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**Welcome ICF Providers!**

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

**March 7, 2022**

For more information:

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

Email: [LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov)

Phone: 512-438-3161

# COVID-19 Updates

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## Panelist

Susie Weirether

IDD Policy and Rule Manager

Long-term Care Regulations

Policy and Rules

[LTCRPolicy@hhs.Texas.gov](mailto:LTCRPolicy@hhs.Texas.gov)



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# **\*Reminder: Sign-up for GovDelivery to receive alerts\***

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**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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# COVID-19 Resources

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

## Rules

- [ICF/IID COVID-19 Expansion of Reopening Visitation Emergency Rule \(PDF\)](#)
- [ICF/IID COVID-19 Response Emergency Rule \(PDF\)](#)
- [ICF/IID Provider COVID-19 Vaccination Data Reporting Rule \(PDF\)](#)

## Guidance

- [ICF/IID COVID-19 Response Plan \(PDF\)](#) – revised Jan. 18, 2022
- [Frequently Asked Questions for ICF/IIDs about COVID-19 \(PDF\)](#) – revised Jan. 18, 2022

# COVID-19 Q&A Webinar

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## COVID-19 Q&A Webinar Schedule

April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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

Email: [LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov)  
Phone: 512-438-3161

Also, as a reminder, the PowerPoint slides will be available on the Provider Portal shortly after the webinar is completed, typically within 48-72 hours.



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# March 2022 LTCR Provider Training Opportunities

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## **Culture Change: Improving Quality of Life in Long-Term Care**

March 14

1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

[Register Here](#)

## **Emergency Preparedness for Long-Term Care Facilities**

March 15

1:30 - 5 p.m.

[Register Here](#)

## **Nursing Scope of Practice in Long-Term Care Communities**

March 16

1:30 - 3 p.m.

[Register Here](#)

## **Scope and Severity for ALFs, DAHS, ICF/IID and PPECC – Providers**

March 28

1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

[Register Here](#)



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# Updated COVID-19 Expansion of Reopening Visitation Emergency Rules for ICF Providers

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HHSC Long-Term Care Regulation published revised [COVID-19 Expansion of Reopening Visitation Emergency Rules](#) for ICF providers. HHSC removed the following language:

“If an executive order or other direction is issued by the Governor of Texas, the President of the United States, or another applicable authority, that is more restrictive than this rule or any minimum standard relating to a facility, the facility must comply with the executive order or other direction.”

The rules became effective Feb. 17, 2022.

# CMS Vaccine Mandate Update

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HHSC is not currently assessing compliance with CMS's Omnibus COVID-19 Health Care Staff Vaccination rules, published in the *Federal Register* on November 5, 2021.





# LTC Providers May Need to Update Fire Alarm System Cellular Communication Services

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In 2022 cellular companies will retire their older 3G technology. These companies include T-Mobile, Sprint, Verizon and AT&T.

LTC providers with a fire alarm system supported by an older cellular communicator running on 3G signals should upgrade their fire alarm communication equipment.

Many fire alarm systems use cellular communication devices to send signals to a 24-hour central monitoring station. The central monitoring station contacts the local emergency response team to send help. If your cellular communication device uses 3G to relay signals, and your cellular provider no longer supports those signals, your fire alarm system will not be able to notify emergency services if there is a fire.

The major cellular companies gave the following dates for retiring their older networks:

- AT&T began retiring its 3G network on Feb. 22, 2022.
- Sprint will retire its 3G CDMA network on March 31, 2022.
- Sprint will retire its 3G LTE network on June 30, 2022.
- T-Mobile will retire its 3G UMTS network on July 1, 2022.
- Verizon will retire its 3G CDMA network on Dec. 31, 2022.
- T-Mobile has announced it will retire its 2G GSM network but has not set a date for that retirement.



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# LTC Providers May Need to Update Fire Alarm System Cellular Communication Services

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After these dates fire alarm communication devices that connect to cellular communication systems using this older technology will not work.

LTC providers are responsible for ensuring their fire alarms systems function correctly. Providers with fire alarm systems monitored by a third-party monitoring company should contact their fire alarm service company. They need to find out if their fire alarm communication equipment needs upgrading.



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## Visitation Reminder for ICF/IIDs

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HHSC issued an [alert](#) to remind providers that all visitation must be allowed.

Essential caregiver and end-of-life visits must be allowed for all individuals with any COVID-19 status.

A facility may be cited if visitation is not allowed.

Review [ICF/IID visitation rules](#) for additional information.



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# HHSC Adopts Revised ICF/IID Rules – Effective Feb. 24

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HHSC Long-term Care Regulation has adopted updates to the Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with an Intellectual Disability (ICF/IID) or Related Conditions program rules. The revised rules are in the Texas Administrative Code Title 26, [Chapter 551](#). They are effective Feb. 24, 2022.

Key changes to the rule are to:

- Implement House Bill 1848 from the 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019 which requires new infection control policies and procedures in long-term living facilities.
- Implement House Bill 3720 from the 87th Legislature, Regular Session, 2021 which limits the total amount of an administrative penalty assessed against an ICF/IID.
- Reintegrate the conditions of participation from the Code of Federal Regulations.
- Correct legacy agency terms, update rule citations, and edit for clarity and consistency.



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# HHSC Publishes Description of Key Changes to 26 TAC 551

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HHSC has published provider letter 2022-07, Description of Key Changes to 26 TAC 551, Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with an Intellectual Disability or Related Conditions, for ICF/IID providers.

This letter describes the key changes to Title 26 of the Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 551, that were effective on Feb. 24.

[Read PL 2022-07](#)

# 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 an 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](mailto:ciiprovider@hhs.texas.gov); or
  - ❖ by fax at 877-438-5827

# COVID-19 Reporting

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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.



# Revised Reporting Guidance for Long-term Care Providers

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HHSC published revised [Reporting Guidance for Long-term Care Providers \(PL 20-37\) \(PDF\)](#) which provides guidance regarding completion of the Provider Investigation Report (Form 3613-A).

When providing the Provider Investigation Report (Form 3613-A) to HHSC regarding a COVID-19 infection, the facility checks each appropriate option and fills in each applicable blank excluding the name of the staff member with the COVID-19 diagnosis. HHSC does not require the name of the staff member who tested positive for COVID-19 as part of the reporting process.

# Additional and Booster COVID-19 Vaccine Doses



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A “[booster dose](#)” is a supplemental vaccine dose given to people when the immune response to a primary vaccine series is likely to have waned over time.

An “[additional dose](#)” is a subsequent dose given after a primary mRNA vaccine series (Pfizer or Moderna). This is recommended only for people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised, because they may not have received adequate protection from their initial 2-dose series.

# CDC Vaccination Schedule for most individuals



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Primary series vaccine manufacturer	Age group	Number of doses in primary series	Number of booster doses	Interval between 1st and 2nd dose	Interval between primary series and booster dose
Pfizer-BioNTech	5-11 years	2	NA	3 weeks	NA
Pfizer-BioNTech	≥12 years	2	1	3 weeks	≥5 months
Moderna	≥18 years	2	1	4 weeks	≥5 months
Janssen	≥18 years	1	1	NA	≥2 months

As per CDC on [Table 2](#)



## CDC Vaccination Schedule for people with moderate or severe immunocompromise

Primary vaccination	Age group	Number of primary vaccine doses	Number of booster doses	Interval between 1st and 2nd dose	Interval between 2nd and 3rd dose	Interval between 3rd and 4th dose
Pfizer-BioNTech	5-11 years	3	NA	3 weeks	≥4 weeks	N/A
Pfizer-BioNTech	≥12 years	3	1	3 weeks	≥4 weeks	≥3 months
Moderna	≥18 years	3	1	4 weeks	≥4 weeks	≥3 months
Janssen	≥18 years	1 Janssen, followed by 1 mRNA	1	4 weeks	≥2 months	N/A

As per CDC on [Table 3](#)



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# COVID-19 Vaccine Resources

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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](#)

# Booster & Additional Doses Resources

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[Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Approved or Authorized in the United States](#) (Updated 2/22/22)

[COVID-19 Vaccines for Moderately to Severely Immunocompromised People](#)

[Underlying Medical Conditions Associated with Higher Risk for Severe COVID-19](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shots](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations with Additional and Booster Doses \(infographic\)](#)

# Updated CDC Guidance for LTC Facilities on Accessing COVID-19 Vaccine

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has updated resources for long-term care facilities on how to help residents and staff access COVID-19 vaccines:

- [Vaccine Access in Long-term Care Settings](#)
- [Care Administrators and Managers: Options for Coordinating Access to COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [Jurisdictions Can Ensure COVID-19 Vaccine Access for Staff and Residents in Long-term Care Settings](#)

# COVID-19 DSHS

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## Panelist

David Gruber

Associate Commissioner for Regional and Local Health Operations

DSHS

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Angel H. Angco-Barrera, MBA, BSN, RN

Director of Public Health Nursing

Division of Regional and Local Health Operations

DSHS

Email: [angel.angcobarrera@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:angel.angcobarrera@dshs.texas.gov)



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# DSHS & Tarrytown Drive-thru Vaccine Events

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**April 02, 2022, 9am to 1pm**

1901 East Palm Valley Blvd

Round Rock, TX 78664

**April 23, 2022, 9am to 1pm**

1901 East Palm Valley Blvd

Round Rock, TX 78664

("2<sup>nd</sup> dose" event)

For more information, please contact:

[Diane M. Romnes](#)

DSHS Division for Regional and Local Health Operations 5

# COVID-19 Medicaid/CHIP Division

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## Panelist

Dana Williamson

Director, Policy Development and Support

Medicaid/CHIP Division



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Kristi Miller

Manager, Policy Development Support

Medicaid/CHIP Division

# COVID-19 Q&A

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## Panelist

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

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



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# COVID-19 Q&A

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## Question:

What information do providers need regarding the vaccination data reporting emergency communication system?

## Answer:

An ICF, within 24 hours of becoming aware of a staff or individual's COVID-19 vaccination, must accurately report COVID-19 vaccination data for staff and individuals in the format established by HHSC.

Providers are required to enroll in an emergency communication system once it is available. HHSC will have more information as deployment gets closer.

[PL 2021-05](#) goes over the process to follow and includes the link to the [survey monkey](#) to be used at this time.



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# COVID-19 Q&A

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## Question:

What are the expectations for staff wearing masks?

## Answer:

HHSC cannot require the use of face masks or face coverings. An ICF must develop and enforce policies and procedures for infection control.

An ICF may use [CDC guidance](#) and the [CMS QSO 21-14](#) to help develop facility policy. The written standards, policies, and procedures for the facility's infection prevention and control program must include standard and transmission-based precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including the appropriate use of PPE.

Staff must also wear appropriate PPE based on the cohort with which they work.



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# Questions?

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For more information:

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Email: [LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov)

Phone: 512-438-3161

# Upcoming Webinars



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Send your ideas for our upcoming quarterly webinars.

[LTCRPolicy@hhs.Texas.gov](mailto:LTCRPolicy@hhs.Texas.gov)

Subject: ICF Webinar Idea



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# Thank you!

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For more information:

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

Email: [LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov)

Phone: 512-438-3161