



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
PO Box 45600, Olympia, Washington 98504-5600

November 6, 2020

ALTSA: AFH #2020-055
AFH POINT PREVALENCE COVID-19 TESTING

Dear Adult Family Home Provider:

This letter rescinds and supersedes ALTSA: AFH #2020-044 and contains updated information about the standing physicians order and the method of contact from the Department of Health. This letter also extends the date for recommended completion of testing and changes the date of exemption for testing from July 1 to September 1, 2020. We apologize for the delays and any inconvenience.

The department is moving forward with the goal of offering COVID-19 testing to all Adult Family Home (AFH) staff, residents, and any others who live in the home. We are asking for your assistance in point prevalence testing to identify any staff, residents, or others living in the home with asymptomatic COVID-19 infections. The testing will be available for both staff and residents who are either receiving or providing services in an AFH, and others who live in the home. Similar to other long-term care settings, some individuals who receive services in an AFH are at risk for more severe outcomes if they become infected with and develop COVID-19. Gaining an understanding of baseline rates of asymptomatic infection will help inform prevention and control efforts to limit transmission. The information will also be helpful in directing any recommendations for ongoing testing of residents, staff, and others who live in the home. It will also help AFH providers develop the ability to perform testing in the event a staff or resident develops symptoms or in response to an outbreak in an AFH.

We believe it is extremely important that staff supporting people in these settings become familiar with testing staff, residents, and others who live in the home to limit the spread of COVID-19 if someone becomes infected. We recognize that testing may be challenging for some providers. Because of this we encourage participation, but do not require it at this time. We do urge every provider to follow these recommendations and to make their best efforts to complete testing by **December 31, 2020**.

An AFH that has performed testing of all residents and staff on or after September 1, 2020, is exempt from this request. For all other AFHs, the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) recommend by **December 31, 2020**, providers should:

- Offer COVID-19 tests to all residents and administer or assist with testing all consenting residents;
- Offer COVID-19 tests to all staff, and anyone else who lives in the AFH;
- Comply with all applicable state and federal laws when offering tests to, requiring tests of, or administering tests to residents and staff, including, but not limited to, any laws governing resident's health care decision-making such as [Chapter 74.34 RCW, Abuse of Vulnerable Adults](#); [Chapter 70.128 RCW, Adult Family Homes](#); [Chapter 70.129 RCW,](#)

[Long-term care residents rights](#); and [Chapter 388-76 WAC, Adult family home minimum licensing requirements](#);

- Submit timely, proper specimens to an authorized laboratory along with information the laboratory requires to perform the tests and report test results;
- Ask staff, residents, and others who live in the home to share their test results, both positive and negative, with the AFH provider;
- Immediately report positive test results for residents and staff to DSHS using:
 - The 24/7 Hotline: 1-800-562-6078, or
 - Online reporting: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/residential-care-services/residential-care-services-online-incident-reporting>, or
 - Email: CRU@dshs.wa.gov or Fax: 360-725-2644;
- Staff not scheduled to work on the testing day are not required to be called in or tested because this is a point in time survey. If an AFH would like to call in and test all staff, additional test kits and PPE will be provided.

One of the following two options must be used for this testing:

1. [Everlywell](#) (Preferred Option for individuals who may have an e-mail account and are able to self-swab)

- Individuals who are tested using test kits provided by Everlywell need to have an individual email address to register online for the test and to look up the test results. Test results will be provided to this email address.
- Two people may not use the same email address. Each email address used to order an Everlywell kit must be unique and one of a kind.
- A practitioner order is not needed, because the Everlywell kit contains this order.
- These kits use self-collected nasal swabs that are sent to the Everlywell laboratory for processing.
- The turnaround time to receive results once the specimens are received at the laboratory is 48 hours.
- The provider order and shipping costs are included in this test.
- If Everlywell tests are being used, they will come in individual boxes with instructions on how to use them.
- On the day the test is collected, it must be dropped off at a UPS or FedEx location; or if there are multiple samples, a UPS pick up can be arranged by contacting UPS.
- Insurance information does not need to be submitted for tests from Everlywell.

2. DOH - Community Based Testing Site (CBTS)

- DOH – CBTS collection kits are available for individuals who do not have a personal email address. Test results will instead be sent to the facility.
- DOH - CBTS specimen collection kits will be sent to you from DOH.
- A practitioner order is required to utilize CBTS. A standing order has been issued by the Washington State Health Officer to meet the health care practitioner order requirement. Note that this standing order covers testing of residents and staff, but does not cover household members. You can find the standing order [here](#).
- Like the Everlywell tests, individuals can self-collect their own swab. For people who are not able to collect their own specimen, collection is considered a public health task and must be observed by a health care professional. As a public health task, a

- registered nurse can delegate this task under their scope of practice to a healthcare professional such as another registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, nursing assistant-certified or registered, home care aide-certified, or a long-term care worker. The delegated health care professional must observe a person who is self-collecting or collect the specimen and prepare the sample for shipping.
- For Medicaid residents, if RN support is needed by the AFH, the AFH can contact the Home and Community Services (HCS) or the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) case manager who will authorize payment to a contracted delegating RN to perform or delegate specimen collection. DOH has determined COVID testing sample collection can be delegated as a public health task under the standard scope of practice for an RN and does not require meeting the protocols under the nurse delegation program operated by HCS and DDA.
 - For private pay residents, if RN support is needed by the AFH, the AFH can utilize a private pay RN to assist with testing or a private pay nurse delegator. As noted with the Medicaid nurse delegation process, DOH has determined COVID testing sample collection can be delegated as a public health task under the standard scope of practice for an RN and does not require meeting the protocols under the nurse delegation program. The State of Washington will pay for the cost of the nurse at the Medicaid rate of \$49 per hour. The billing process is being finalized and an email will be sent to all facilities as soon as this process is complete.
 - Personal protective equipment (PPE) for the health care professional to use while obtaining the nasal swabs will also be sent to you. The PPE will include gowns, gloves, surgical masks, and goggles or face shields.
 - The supplies and specimen shipping costs, in the form of a pre-printed and pre-paid shipping label, will be covered by DOH.

The DOH - CBTS customer service team will email each AFH provider to start this process. The email will be from "Tammi Leclerc via SmartSheets." This email will prompt you to go to a web portal, SmartSheets, to confirm the number of tests you need and a delivery address. SmartSheets is software used by DOH for test orders and is not spam. This portal will help determine how many specimen collection kits each provider needs. They will round up to account for gaps.

- **Please wait** for Statewide Testing to email you about shipping your kits. You will be asked to confirm your shipping address and the number of kits you would like.
- Once you have responded you will receive a second email with an account code. This code will allow you to login to the QR portal. This portal will allow you to create and print lab labels for the specimens.
- Once you receive the account code, you can find the portal at:
<https://qrp.doh.wa.gov>
- The DOH - CBTS team will also send you an email with your assigned laboratory and instructions for sending specimens after you enter your information into the portal. This includes how to register your tests online and complete the requisition forms, and how to properly prepare and package specimens with the material in your kits. Specimens not properly labeled, sealed, and packaged cannot be processed.

Dear AFH Provider: AFH Point Prevalence COVID-19 Testing

November 6, 2020

Page 4

- Insurance information must be collected and submitted for resident tests covered by Medicare or Medicaid. These payers will reimburse for specimen collection and for lab processing.
- Insurance information is not needed for staff or residents covered by any other insurance. The State of Washington will cover the laboratory fees for all staff and for residents who are uninsured or not covered by Medicaid or Medicare.
- If your AFH does not receive enough test kits to provide tests to consenting residents and staff, it must use every test it can and promptly email the DOH - CBTS customer service team at doh-cbts@doh.wa.gov about ordering more supplies.
- If your AFH does not receive enough PPE to provide tests to consenting residents and staff, you can contact the DOH – CBTS customer service team at doh-cbts.imt@doh.wa.gov to request more supplies.

Thank you for your attention to this and for all the hard work you do to care for residents.

Sincerely,



Candace Goehring, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: “Transforming Lives”