



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

December 9, 2020

AL TSA: NH #2020-096
NURSING HOME COVID-19 TESTING SUPPLY UPDATE

Dear Nursing Facility/Home Administrator

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published an interim final rule ([CMS-3401-IFC](#)) on August 25, 2020, that included a new requirement at 42 CFR §483.80(h) for nursing homes to test all staff for COVID-19. The testing frequency was described in [QSO-20-38-NH](#). In July 2020, Health and Human Services (HHS) launched an initiative to send rapid point-of-care (antigen based) testing instruments and tests to nursing homes.

The CMS testing requirement and increased COVID-19 transmission rates placed heavy demands on antigen testing supplies, and many facilities have reported difficulty obtaining needed testing supplies for antigen based tests.

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) recently announced that facilities having difficulty obtaining enough testing supplies to meet testing requirements have an option to request testing supplies directly from DOH. The testing supplies are PCR (molecular) tests and DOH will bear the cost of the test supplies and the cost to send the test to a DOH contracted laboratory. If a facility sends the test samples to their own laboratory, DOH will not reimburse the facility for that lab cost.

Availability of testing supplies is not guaranteed. The turnaround time for laboratory results is approximately 48 hours. DOH will assign a DOH-contracted laboratory for a facility to use. If the facility has not used the laboratory before, there will be instructions about how to work with the assigned laboratory and how to ship test samples.

To request testing supplies from DOH, please use this Smart Sheets link to fill out a request form: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/a026d012a1ec47b78ff15a2f495de863>

If you have additional questions, please contact DOH using this email address: doh-cbts.imt@doh.wa.gov

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Herke, Nursing Home Program Policy Unit Manager, at (509) 209-3088 or lisa.herke@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Candace Goehring

Candace Goehring, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: "Transforming Lives"