



## Ohio Adult Care Facilities Association

[www.ohioadultcarefacilitiesassociation.org](http://www.ohioadultcarefacilitiesassociation.org)

PO Box 133, West Jefferson, OH 43162

614.224.2700

Dear Adult Care Facility Operators,

As all of you are aware, the COVID-19 virus has hit the United States and the government is putting all their resources into prevention with the hope of reducing the number of individuals contracting this virus.

We are keenly aware of the fact that the elderly and individuals with co-occurring illnesses are much more likely to be in danger if they come in contact with this virus. It is also true that individuals in confined group locations are at higher risk. Therefore, residents and staff of adult care facilities must follow procedures that lessen the likelihood of contracting the COVID-19 virus. Please read the following and take appropriate action. We will be monitoring the situation and updating you as new information comes available.

### **WHAT ADULT CARE FACILITY PROVIDERS NEED TO KNOW**

The news is filled with stories about the Coronavirus and its impact. When ACF providers hear “vulnerable populations are most likely to be impacted by the disease,” we all know that few groups are as vulnerable as our residents. Most ACF residents have histories of homelessness and are managing multiple health conditions. OACFA has pulled together information from a variety of sources, considering the material from the vantage point of ACF providers, to help your home best support your residents, your staff and your community.

#### **How to Prepare**

The old adage says that ‘Prevention is the best Cure’ and this is certainly true for the Coronavirus. The best way to prevent the negative effects of the disease and assist your community is to PREPARE by preventing either widespread transmissions of the disease or treatment for those who are infected. OACFA recommends that you consider preparation from the perspective of your residents, your staff and your home. And while the best information currently available is that the virus was first recognized in China, no ethnicity is more at risk than any other group and a public health crisis requires that we continue our work to further health equity and not discriminate.

#### **You Need Partners**



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Connect with your local health department for support in developing or implementing the plan to address the disease. If your home is one of many in your area, reach out to your peers in your local area to pool information and gather resources jointly that will help prevent further spread of the disease.

Link to find your local health department: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/find-local-health-districts>

### FOR YOUR RESIDENTS

#### EDUCATE YOUR RESIDENTS

Educating your residents can be group classes, posting materials around your home or speaking with residents individually. Residents who are at higher risk should be engaged individually and educated on what will keep them safe and what they should do if they believe they have been exposed. A higher risk of infection is from those who have encountered other infected individuals. Those most likely to become seriously ill from the virus include people who are older and who are managing chronic health conditions such as COPD, cancer, diabetes, heart disease or lung disease.

#### SUPPLIES

Your residents may also need supplies that they may or may not be able to access. Hand sanitizer is an effective manner to prevent against the spread and your agency may want to provide it for your lowest-income residents.

#### HEALTH INSURANCE

All your residents need to be covered via health insurance, if possible. Your home should track information regarding their health care coverage, their primary care physician, diagnoses, medications, and other key health-related information. You and your staff should consider which residents are able to manage their own health and which ones will need extra support in order to be sure they report any symptoms and reach out to appropriate medical personnel as needed.

### FOR YOUR STAFF



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### EDUCATE YOUR STAFF

Educate your staff about the virus and how to protect anyone against the spread. Staff who are exhibiting symptoms should be encouraged to stay home. Staff patterns and back up staff should be set up to expect a higher rate of call-outs than is normally expected.

### STAY UPDATED

The health crisis is evolving and you and your team need the most up to date information on how to stay safe. Monitor the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website on Coronavirus regularly for updates. The Ohio Department of Health has also created a website that holds the latest information regarding the virus and other resources (posters to post around your home).

The Center for Disease Control's Coronavirus Webpage

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Ohio Department of Health webpage

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/>

Behavioral health-specific questions related to the outbreak should be emailed to

[COVID19BH@mha.ohio.gov](mailto:COVID19BH@mha.ohio.gov)

All non-behavioral health-specific COVID-19 questions should be directed to ODH at

1-833-4-ASK-ODH or 1-833- 427-5634.

### FOR YOUR HOME

Your home needs to be in contact with your local health department for regular updates and how to respond as the situation evolves. Make sure the local health department understands your role, resources and who you serve, so they can offer the most educated support.

### VISITOR POLICIES



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Your home already likely has policies around visitors for your residents. Those policies should be reviewed and modified in light of this outbreak. Different policies need to be in place for a general population, for a senior population and if one of your residents tests positive for the Coronavirus and is quarantined.

### **QUARANTINE PREPAREDNESS**

If any of your residents test positive, they will need to be quarantined for 14 days. Make sure the necessary supplies are available and prepare your home by having medications, food, and activities to keep your residents busy. In your conversations with the CDC or local health departments, let them know the guidance you need to support your residents and keep them and your community as safe and healthy as possible.

While the headlines right now seem very concerning, currently we are in a short time window where too little information is available. However, knowledge about the virus, how to prevent the spread and how to treat those who are infected is growing every day. To that end, learn all you can and be sure to gather your information from reputable sources and share that information, support, and resources effectively with your residents and your staff.

Remember that the most effective messengers are people whose experience is similar to your staff and residents, so pull in your peer networks. And remember that this outbreak, is likely to be harder for people in poor health and limited networks of support, so your support to your staff and residents can make all the difference.