

**Communicable Disease Epidemiology
and Immunization Section**

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To: King County skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, adult family homes, enhanced service facilities, intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities, and certified community residential services and supports

Subject: Public Health – Seattle & King County recommends all facilities under the Long Term Care Facility Safe Start Plan, follow Phase 1 guidance effective immediately.

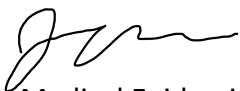
Public Health recommends long term care facilities (LTCFs), including skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, adult family homes, enhanced service facilities, intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities, and certified community residential services and supports, follow Phase 1 of the Long Term Care [Safe Start Plan](#) effective immediately.

We understand that these restrictions have negative impacts on residents, families and staff in these facilities and this decision was not taken lightly. King County is experiencing increasing trends in the number of COVID-19 outbreaks and the numbers of cases per outbreak in this sector. When compared with August and September, the average number of outbreaks reported on a weekly basis has increased at least by 36% in October and to date in November. Additionally, the average number of cases identified per week associated with LTCFs have increased at least by 35% over that same timeframe. Currently we have seven active outbreaks in LTCFs with more than 10 cases each, which is the largest number of simultaneous outbreaks of this size since the Spring, and this is likely an underestimate as data for this week is not yet fully captured.

The rising cases in LTCF is tied to the increasing incidence in the community at large and we unfortunately do not believe this trend will slow in the immediate future. In order to limit transmission within LTCFs and protect the residents of these facilities, the staff providing essential care and support, and our healthcare system as a whole, it is necessary to implement further restrictions by implementing Phase 1 of the LTCF Safe Start Plan. We will continue to actively monitor the situation and adjust COVID-19 prevention guidance while keeping in mind the balance of harms and benefits these restrictions have on LTC residents and their families.

If you have questions about this request please email LTCFCOVIDSupport@kingcounty.gov

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