



Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality
67 Forest Street, Marlborough, MA 01752

CHARLES D. BAKER
Governor

DEWEY E. POLITO
Lieutenant Governor

MARYLOU SUDDERS
Secretary

MONICA BHAREL, MD, MPH
Commissioner

Tel: 617-624-6000
www.mass.gov/dph

Memorandum

TO: Nursing Home and Rest Home Administrators

FROM: Elizabeth D. Kelley, MPH, MBA, Director
Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality

SUBJECT: Allowing Non-Essential Personnel in Long-Term Care Facilities¹

DATE: July 30, 2020

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) continues to work with state, federal, and local partners on the outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2, and we continue to appreciate the essential role you have in responding to this evolving situation.

Effective immediately, long-term care facilities may allow non-essential personnel to enter the facility, provided that the long-term care facility meets all of the following safety, care, and infection control measures:

- The long-term care facility has adequate supplies of personal protective equipment and essential cleaning and disinfection supplies to care for residents.
- The long-term care facility has no staffing shortages and the facility is not under a contingency staffing plan.
- The long-term care facility has implemented and is in compliance with the Commonwealth's Long-Term Care Surveillance Testing Strategy.
- There have been no new COVID-19 positive resident or staff cases identified in the facility in the last 14 days.
- The long-term care facility screens all non-essential personnel for fever or respiratory symptoms before they enter the facility. The long-term care facility must not permit any individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 infection (fever equal to or greater than 100.0

¹ This guidance applies to all Long-Term Care Facilities (Nursing Homes and Rest Homes) other than those that are operated by the state.

F, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, myalgia, chills or new onset of loss of taste or smell) to enter.

- Non-essential personnel must wear a face mask for the duration of their time in the facility and don any other appropriate personal protective equipment.

If volunteers are permitted in a long-term care facility, the following safety, care, and infection control measures should be implemented in addition to the measures described above:

- Volunteers must wear a face mask for the duration of their time in the facility.
- Volunteers must remain socially distanced (6 feet apart) from residents at all times; and
- Volunteers are not permitted to enter resident rooms or spaces designated by the facility for caring for COVID-19 positive residents. Volunteers are permitted in common spaces within the facility.

Non-essential personnel include, but are not limited to, the following individuals: barbers, hair stylists, volunteers, maintenance contractors and vendors performing cosmetic work (e.g. painting) as long as such work is not being performed in a resident's room, and individuals working in facility gift shops.

When providing services in the long-term care facility, non-essential personnel must follow the same safety standards and checklists for any service they are providing outside the long-term care facility, including but not limited to, maintaining social distancing between residents, hygiene protocols, staffing and operations, and cleaning and disinfection. The guidance may be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/reopening-massachusetts>.

DPH strongly encourages all long-term care facilities in Massachusetts to monitor the CMS and CDC website for up-to-date information and resources:

- CMS website: <https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/Emergency/EPRO/Current-Emergencies/Current-Emergencies-page>
- CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/index.html>

Additionally, please visit DPH's website that provides up-to-date information on COVID-19 in Massachusetts: <https://www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus>.