



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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**ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH**

**20-02**

**COVID-19 Testing of Residents and Staff of Nursing Homes  
and Assisted Living Facilities with Memory Care Units**

**WHEREAS**, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee has issued Proclamation 20-05, subsequently amended and extended, proclaiming a statewide state of emergency due to an outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the United States and community spread of COVID-19 in Washington State; and

**WHEREAS**, Long-term care facilities are at high risk of severe COVID-19 outbreaks due to their congregate nature; and

**WHEREAS**, Long-term care facility staff and volunteers, including asymptomatic carriers of COVID-19, are the most likely source of introduction of the disease into a facility given current visitor restrictions; and

**WHEREAS**, Long-term care facilities' resident populations are generally comprised of people at highest risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19, including older adults with underlying chronic medical conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Inslee has issued proclamations requiring and the Department of Health and Department of Social and Health Services have issued guidance recommending the implementation of numerous COVID-19 prevention and control measures in long-term care facilities, including restricting visitors and implementing screening measures for staff and residents; and

**WHEREAS**, Comprehensive testing of long-term care facility residents and staff will show the scope and magnitude of COVID-19 infections in these facilities and help inform COVID-19 prevention and control efforts to limit transmission among residents and staff.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, John Wiesman, Washington State Secretary of Health, as a result of the above-noted situation, and under RCW 43.70.130, RCW 70.05.070, WAC 246-100-036, and any other applicable authority, do hereby order the following:

**Except for those facilities that completed a COVID-19 point prevalence survey of residents and staff on or after April 1, 2020, every nursing home by June 12, 2020, and every assisted living facility with a memory care unit by June 26, 2020, must:**

- Offer COVID-19 tests to all residents and administer tests to all consenting residents;
- Require all staff to be tested for COVID-19 and administer tests to all staff, except those who provide medical justification for declining testing from a licensed health care provider;
- Contact [doh-cbts.imt@doh.wa.gov](mailto:doh-cbts.imt@doh.wa.gov) for assistance as soon as reasonably possible if unable after diligent efforts to arrange for the administration of tests by legally authorized individuals;
- Comply with all applicable laws when offering tests to, requiring tests of, administering tests to residents and staff, including, but not limited to, any laws governing residents' health care decision-making;
- Ensure timely and proper submission of test specimens to authorized laboratories along with all information the laboratories require to perform the tests, report test results, and obtain payment; and immediately report positive test results for residents and staff to the Department of Social and Health Services (at 24/7 Hotline: 1-800-562-6078; online reporting: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/residential-care-services/residential-care-services-online-incident-reporting>; email: [CRU@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:CRU@dshs.wa.gov); or fax: 360-725-2644).

A staff member is any employee, contractor, volunteer, or other personnel who provides health care, personal care, social, administrative, clerical, dietary, environmental, or any other kind of services in the facility.

The state of Washington will provide test kits and personal protective equipment (PPE) for administering tests to every facility at no cost. If a facility does not receive enough test kits or PPE to provide tests to all residents and staff, it must use every test it can safely administer and promptly notify [doh-cbts.imt@doh.wa.gov](mailto:doh-cbts.imt@doh.wa.gov), but otherwise will not be deemed to be in violation of this order for not providing tests to all residents and staff.

Facilities are not obligated to pay laboratories for tests performed for residents or staff. Laboratories will obtain payment from CMS and HCA for tests performed for those residents and staff who are covered by Medicare and Medicaid. The state of Washington will pay laboratories for tests performed for staff who are not covered by Medicare or Medicaid.

This order shall take effect immediately and remain in effect until rescinded or superseded by a subsequent order of the Secretary of Health or until the Governor issues a proclamation declaring the termination of the state of emergency declared by Proclamation 20-05, as amended and extended by subsequent amendatory proclamations, whichever is earlier.

Signed this 28<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2020.

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John Wiesman, DrPH, MPH  
Secretary of Health