recommends urgent action:

- Get vaccinated as soon as possible. Residents, LTC facility staff, and visitors should be fully vaccinated to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Wear a mask regardless of vaccination status:
 - LTC facility staff should continue to wear a facemask or personal protective equipment when around residents or in the facility.
 - LTC facility staff should wear [full PPE](#) such as gloves, gown, N95 respirator and eye protection when working with residents who are COVID-19 positive or of unknown COVID-19 status.



Delta Variant in the US

- Fully vaccinated visitors should use a mask when in the public areas of the facility such as hallways and common areas for source control. It is also safest to use a mask when visiting privately with residents. Visitors who are not fully vaccinated should always use a mask.
- Encourage residents to wear a mask when outside of their room, especially when unvaccinated or when in counties with high rates of COVID-19.
- Stay home if you feel ill. Do not go to work or visit an LTC facility if you have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Get tested. Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 or known exposure, regardless of vaccination status, should receive a viral test immediately.

Get answers to your vaccine questions at CDC's Vaccinate with Confidence:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/vaccinate-with-confidence/strategy.html>

DSHS COVID-19 Dashboard

<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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COVID-19 DSHS

Panelist

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COVID-19 DSHS

- **Additional 3rd dose vs “Booster” dose**

- The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended a third dose as an additional dose for people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised. They have not recommended a “booster” dose for the rest of the population at this point.
- It’s important to differentiate between the two as those who are receiving an “additional dose” may end up needing a “booster” also in the future, should it end up being recommended. The timing between doses also would be different between an additional dose vs booster.

- **Resource on Natural Immunity**

- [Reduced Risk of Reinfection with SARS-CoV-2 After COVID-19 Vaccination — Kentucky, May–June 2021 | MMWR \(cdc.gov\)](#) (Compares previously infected people who have not been vaccinated to previously infected people who did get vaccinated. The vaccinated population had a much lower risk of re-infection, demonstrating the benefits of vaccine among a group of people who were previously infected.)



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COVID-19 Updates

Panelist

Dana Williamson

Director, Policy Development and Support
Medicaid/CHIP

-
- Updates



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COVID-19 Updates

Panelist

Mary Valente, MPAff, LBSW, SMQT, CMDCP
Policy Development Support Office
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-
- Updates
 - Q&A

COVID-19 Q&A

Panelist

Kirsten Notaro, MA
ICF Policy Specialist
Policy, Rules and Training
Long-term Care Regulatory

- COVID-19 Q&A
- Live Q&A



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COVID-19 Q&A

Question:

Should an individual who is in quarantine go on a home visit?

Answer:

An individual has the right to choose to go on a home visit. The family (or loved ones) of the individual who is in quarantine should be educated on the risks of COVID-19 transmission and the facility must decide if the individual meets the definition of unknown COVID-19 status upon return from the home visit.



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Questions?

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Thank you!

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