



PLAY 4 Implement Effective Testing Practices

12/3/2020

GOAL: Implement Effective & Efficient Testing Practices that Adhere to Federal, State, and County Guidelines



PLAY STRATEGY

Congregate living facilities must minimize the risk that residents and staff will contract COVID-19. In the event that any do test positive, the facilities must be able to immediately intervene. Therefore, facilities must develop and implement effective testing plans for staff, residents, and visitors.

See the section below titled “Special Considerations for People with Dementia and/or in Memory Care Units” for additional guidance on this sub-population of residents.



HOW TO RUN THE PLAY

A. Testing of New Residents and Re-admitted residents

- The designated infection preventionist should ensure that **new residents and re-admitted residents** are tested in accordance with the guidance in the [California Department of Public Health All Facilities Letter \(AFL\) 20-53.3](#) (bit.ly/37sGmFt).
- If testing is not available, follow [the guidance in the absence of available testing](#) (bit.ly/3oc6JX8) issued by the California Department of Social Services.

B. Ongoing Testing of Residents and Staff

- Each day senior leaders review any new testing data to determine whether their congregate living facility has an active case of COVID-19 among staff and/or residents and then proceeds with ongoing testing based on this.
- The infection preventionist regularly check (at least twice weekly) for any new guidance from the U.S. Government, State government, County and/or any licensing body. Some guidance may be more restrictive than the guidance in this play.
- Staff or residents who have symptoms of COVID-19 should be tested as quickly as feasible.
- If a **Skilled Nursing Facility** has **no active cases and the county in which the facility is located has less than a 10% positivity rate**, the designated infection preventionist should



develop and implement a plan to conduct surveillance testing of **100 percent of all staff every seven days.**

- If a **Skilled Nursing Facility has no active cases but the county in which the facility is located has a 10% or higher positivity rate**, the designated infection preventionist should develop and implement a plan to conduct surveillance testing of **100 percent of all staff two times per week.**
- If a congregate living facility (other than a Skilled Nursing Facility) has **no active cases**, the designated infection preventionist should develop and implement a plan to conduct surveillance testing of **25 percent of all staff every seven days.**
 - The infection preventionist should choose different staff to test every seven days.
 - If testing is not available, follow [the guidance in the absence of available testing](https://bit.ly/33Qqdcj) (bit.ly/33Qqdcj) issued by the California Department of Social Services.
- If the congregate living facility has **one or more active cases** among staff or residents, the infection preventionist should **test or retest all (100 percent) of congregate living facility staff and residents.**
 - The initial tests/retests should all be conducted within 12 hours for all staff working that day and residents who are currently at the facility.
 - Staff who are not working that day should be tested at the beginning of their next shift.
 - Newly admitted residents or returning residents should be tested as they enter/re-enter the facility.
 - The retests of all staff and residents should be performed at least every seven days, until no new cases are identified in two sequential rounds of testing.
 - If testing for all staff and residents is not available, follow [the guidance in the absence of available testing](https://bit.ly/33Qqdcj) (bit.ly/33Qqdcj) issued by the California Department of Social Services.

C. Testing Visitors

- Federal and California guidance does not suggest routine testing of visitors but does require that each congregate living facility conducts initial screening for any/all individuals entering congregate living facility. For more information on visitors, see Play 6: *A robust visitation plan for families and care partners.*



D. Conducting Tests

- The test used should be an authorized nucleic acid or antigen detection assay for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, used as recommended for testing in nursing homes by the CDC, with results obtained within 48 hours.
- Skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) may use the [Point of Care \(POC\) antigen testing](https://bit.ly/3muael4) (bit.ly/3muael4) instruments distributed by the Department of Health and Human Services. POC antigen test should be used on symptomatic staff or residents as guided by the manufacturer instructions. As appropriate, testing in SNFs using POC antigen test may be used in accordance with [California Department of Public Health guidance](https://bit.ly/3fVCJvL) (bit.ly/3fVCJvL).



TIPS AND TRICKS

- Federal, state, and/or county guidance may be updated frequently, so it is critical to have the designated infection preventionist check for updates at least weekly.
- If your facility allows one family member/care partner to be designated as a part of the resident's care team, test that person as staff is tested.



SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA AND/OR IN MEMORY CARE UNITS

- If the resident has a care partner with power of attorney, the facility needs to get permission from that person before testing.
- For instances where the person with power of attorney declines having the resident tested:
 - If there are no cases within the facility, continue as usual.
 - If there are cases in the facility, monitor the patient closely.
 - If they begin showing symptoms, begin treatment (in consultation with a medical professional).





ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [California Department of Public Health AFL 20-53.3](https://bit.ly/39Bla1J) (bit.ly/39Bla1J)
- [California Department of Public Health Guidance on the Use of Antigen Tests for Diagnosis of Acute COVID-19](https://bit.ly/3g0D3JB) (bit.ly/3g0D3JB)
- [California Department of Social Services – PIN 20-38-ASC](https://bit.ly/3myEoda) (bit.ly/3myEoda)
- [Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, HHS - Title 42 CFR 483.80\(h\)](https://bit.ly/3qiSfXn) (bit.ly/3qiSfXn)
- [CDC Guidance on Antigen Testing in Nursing Homes](https://bit.ly/33zj7J3) (bit.ly/33zj7J3)
- [California Coronavirus testing task force](https://testing.covid19.ca.gov) (testing.covid19.ca.gov)

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