

**Communicable Disease Epidemiology  
and Immunization Section**

401 5th Avenue, Suite 1250  
Seattle, WA 98104

**206-296-4774** Fax 206-296-4803  
TTY Relay: 711

[www.kingcounty.gov/health](http://www.kingcounty.gov/health)

*Updated 11/3/2022*

**Subject: To align with guidance changes from [CDC](#), [CMS](#) and [DOH](#), Public Health no longer recommends routine testing of asymptomatic staff in LTCF. Routine testing of asymptomatic staff may continue to be performed at the discretion of the facility.**

Dear King County Long-Term Care Facilities,

On 10/31/22 the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) released updated [Recommendations for SARS-CoV-2 Infection Prevention and Control in Healthcare Settings](#). This guidance, along with guidance from CDC and CMS, no longer recommends weekly screening of asymptomatic staff in LTCF. **This letter is to notify you that Public Health-Seattle & King County (PHSKC) will align with these new recommendations and no longer recommend LTCFs test staff three times per week.** The decision to continue routine staff screening is at the discretion of the facility

When determining whether to continue with testing of asymptomatic staff, LTCF should know that increasing routine staff and case finding testing will identify COVID-19 cases earlier, allowing facilities to initiate mitigation measures more rapidly and reduce outbreak size and duration.

Be aware that Public Health may update these recommendations to reinstate screening of LTCF staff if there are significant increases in the size and severity of outbreaks in LTCFs. **Facilities should be prepared to reimplement these strategies quickly, if determined necessary by Public Health.**

In addition to the above, Public Health continues to recommend and encourages re-evaluation of the following practices:

- Ensuring all LTCF residents and staff are up to date with vaccinations including bivalent boosters.
- Ensuring staff are wearing high quality masks as source control, ideally fit tested N95 masks as well as eye protection while working in your facilities.
- Ensuring ventilation and filtration within your facilities is optimized as much as possible.
- Ensuring LTCF are able to provide or encourage treatment for all residents who test positive for COVID-19. [Treatment guidelines](#) for non-hospitalized patients are available from NIH.

Public Health is available to offer support and resources as needed. We can be reached through our Public Health Information Call Center 206-477-3977 or by email at [LTCFCOVIDSupport@kingcounty.gov](mailto:LTCFCOVIDSupport@kingcounty.gov).

Thank you for your continued dedication and effort to keep our community safe.

Sincerely,



Eric J. Chow, MD, MS, MPH  
Chief, Communicable Disease Epidemiology & Immunization Section  
Public Health – Seattle & King County