



## OPERATIONAL MEMO

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<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>OPERATIONAL INFORMATION FOR HCBS RESIDENTIAL SERVICES PERTAINING TO COVID-19 AND THE PROTECT OUR NEIGHBORS ORDER</b>
<b>SUPERSEDES NUMBER:</b>	<b>OM 20-035</b>
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	<b>JULY 20, 2020</b>
<b>DIVISION AND OFFICE:</b>	<b>BENEFITS AND SERVICES MANAGEMENT DIVISION, OFFICE OF COMMUNITY LIVING</b>
<b>PROGRAM AREA:</b>	<b>HCBS BENEFITS</b>
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*HCPF Memo Series can be accessed online: <https://www.colorado.gov/hcpf/memo-series>*

### **Purpose and Audience:**

The purpose of this Operational Memo is to inform Providers and Case Management Agencies (CMAs) of guidelines that shall be followed in residential settings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the new [Protect Our Neighbors order](#).

### **Information:**

Residential settings shall continue to follow all issued guidance by the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE) and comply with all local and state orders.

[Protect Our Neighbors](#) means that communities that meet certain criteria have less stringent restrictions than under the Stay-At-Home and Safer-At-Home orders. Under Protect Our Neighbors, communities may permit activities at 50% of pre-pandemic capacity, with at least 6 feet between non-household members, and no more than 500 people in one setting at a time.

Different communities will be at different phases, based on local conditions and capabilities, and the state may change phases as well. All variances by county are updated on CDPHE's website [here](#). Please pay close attention to which phase the state and your community is in and follow guidelines.

During all phases, residential settings can continue to be vigilant in reducing the risk of exposure to members by:

- Following the Stay-at-Home recommendations for members that are considered part of the "Vulnerable Population", which means only leaving home for medical care and essential activities. This population includes:
  - Individuals who are 65 years and older
  - Individuals with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
  - Individuals who have serious heart conditions
  - Individuals who are immunocompromised
  - Individuals who determined to be high risk by a licensed healthcare provider are considered vulnerable under [Executive Order D 2020 127](#).
- Avoiding communal dining.
- Performing active health screens for all residents.
- Avoiding any congregating within the setting.
- Limiting visitation to only necessary or essential visits as outlined in CDPHE's latest [Public Health Order](#). This can include end-of-life scenarios. Settings should make efforts to allow for safe visitation for residents in such necessary scenarios. For all other situations, the Department continues to encourage the use of technology to allow members to connect with their friends, families, guardians and/or natural supports, or community resources (i.e. Arc Advocate) via video chat (Apple FaceTime or Zoom).
- Completing required health screenings of all employees, contractors, and essential individuals prior to entering the premises.
  - Screening documentation must be maintained until further notice and made available upon request to CDPHE. After screening, if an essential visitor is allowed into the setting, they must:

- Limit their movement within the facility to the resident's room.
- Limit surfaces touched.
- Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) – gown, gloves and mask.
- Limit physical contact with resident.
- Only be two essential visitors per resident at a given time.

If a member served in a residential setting is suspected of having or has been confirmed as having a case of the COVID-19 illness, please follow all published [CDC guidance](#). This includes:

- Contacting the individual's healthcare provider and informing them that the individual has symptoms consistent with, or a diagnosis of, COVID-19; coordinate a telehealth visit with their provider as necessary.
- Implementing their healthcare provider's instructions for medication(s) and care. The residential provider shall ensure the member has support with basic needs in the residence and provide support for getting groceries or meals, prescriptions, and other personal needs, while ensuring that appropriate precautions are taken to isolate the patient and prevent spread to other residents or staff.
- Monitoring the person's symptoms, including their respiratory rate and oxygen saturation. If the member's symptoms appear to be getting significantly worse, or the oxygen saturation falls below 90%, or as otherwise instructed by the healthcare provider, call his or her healthcare provider and ask for further instructions. If the person has a medical emergency and you need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that the person has, or is being evaluated for COVID-19.
- Other residents should stay in another room and be separated from the person. Residents should use a separate bedroom and bathroom, if available. If a separate bathroom is not available, it should be sanitized after each use.
- Household members should care for any pets in the home. Do not handle pets or other animals while sick. For more information, see [COVID-19 and Animals](#).
- Make sure shared spaces in the residence have good air flow, such as by an air conditioner or an opened window, weather permitting.

- Perform hand hygiene frequently. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60 to 95% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- The member should wear a facemask when around other people if possible. All caregivers should wear a facemask around the person at all times. Requests for personal protective equipment (PPE) can be submitted to your local health department [here](#).
- Wear a disposable facemask and gloves when you touch or have contact with the person's blood, stool, or body fluids, such as saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, vomit, urine.
  - Throw out gloves after using them and masks if soiled. If masks are not soiled, and supplies are short, they can be reused. Ideally healthcare workers interacting with COVID-19 affected individuals would have an N95 respirator.
  - When removing personal protective equipment, first remove and dispose of gloves. Then, immediately clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Next, remove facemask, and immediately clean your hands again with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer. If re-using mask, store in a bag between uses.
- Do not share household items with the person. You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items. After the person uses these items, you should wash them thoroughly (see below "Wash laundry thoroughly").
- Clean all "high-touch" surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables, every day. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Options for cleaning surfaces include:
  - Household cleaning spray or wipes used according to the label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the

product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

- **Diluted household bleach solutions may also be used** if appropriate for the surface. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
- **Follow manufacturer's instructions** for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
- **Leave solution** on the surface for **at least 1 minute**.
- To make a bleach solution, mix:
  - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water  
OR
  - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
- Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol.
- Wash laundry thoroughly.
  - Immediately remove and wash clothes or bedding that have blood, stool, or body fluids on them, as well as any items that come in contact with the infected individual.
  - Wear disposable gloves while handling soiled items and keep soiled items away from your body. Clean your hands (with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) immediately after removing your gloves.
  - Read and follow directions on labels of laundry or clothing items and detergent. In general, using a normal laundry detergent according to washing machine instructions and dry thoroughly using the warmest temperatures recommended on the clothing label.
  - Do not forget to sanitize the laundry basket according to the hard surface instructions.
- Place all used disposable gloves, facemasks, and other contaminated items in a lined container before disposing of them with any other household waste. Clean

your hands (with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) immediately after handling these items. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.

- Discuss any additional questions with your state or local health department or healthcare provider. Check available hours when contacting your local health department.

**It is critical for any household with a confirmed or suspected case to follow the above recommendations.**

Please refer to the [Department COVID-19](#) page for up-to-date information and Memo Communications. Information is updated frequently.

Follow the [CDC website](#) to keep up with the general trends and what's happening. Communicating with the [state health department](#) and watching local news will help you with specifics.

**Attachment(s):**

None

**Department Contact:**

[HCPF\\_HCBS\\_Questions@state.co.us](mailto:HCPF_HCBS_Questions@state.co.us)

**Department COVID-19 Webpage:**

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/COVID>

For specific information, please call the CDPHE Call Center at 303-692-2700.

For general questions about COVID-19: Call CO-Help at 303-389-1687 or 1-877-462-2911 or email [COHELP@RMPDC.org](mailto:COHELP@RMPDC.org), for answers in English and Spanish (Español), Mandarin (普通话), and more.