

PRIORITY CHANGE: Temporary Guidance for Testing and Masking: August 17, 2021 by Wendy Soulek, COO

- **Screening** – ALL who enter complete the screen. The screener evaluates to ascertain accuracy before admitting.
- **Testing** – Testing will be done as follows (POC):
 - a. Based on County Positivity – All Vaccinated and Unvaccinated – no discrimination – all follow it:

- i. **Green (generally <5%) – 1 x / month all employees/vendors/contractors regardless of vaccination status**
- ii. **Yellow (generally between 5-10% except in small communities/counties) – 1 x / week – ALL staff/vendors/contractors regardless of vaccination status**
- iii. **Red (generally >10% except in small communities) – 2 x / week – ALL staff/vendors/contractors.**

Table 2: Routine Testing Intervals Vary by Community COVID-19 Activity Level

Community COVID-19 Activity	County Positivity Rate in the past week	Minimum Testing Frequency
Low	<5%	Once a month
Medium	5% - 10%	Once a week*
High	>10%	Twice a week*

*This frequency presumes availability of Point of Care testing on-site at the nursing home or where off-site testing turnaround time is <48 hours.

- b. Outbreak Testing – REGARDLESS of what the health departments say, in outbreak of 1 or more positive resident or employee/contractor/vendor, according to CDC/CMS, **ALL** vaccinated and unvaccinated Staff/vendor/Contractor AND Residents will be tested every 3-4 days for at least 14 days **and** until there are 2 negative subsequent rounds of test – **TEST BOTH VACCINATED AND UNVACCINATED STAFF / VENDORS / CONTRACTORS / RESIDENTS.** We have chosen the **twice a week** method to catch positives faster.
- c. Test Residents before entering building on admission and/or when have gone on a high-risk outing where COVID is unknown: Church, Wedding, Graduation; family reunion;
- d. Test anyone if there is any symptom of any kind. Remember there are the symptoms that are similar to flu, cold or allergies and there are some strange ones. Question every symptom. POC testing is quick and easy. It is our best knowledge to catch COVID presence before it spreads.

For a positive, asymptomatic POC (Binax), complete a PCR immediately and a follow-up PCR within 24 hours. If PCR is not an option, I am recommending two Binax tests from two different boxes, making sure the control had validated the box of tests effectiveness.

- **MASKING: Due to the prevalence of new variants of COVID-19 with vaccine breakthrough and transmission regardless of vaccine status, we are temporarily going back to masking for all visits. All visitors must mask regardless of vaccine status.**

This is temporary and will be followed until it is removed by the COO. I anticipate continuance until travelers begin returning home, school and the spiking of cases nationwide begins to decline to record lows. We want to be extra cautious and do our best to keep our teammates and the residents exposed to decreased risk and increased opportunity to stop the spread quickly. We still are asked to encourage the vaccine for shutting the virus down, but testing and masking are proven to catch it fast and prevent the spread. Outbreak is incredibly taxing, emotionally, physically, supply wise and on resources. You have been through so much already. This is a small ask in comparison and together we can do anything!

For information regarding the vaccine, please contact the Administrator/Executive Director/HHD or Director of Nursing/