

Key Points for COVID-19 in Assisted Living Facilities

Multiple states have identified suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19 among residents of Assisted Living, Residential Care, and Independent Living Facilities (subsequently referred to here as ALFs). The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) recommends adapting the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) ["Preparing for COVID-19: Long-term Care Facilities, Nursing Homes"](#) to guide COVID-19 preparation, prevention and control efforts. The structure and care provided within ALFs can be distinctly different than nursing homes. Implementing this guidance may present some unique challenges or additional considerations. Some ALFs share a building or campus with a CMS certified nursing home or Skilled Nursing Facility and have access to a trained infection control nurse that can assist with COVID-19 prevention and control efforts. Others are standalone facilities that may have limited access to these resources. Additional considerations for ALFs include:

1. ALF staffing is varied. They may have full- or part-time nursing staff, contract personnel, vendors, or use outpatient providers. Documentation of resident conditions/problems may not be centralized within the facility. Therefore, cluster identification may be delayed.
 - ALF staff should be vigilant for fever or respiratory symptoms (e.g., shortness of breath, new or change in cough, and sore throat) among their residents.
 - ALFs should implement active monitoring for fever and respiratory symptoms for all residents (at least once per shift).
 - ALFs should implement active monitoring for fever and respiratory symptoms for all staff (upon arrival and departure daily).
 - ALFs should designate one staff member to report identified illnesses.
 - Notify the local health department if: instances of severe respiratory infection, clusters (≥ 2 residents and/or HCP) of respiratory infection, or individuals with known or suspected COVID-19 are identified.
2. Given the independence and ambulatory status of residents in ALFs, staff may encounter challenges implementing guidance related to restrictions of resident movement (inside or outside the facility), family members/other visitors to residents, or contract HCP to the ALF. Share COVID-19 guidance for persons in the community with residents. Examples include: ["How to Protect Yourself"](#), and ["Are You at Higher Risk for Severe Illness?"](#). ALF staff could post notices directed at older adults to stay in the room and to restrict visitation.
3. ALF housekeeping or cleaning services should follow environmental cleaning and disinfection practices similar to nursing homes. If facility policies, procedures and products for environmental cleaning and disinfection for healthcare settings are not in place, at a minimum use the ["Interim Recommendations for US Households with Suspected/Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019"](#) including the use [EPA-registered disinfectants](#).

Thank you very much for everything you are doing to keep your residents safe and healthy.