

# COVID-19



The National **Long-Term Care**  
**Ombudsman** Resource Center

## Recovery and Reentry Resources

For Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs



## Visit Checklist During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Facility \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

#	Task	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 Call facility in advance to learn of their visitation protocols.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 Confirm with public health, the state survey agency, or with the facility about status of positive COVID-19 cases.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 Guarantee that you are feeling well, have no temperature or other symptoms of illness, and have been following handwashing and physical distancing guidance. Complete <a href="#">COVID-19 Self-Screening and Verification</a> form.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4 Review training in the use of face coverings, other personal protective equipment (PPE), and basic infection control practices. Review current program policies and procedures regarding safety and visits.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5 Ensure Sanitizer Kit is complete and includes adequate number of supplies.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6 Review and follow Ombudsman Program guidance regarding COVID-19 testing.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	7 Protecting yourself and others. Everyone is encouraged to get fully vaccinated against COVID-19.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 Review NORC's <a href="#">Tips for Facility Visits</a> information.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	9 If possible, plan to speak with more than one resident, especially if in response to a complaint to help maintain confidentiality of those that you visit.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	10 Depending upon the reopening phase protocols, visit with residents throughout the facility, if allowed.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	11 Document a resident's verbal communication of informed consent to investigate the complaint and/or access records related to the complaint.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	12 Be prepared that residents may feel different emotions in reaction to the pandemic, isolation, and loss.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	13 If you develop COVID-19 symptoms and/or test positive, for contact tracing be prepared to provide public health with a list of facilities you visited and follow additional infection control protocol.	

# Task Details

#	Task	Description	Example
1	<p>Call facility in advance to learn of their visitation protocols.</p> <p><i>Do not tell them when you plan to visit unless scheduling visits is required.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facility protocols for the recovery phases.</li> <li>• According to <a href="#">revised CMS guidance</a> (April 27, 2021), facilities should allow indoor visitation at all times and for all residents (regardless of vaccination status), except for a few circumstances when visitation should be limited due to a high risk of COVID-19 transmission (note: compassionate care visits should be permitted at all times).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temperature check of visitors.</li> <li>• Visitors wear masks.</li> <li>• Visiting hours.</li> <li>• Specified visiting room or outdoor space.</li> <li>• Scheduling of appointments to visit residents.</li> <li>• Request that visitors be fully vaccinated. State laws and business requirements for vaccination of any type vary. However, facilities may not prohibit visitors who have not been vaccinated from visiting with residents (<a href="#">revised CMS guidance, April 27, 2021</a>).</li> </ul>
2	Confirm with public health, state survey agency, or with the facility about status of positive COVID-19 cases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status of positive COVID-19 cases including residents/staff with symptoms of COVID-19.</li> <li>• Verify if the facility is a “COVID-19 care facility only”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few cases vs. significant “outbreak.”</li> <li>• Testing of residents and staff.</li> </ul>
3	<p>Guarantee that you are feeling well, have no temperature or other symptoms of illness, and have been following handwashing and physical distancing guidance. Complete <a href="#">COVID-19 self-screening and verification form</a>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not visit facilities if you have a temperature, are sick, or caring for another person who is sick.</li> <li>• Complete the COVID-19 self-screening form to verify that you are not experiencing symptoms or had recent exposure to COVID-19.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are feeling unwell contact your health care provider and let your supervisor know you are sick.</li> <li>• If you have health conditions that make you that put you at risk of contracting COVID-19, speak with your supervisor.</li> </ul>
4	Review training in the use of face coverings (e.g., cloth masks), personal protective equipment (PPE), and basic infection control practices. Review current program policies and procedures regarding safety and visits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow Ombudsman program guidance for infection control training and use of face coverings and any PPE.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not reuse disposable PPE.</li> <li>• Use a cloth mask with multiple layers of fabric or a disposable mask under a cloth mask. Do not use two disposable masks. Do not combine a KN95 mask with another mask. <a href="#">CDC, April 6, 2021 update</a>.</li> <li>• Use soap for hand washing or hand sanitizer with 60% or higher alcohol.</li> </ul>

#	Task	Description	Example
5	Ensure Sanitizer Kit is complete and includes adequate number of supplies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sanitizer Kit in a sealable bag includes: hand soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, disinfectant wipes, and bag for disposal of used items.</li> <li>Recommend keeping clean face coverings in a bag separate from the Sanitizer Kit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restock sanitizer kit when some items are used, or the supplies are low.</li> <li>Consider keeping the kit in a cooler bag for when car temperatures are extremely high.</li> </ul>
6	<p>Review and follow Ombudsman Program guidance regarding COVID-19 testing.</p> <p><i>COVID-19 testing varies by location. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), decisions about <a href="#">testing</a> are made by state and local public health officials and healthcare providers.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are two types of tests.</li> <li>A viral test tells you if you have a current infection.</li> <li>An antibody test tells you if you had a previous infection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you are sick and have symptoms of COVID-19, ask your health care provider for a test.</li> <li>Regardless of test results, if you are sick, do not visit residents and follow quarantine guidance.</li> </ul>
7	Protecting Yourself and Others	<p>Everyone is encouraged to get fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Fully vaccinated is defined as two weeks after completion of the vaccination process (either 1 or 2 shots).</p> <p>For information about finding a vaccine visit the <a href="#">CDC website</a>, or contact your local health department, medical provider, or pharmacist.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scientists have not yet determined whether vaccinated people may still unknowingly spread the COVID-19 virus. Once you have been vaccinated, continue to wear a mask, maintain a physical distance of six feet, and wash hands frequently.</li> </ul>
8	Review NORC's <a href="#">Tips for Facility Visits</a> information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This tip sheet addresses preparing and arriving for a visit and cleaning and sanitizing during and between.</li> </ul>	
9	If possible, plan to speak with more than one resident, especially if in response to a complaint to help maintain confidentiality of those that you visit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If a facility requests scheduling visits with residents, schedule more than one visit.</li> <li>Ask for a private space to visit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider asking to visit with a member of the Resident council.</li> <li>Consider visiting outside in a courtyard or pavilion.</li> </ul>

#	Task	Description	Example
10	Depending upon the recovery phase protocols, try to visit with residents throughout the facility, if allowed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice normal routine for visiting various residents on different halls.</li> <li>Plan for a longer visit than usual because of the length of time since the last visit.</li> <li>Observe staffing, resident affect, signs of resident weight loss, unpleasant smells, and set-up of visitation area outside or designated room inside.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining physical distance and wearing a mask may make it difficult for a resident to hear you clearly. Do not take your mask off. Instead speak slower and with short sentences.</li> <li>Consider using a portable voice amplifier and/or portable hearing amplifier. Use ear pad covers or wipes for the hearing amplifiers.</li> </ul>
11	Document a resident's verbal communication of informed consent to investigate the complaint and/or access records related to the complaint.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow Ombudsman program policies and procedures for seeking and documenting informed consent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maintain physical distance and avoid sharing pens and paper, document the resident's verbal informed consent for Ombudsman program action and access in case notes or on a consent form instead of seeking a resident's signature to demonstrate informed consent.</li> </ul>
12	Be prepared that residents will feel different emotions in reaction to the pandemic, isolation, and loss.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emotions displayed may include sadness, grief, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, great excitement for having visitors, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spend time listening to the residents. Be an attentive empathetic listener.</li> <li>Ask if the resident wants to speak with someone for assistance with their feelings (e.g., a mental health professional, a doctor, the facility social worker) and if the resident wants help connecting with resources.</li> <li>For additional information, review NORC resources regarding <a href="#">mental health</a> and coping with the <a href="#">emotional impact of the pandemic</a>.</li> </ul>
13	If you develop COVID-19 symptoms and/or test positive, for contact tracing be prepared to provide public health with a list of facilities you visited and follow additional infection control protocol.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public health will trace and monitor contacts of infected people and notify them of their exposure.</li> <li>Public health will ensure the safe, sustainable, and effective isolation of contacts to prevent additional transmission.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State and local health authorities are responsible for contact tracing and isolation of individuals that tested positive, but information is available from the CDC about <a href="#">contact tracing</a>, <a href="#">quarantine</a>, and <a href="#">isolation</a>.</li> </ul>