Here are Care Providers Oklahoma latest updates as of April 24, 2020

[**COVID-19 Update #49**](https://www.ahcancal.org/facility_operations/disaster_planning/Documents/Update%2049.pdf) **| Congress Approves Additional $75 Billion for Provider Relief Fund**

The House approved and the President is expected to quickly sign the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act, a bill that was passed by the Senate this week. The bill provides: $75 billion for health care providers to support the need for COVID-19 related expenses and lost revenue. This funding is in addition to the initial $100 billion provided in the Provider Relief Fund as part of the CARES Act. $25 billion for COVID-19 testing $321 billion increase in the Small Business Administration’s Payment Protection Program (PPP) loan to allow for more small businesses to apply to receive aid. All of the provisions above are in addition to the provisions that are in the CARES Act, that was signed into law by the President last month.

[**COVID-19 Update #48**](https://www.ahcancal.org/facility_operations/disaster_planning/Documents/Update%2048.pdf) **| Preparing for Widespread Testing**

CMS recently emphasized the importance of testing for COVID-19 in nursing facilities. In addition, a growing number of states are requiring testing of all residents and/or staff. Providers need to have a plan in place to [isolate residents](https://www.ahcancal.org/facility_operations/disaster_planning/Documents/Cohorting.pdf) who test positive, and follow [CDC guidance](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhealthcare-facilities%2Fhcp-return-work.html) for staff that test positive. More information and guidance on preparing for widespread testing is available in [here](https://www.ahcancal.org/facility_operations/disaster_planning/Documents/Testing-in-LTC.pdf)

[**COVID-19 Update #47**](https://www.ahcancal.org/facility_operations/disaster_planning/Documents/Update%2047.pdf) **| Additional Distribution of Provider Relief Funds**

Two weeks ago, we learned that skilled nursing would be included as part of the stimulus bill’s (aka the CARES Act) $100 billion Provider Relief Fund, when HHS distributed the first $30 billion from the fund and all skilled nursing facilities received 6.2% of their 2019 Part A and Part B Medicare payments. HHS announced an additional $40 billion in distributions, with checks going out as early as this Friday.

**COVID Positive Staff: Are You Subject to Penalties?**

The use of asymptomatic COVID positive staff who have not met the “return to work criteria” may only be used as a last resort as defined under the “crisis capacity strategy” in CDC’s, [Strategies to Mitigate Healthcare Personnel Staffing Shortages](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDAsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMDA0MjMuMjA1Nzg5NzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5jZGMuZ292L2Nvcm9uYXZpcnVzLzIwMTktbmNvdi9oY3AvbWl0aWdhdGluZy1zdGFmZi1zaG9ydGFnZXMuaHRtbCJ9.6Z0n7oVHnkfmNukKP9AgvMwXlc1ybJNm030r83PgzmI/br/77786629594-l). The Long Term Care Service must approve this strategy prior to use by a facility.

COVID positive employee’s must be cleared to return to work through the CDC’s [Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 Employee’s](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDEsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMDA0MjMuMjA1Nzg5NzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5jZGMuZ292L2Nvcm9uYXZpcnVzLzIwMTktbmNvdi9oY3AvcmV0dXJuLXRvLXdvcmsuaHRtbCJ9.HeIs9xbLuttYu5i-4zifvdDE9GgGALPTmOJMEqdOfTk/br/77786629594-l) unless there is written approval from Long Term Care.

The return to work criteria are:

**Use the *Test-based strategy* as the preferred method for determining when HCP may return to work in healthcare settings:**

1. Test-based strategy.Exclude from work until
   * Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
   * Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), **and**
   * Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized molecular assay for COVID-19 from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected ≥24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens)[[1]](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDIsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMDA0MjMuMjA1Nzg5NzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5jZGMuZ292L2Nvcm9uYXZpcnVzLzIwMTktbmNvdi9oY3AvcmV0dXJuLXRvLXdvcmsuaHRtbD9DRENfQUFfcmVmVmFsPWh0dHBzJTNBJTJGJTJGd3d3LmNkYy5nb3YlMkZjb3JvbmF2aXJ1cyUyRjIwMTktbmNvdiUyRmhlYWx0aGNhcmUtZmFjaWxpdGllcyUyRmhjcC1yZXR1cm4td29yay5odG1sI2YxIn0.Ex0t0P3aw_B8Gg5x1C6ASJo12H0vgukFuISElgS1iNM/br/77786629594-l). See [Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens for 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDMsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMDA0MjMuMjA1Nzg5NzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5jZGMuZ292L2Nvcm9uYXZpcnVzLzIwMTktbmNvdi9sYWIvZ3VpZGVsaW5lcy1jbGluaWNhbC1zcGVjaW1lbnMuaHRtbCJ9.SRP7Q4SmAOLQDq7D1ccigfZKNxJdL2qx3zN9g1OiXnU/br/77786629594-l)).

**If the *Test-based strategy* cannot be used, the *Non-test-based strategy* may be used for determining when HCP may return to work in healthcare settings:**

1. Non-test-based strategy. Exclude from work until
   * At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recoverydefined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and**,
   * At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

**HCP with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms**should be excluded from work until 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test.

If HCP had COVID-19 ruled out and have an alternate diagnosis (e.g., tested positive for influenza), criteria for return to work should be based on that diagnosis.

## Evaluation of Crisis Capacity Strategy

The evaluation of critical staffing criteria will require answers to the following questions.

1. How many residents do you have?
2. How many non-COVID staff do you have?
   * Please provide a breakdown by classification, i.e. RN, LPN any other medical staff?
3. Have you exhausted all staffing agencies to provide staffing?
   * Why have you not been able to obtain staffing?
   * Have you activated the MRC (Medical Reserve Corp)
4. Have you tried to relocate residents?
5. How many COVID positive staff are you requesting to use?
   * How long are they into their monitoring period?
   * Are they asymptomatic?
   * What are your infection control measures for where COVID positive staff will work?
6. What messaging will be provided to residents, resident representatives and facility staff about actions that will be taken to protect them from exposure to COVID-19 if staff with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are allowed to work?

**Update on National Skilled Nursing Care Week May 10-16, 2020**

This year, while it is more important than ever to celebrate NSNCW and recognize the staff and residents in our skilled nursing care centers across the nation, it is a challenge to figure out how best to do so. Current social distancing rules and the inability of friends and family to enter the buildings has changed much of the day to day life of the staff and the residents, and no one knows how long this is going to continue. One thing is certain, though, and that is that staff are playing a critical role in caring for residents and saving lives, and that deserves to be honored and celebrated. We hope you will find ways to recognize your staff during NSNCW.

NSNCW is also a time to recognize your residents, their special relationships with staff, and the family members that all make up your unique and wonderful communities. Keeping your community connected through the use of technology and social media is a great way to prevent social isolation and lift everyone’s spirits.

**Please complete this Quick Workforce Survey**

Care Providers Oklahoma is partnering with The Oklahoma Department of Commerce to help with workforce recruitment.  We have been asked about specific needs in long-term care.  To help facilitate the recruitment strategy, gathering some quick data points on recruitment needs will help prioritize the work with Commerce.  This survey should take 2 minutes to complete.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G98FQJ5>

About 40% of the survey participants have expressed a need in assistance in developing a training protocol to address the recent flexibility offered by OSDH. Natashia Mason will be contacting those indicating needing assistance individually to discuss training protocol for specific issues. We appreciate your participation!

**Quote of the Day** from McKnights**:**

[“Nursing homes did not ask for this virus. They are the victim in the truest sense of the word, caught off-guard by an enemy that was unknown to humankind six months ago and preys on the most vulnerable.”](https://www.mcknights.com/daily-editors-notes/righteous-covid-19-indignation/)

**Here’s to the Heroes...**

Day after day, night after night, you walk through the doors of senior care campuses across the nation, ready for service.

One West Coast provider celebrated in a [tribute video](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2854344951349736) all the “Healthcare Heroes” who have cared for long-term care residents since “long before the storm” that is the coronavirus. While the images show frontline caregivers and staff from Marquis Companies and Consonus Healthcare, the narrative is an insightful essay into the character and courage of long-term care workers everywhere.

Learn how you can support these **#HealthcareHeroes** - <https://bit.ly/34SRcTE>

**#HealthcareHeroes #YouAreVital #MarquisCompanies #ConsonusHealthcare #CareNotCOVID**

**Care Providers Oklahoma COVID -19 Resource Page**

Care Providers Oklahoma is providing regular [COVID-19 updates](https://www.careoklahoma.com/covid-19-resource-page/) via our website including all the AHCA/NCAL COVID-19 Updates and daily Member Updates.

Please visit the [**COVID -19 Resource Page**](https://www.careoklahoma.com/covid-19-resource-page/) to find NEW vendors with available PPE supplies

Join Care Providers Oklahoma to brighten up long term care and assisted living residents day and send them a message of support via our Facebook page with hashtag **#CareNotCOVID** Please share your ideas and tell us what you’re doing by connecting on Facebook and Twitter using **#CareNotCOVID**

**Care Providers Oklahoma** [**Facebook Profile Pic Frame**](https://www.facebook.com/profilepicframes/?selected_overlay_id=2905473726207118)