



April 15, 2020

Dear Residents, Patients and Families,

We wanted to reach out again to let you know about safety measures being implemented by the State of Connecticut to protect the health and safety of nursing home residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

All nursing homes in the state have been asked by the State of Connecticut to send the attached information, that we received late yesterday, to residents and families to make you aware of the State's plan to designate specific nursing homes in Connecticut as COVID-19 Recovery Facilities. It is our understanding that these designated facilities will provide specialized services to better accommodate COVID-19 positive patients with higher care needs.

We are working with state and local health officials on ensuring the safety and security of our community and will cooperate with the State's plan as needed.

We will communicate with anyone directly impacted by the State's plan and will work to minimize any disruption as much as possible while working to protect the health and well-being of those living on our campus.

We will continue to keep you informed as updates become available. If you have any questions, please contact me at (860) 658-3703 or [david.bordonaro@mcleancare.org](mailto:david.bordonaro@mcleancare.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David Bordonaro".

David Bordonaro  
President



State of Connecticut  
Department of Aging and Disability Services  
Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

4/11/2020

Dear Resident, Family Member or Responsible Party,

I know you have received several letters from me, but this is a very fluid situation and the guidance changes as we learn more about this virus. As guidance develops, I will write to you, providing updates about the measures the State is taking to protect the rights, health and safety of nursing home residents. In the March 30, 2020 joint letter with the Department of Public Health (DPH), we explained that there have been positive tests for the coronavirus (COVID-19) in many nursing homes across our state.

Throughout this pandemic the Governor, in consultation with the State Department of Public Health, has had to make difficult decisions. I am thankful that they have kept the rights of residents, including first and foremost the right to appropriate medical care, at the forefront of this decision making. We have every indication that the rights, health, safety and wellbeing for Connecticut's nursing home residents remain a priority.

Providing physical distancing to slow the spread of the virus, as well as appropriate medical services for nursing home residents, are an essential part of the State's plan during this public health crisis. In order to meet the level of care some residents may need, designated nursing homes will provide specialized services and therefore be identified as COVID Recovery Facilities. COVID Recovery Facilities will have access to higher levels of care and services in order to treat residents with increased needs. All other homes will continue providing care in a traditional manner which may include the care of COVID-19 positive residents who do not require specialized care and services. These homes will incorporate practices to provide physical distancing which may include, for example, separate wings of the facility.

There are normal procedures for transfers or discharges on both a voluntary and involuntary basis for all nursing homes. Normally a nursing home is required to give you, your guardian, conservator or legally liable relative a written notice, and develop a plan with you, before a transfer from one room to another in the facility. This also normally applies before a transfer or discharge from one facility to another.

There are very few exceptions to this rule. One exception is infection control or other health/safety concerns that could impact or endanger other individuals in the home. If that is the case, under existing law, you may be transferred to another room with the right to notice and consultation after the fact, and otherwise all existing regulations and procedures would apply.

Under the current public health crisis, there may be situations involving a transfer to another facility where current procedures are waived or are done as soon as they can be. These would be related only to transfers involving the COVID-19 Recovery Facilities and be in consultation with your doctor, the Hospital, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman and DPH.

Otherwise, the rules and process involving a transfer to another nursing home are unchanged and remain in place.

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If you are going to be asked to transfer from your room or nursing home, someone will discuss this with you. All transfers will be in consultation with your doctor and moves will be coordinated by the care team at your nursing home.

If the room change or transfer is due to infection control issues or other health/safety concerns that may impact other individuals in the home who could be endangered, you may be transferred with the official legal notice given after the fact. All other normal procedures remain in place.

The nursing homes that are designated as COVID Recovery Facilities may have residents who have tested negative and wish to move to a traditional nursing home or unit that is COVID-19 unknown. Residents who have tested COVID-19 negative and have elected to transfer will go to a quarantined section of the traditional nursing home for 14 days. Again, all transfers will be recommended or in consultation with the doctor and moves will be coordinated by the care team at your nursing home.

We understand that this period of physically distancing will remain in effect until it is deemed that the risk of transmission has been remedied. At that time, there will be a process to facilitate how residents can return to their nursing home of origin.

I know this is a great deal of information, potentially leaving you with more questions and that is very understandable. Throughout this process the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program as well as all of the State agencies involved will be here to provide you with the most up to date and accurate information.

I will continue to host Facebook live events Mon, Wed and Fri. at 5:30 pm.

To watch or ask questions, please visit the Connecticut Long Term Care Ombudsman Program's Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/CTLTCOP>.

If you have specific questions or concerns related to your nursing home, you can contact the Long-Term Care Ombudsman's office toll-free at: **1-866-388-1888**

Please remember it is normal to have questions, feel uneasy or even scared. Our offices as well as the care team members at your nursing home are here for you. Reach out, talk about how you are feeling. We need to do things differently right now but will continue to offer support so that we can get through this together.

Sincerely,



Mairead Painter

State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

# **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) RELATED TO PLAN FOR LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES (LTCFs) DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

1. Will my family and I be told if there is a positive COVID-19 case in my nursing home?

*During this public health emergency, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) recommends that residents and families be notified expeditiously by the nursing home when one or more residents test positive for COVID-19.*

2. What is a COVID Recovery Facility?

*DPH is planning to establish COVID Recovery Facilities.*

- *Alternate COVID Recovery Facilities are alternate care sites that will accept COVID-positive patients discharged from the hospital who no longer need an acute hospital level of care, freeing up a hospital bed, and have a need for skilled nursing care or the need for additional support. These alternate care sites will be responsible for discharge planning and preparing patients for discharge into the community.*
- *COVID Recovery Facilities are existing nursing homes that will accept patients discharged from the hospital who previously resided in a nursing home but were denied re-admission to their original nursing home because of the facility's inability or incapacity to care for these patients who continue to be COVID positive.*

3. If my nursing home is chosen to be a COVID Recovery Facility, will I have to move to another nursing home?

*You will be offered the opportunity to transfer to another facility if you do not have symptoms and test negative for COVID-19. If you test positive for COVID-19, your current nursing home will be able to care for you.*

*The Medical Director and the Director of Nursing will discuss decisions to transfer with residents and their families.*

4. Can residents decline the move and opt to take on the risk?

***A COVID-negative resident can discuss declining to transfer with the Medical Director and the Director of Nursing.***

5. Will COVID-positive residents need to move to a COVID Recovery Facility?

***COVID-positive residents can be cared for in their current nursing home. If they are hospitalized and ready for hospital discharge to nursing home level of care, they might be discharged to a COVID-Recovery Facility until ready for discharge back to their original facility, if possible, when COVID-negative.***

6. If my nursing home is not one of the COVID Recovery Facilities, will I have to move to another nursing home?

***No, you will not have to move to another nursing home.***

7. Q - Are there procedures for transfers or discharges on both voluntary and involuntary basis?

***Normally a nursing facility is required to give you, your guardian, conservator or legally liable relative a written notice and develop a plan with you, either A) transfer from one room to another within a facility; or B) transfer or discharge from one facility to another.***

***There are very few exceptions to the rules related to notice and transfer or discharge. One of these existing reasons for an exception for room to room transfer is infection control issues or other health/safety concerns, that could impact other individuals or if other individuals in the home could be endangered. If that is the case, under existing law, you may be transferred to another room with the right to notice and appeal after the fact, otherwise all existing regulations and procedures would apply.***

***Under the Executive Order and Commissioner's Order there may be situations involving a transfer to another facility when current procedures are waived or are done as soon as practicable, related only to transfers involving the COVID-19 Recovery Facilities, due to the Public Health crisis. Otherwise, the rules and process involving a transfer to another nursing home are unchanged.***

***If you are going to be asked to transfer from your room or nursing home, someone will discuss this with you. If it is due to infection control issues or other health/safety concerns that may impact other***

***individuals in the home who could be endangered, you may be transferred, and the existing regulations apply. This is not a new procedure or process and should follow the normal regulations.***

8. Are residents in nursing homes that are not COVID Recovery Facilities being tested for COVID-19?

***The capacity to test nursing home residents for COVID-19 is limited and will be done on a priority basis. Residents with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 are in the highest priority group for testing.***

***Residents who are in units designated for COVID-positive residents and who do not have symptoms of COVID-19 are in the next highest priority group for testing. If they are COVID-negative, they can be moved to another part of the nursing home.***

***Residents pending test results will be moved to a unit or area of their current home for residents with pending test results.***

9. If I develop a COVID infection, will I be moved within my home?

***You may be moved if you test positive for COVID-19. If you have symptoms but are pending results, you will be moved to a unit or area of your home for residents awaiting test results, in isolation within a room as a precaution.***

***If you test positive for COVID-19, you will be moved to a unit or area of your current home for COVID-positive residents. There is no current plan to move people to another home if you test positive.***

***If you are hospitalized and ready for hospital discharge to nursing home level of care, you might be discharged to another nursing home other than your own until you are ready for discharge back to your original home, if possible, when you test COVID-negative.***

10. Will I be quarantined for 14 days before being blended into the rest of the community?

***Upon admission to a nursing home, all new residents will be restricted to their room for 14 days.***

11. How will I know if I am going to be moved within my home to make room for someone who has COVID-19?

***The Medical Director and the Director of Nursing will discuss this with each involved resident and will notify the Long-Term Care***

***Ombudsman, who will be available to guide residents through the process.***

12. How much notice will I have?

***We will provide as much notice as possible.***

13. Who will move my belongings?

***The facility is responsible for the transfer of residents' belongings. Based on the infection control guidance, it may be necessary to sanitize and store belongings until your return or relocation.***

14. Will I get to go back to my original room?

***This is a difficult question to answer. Residents who have been moved will eventually go back to their original facility, if possible. For any residents returning to their original facility, we cannot guarantee that residents will return to their original rooms, but that will happen if the rooms are vacant.***

15. Who will do the moves?

***Proper transport will be provided based on residents' medical status.***

16. How do residents know that these transferred residents will not contaminate the facility?

***Residents will be screened appropriately before transfer and/or will undergo a 14-day isolation period upon transfer.***

17. Can a family member see a resident who is transferring before or while the move takes place?

***Families can video chat and use other technologies to see their loved ones. The no-visitation policy is still in effect.***

18. If I move will my new home know my payment status?

***All financial terms remain the same for residents.***

19. What if a redetermination is due soon or while I am gone?

***If your HUSKY Health benefits were scheduled to end in March or April 2020, DSS will automatically continue your benefits through at***

***least June 2020. DSS will continue to extend benefits for the duration of the coronavirus pandemic.***

20. Do I work with the business office at my home of origin for questions regarding payment?

***The fiscal department will contact each involved resident and his or her loved ones and will explain the process.***

21. If I have OPTUM and I am moved to a non-Optum home how will that be covered?

***Residents' current payer (Medicare Advantage plan or other) will continue to pay for their care.***

22. Will I incur any cost?

***Your costs will remain the same.***

23. Are any of the COVID Recovery Facilities with VA contracts?

***None of the involved homes have VA contracts.***

24. What if I am moved from a home with a VA contract that pays 100% of my care?

***Your payment status will not change.***

25. Who do I pay my applied income to?

***Residents will continue to pay their applied income to the facility that is providing their care.***

26. Will the stimulus check affect my Medicaid status?

***We are waiting for confirmation of this, but our best understanding at this time is that the stimulus checks will not affect residents' Medicaid status. The Treasury Department has also commented that people who receive certain public benefits will not have to file a tax return to receive the stimulus checks. We will confirm this information as soon as is possible.***