



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

December 8, 2020

**ALTSA: AFH #2020-069**  
**ALTSA: ALF #2020-062**  
**ALTSA: CCRSS #2020-050**  
**ALTSA: ICF/IID #2020-051**  
**ALTSA: ESF #2020-050**  
**ALTSA: NH #2020-094**  
**UPDATE: COVID ONLY FACILITIES**

Dear Provider/Administrator/Superintendent:

This is an update to the Dear Provider Letter issued on May 4, 2020 providing information on DSHS newly contracted dedicated COVID-19 positive units.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) has contracted with multiple nursing facilities to establish dedicated units to care for residents with a confirmed COVID-19+ diagnosis. The intent of establishing these units is to allow COVID-19+ residents from other residential care or acute care settings to move to a setting where they can receive appropriate care in an environment where there will be less risk of COVID-19+ virus transmission to other residents and staff.

Multiple nursing facilities across the state now have dedicated COVID-19+ units ([COVID-19+ Unit Nursing Facilities](#)), with more anticipated to be added over the next week. As new contracts are finalized and signed with nursing facilities the department will continue to evaluate the need for additional bed capacity and continue to add nursing facilities as needed. The planned time frame for these nursing facilities to have dedicated units providing care to residents with COVID-19+ is through March 31, 2021, but may be extended depending on need and as funding is available. Please check the COVID 19 Unit Nursing Facilities link frequently for updated facility names.

If you are a nursing facility interested in contracting to provide a COVID+ unit or building, please reach out to Stephanie VanPelt at the contact information below.

Nursing facility contracted with DSHS to provide these services will meet the following criteria:

1. Provide Nursing Facility services to treat patients who have received a positive diagnosis for the COVID-19+ virus;
2. Assure that all the care needs of the resident are being met including any monitoring of COVID-19+ related symptoms and treatments according to guidelines from the CDC and the WA DOH;
3. Provide services to COVID-19+ residents in a stand-alone building that is not connected by hallways or any other structure or building where care is provided to patients who have not received a COVID-19+ positive diagnosis, OR, a unit that can be physically isolated from the rest of the facility by barriers that reduce airflow between the two areas;

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4. The location shall have a separate ingress and egress to the specialty care area that no other staff or subcontractors use;
5. The ability to reduce risk of virus spread due to aerosolizing procedures; and
6. Have staff dedicated to caring for these resident and not allow staff to work in other care facilities or portions of the same care facility for 14 days, with exceptions allowed for examinations of residents by medical providers when necessary.

The Department's intent is to partner with the facility where the resident lives and is transferring from, the resident and their representative as appropriate, the local health jurisdiction and acute care hospital discharge planners to move COVID-19+ residents to nursing facilities where they can receive high quality care meeting all of their care needs, while minimizing the risk of spreading the virus.

Entities seeking admission for a resident(s) into a COVID-19+ Unit should contact the nursing facility administrator to work directly together in the admission process.

Nursing facility administrators that have residents temporarily admitting to a dedicated COVID-19+ Unit can work with DSHS to identify any payments the provider may be eligible for while the COVID-19+ resident is in the contracted dedicated unit. Once a resident has recovered and has met the recommended testing criteria, they will return to their original nursing facility or other residential facility.

For contract or programmatic questions regarding the COVID only facilities or units, please contact Stephanie VanPelt at [stephanie.vanpelt@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:stephanie.vanpelt@dshs.wa.gov).

More information: [CMS COVID-19 Blanket Waivers for Healthcare Providers](#)

Sincerely,



Candace Goehring, Director  
Residential Care Services

DSHS: "Transforming Lives"