



**STATE OF WASHINGTON**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES**  
*Home and Community Living Administration*  
*PO Box 45600 Olympia, WA 98504-5600*

**February 12, 2026**

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**NH #2026-007**

**COVID-19 Testing Considerations for Admissions / Move-ins From Hospitals**

Dear Provider/Administrator,

Residential Care Services (RCS) is writing to share important information about COVID-19 testing considerations for individuals discharged from hospitals to long-term care (LTC) facilities / homes.

This letter is being sent as COVID-19 tests continue to transition from Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to traditional U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) marketing authorization. As this transition occurs, facilities / homes may see increased attention to the specific testing instructions included in FDA-authorized labeling.

**Key Testing Considerations**

- Some FDA-authorized COVID-19 tests are not indicated for use in people without symptoms (asymptomatic).
- Other tests allow asymptomatic testing but require serial testing in accordance with the test's instructions for Use (IFU).
- Depending on the test used, a single negative rapid test may not meet labeling requirements for an asymptomatic individual.

**Implications for LTC Admissions / Move-ins**

Some LTC facilities / homes request a negative COVID-19 test prior to a hospital discharge. Variability in test indications and serial testing requirements may affect discharge planning, insurance coverage, and the timing of admissions.

**Important Reminders**

- COVID-19 testing is not a regulatory requirement for admission / move-in to LTC facilities / homes.
- Facilities / homes may choose to request or perform testing as part of their infection prevention and control practices (IPC); however, testing must follow FDA-authorized instructions.

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- When serial testing is required, facilities / homes must ensure:
  - The correct number of tests are completed within the required timeframe, and
  - The same test brand and type are used for all tests in the series.
- Insurance may not pay for testing, the facility / home that requires admission / move-in testing might be expected to pay for these tests should they choose to require them.

RCS encourages LTC operators to review their admission / move-in and testing policies and communicate with hospital partners to support timely admissions / move-ins and consistent testing practices.


Thank you for your continued commitment to resident safety and quality care. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the RCS IPC Specialist Jamie Ford:

[jamie.ford1@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:jamie.ford1@dshs.wa.gov)

Resources:

- [FDA: COVID-19 Tests Granted Traditional Marketing Authorization by the FDA](#)
- [FDA: In Vitro Diagnostics EUAs - Antigen Diagnostic Tests for SARS-CoV-2](#)

Sincerely,



Amy Abbott, Director  
Residential Care Services  
DSHS: "Partnering with People"