

Governor Hogan Announces Safe and Phased Reopening Plan for Assisted Living Facilities

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ANNAPOLIS, Md. - Governor Larry Hogan today announced a safe and phased reopening plan for Maryland's assisted living facilities as part of the state's commitment to protect vulnerable populations during the COVID-19 pandemic. This plan requires universal screenings and face coverings for staff and visitors, mandates widespread testing, and allows for limited visitation.

"As our state continues to reopen, we remain committed to protecting our most vulnerable Marylanders," said Governor Hogan. "Maryland has consistently taken some of the earliest and most aggressive actions in the nation to protect older populations. We will continue to lead in these efforts, while also allowing for more Marylanders to safely visit their loved ones."

Assisted living facilities must meet a series of prerequisites to begin relaxing any restrictions, including:

- The facility must not be experiencing an ongoing outbreak of COVID-19, defined as one or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 in a resident or staff member.
- Absence of any facility-onset COVID-19 cases within the last 14 days.
- Universal source control must be in place, requiring anyone else entering the facility to wear a face mask or cloth face covering at all times while in the facility.
- Staff must have access to adequate personal protective equipment (PPE).

Provided a facility has met the prerequisites, limited visitation is allowable if:

- Visitors and residents wear a face covering at all times.
- Visitors and residents maintain proper social distancing at all times.
- There is not an ongoing outbreak at the facility.
- Additionally, it is strongly recommended that there are no more than two visitors at a time per resident per visit.

Read the Maryland Department of Health's order and guidance.

Assisted living facilities are required to adhere to the following protocols and restrictions for the foreseeable future:

- **Universal screenings.** Facilities must screen all persons who enter the facility for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, including temperature checks. Facilities must refuse entrance to anyone screening positive for symptoms of COVID-19.
- **Face coverings.** All staff, volunteers, vendors, and visitors when permitted, must wear the appropriate face covering at all times when they are inside the facility. All residents should wear face coverings under certain circumstances, including if they leave their rooms and are within close proximity of others, and for any appointments outside of a facility.
- **Widespread testing.** For all assisted living programs with less than 50 beds, upon identification of a resident or staff member with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19, the facility must report the case to their local health department and test all residents and staff for COVID-19. Testing must be performed at weekly intervals until no new resident infections are confirmed in a 14 day period since the most recent positive result. In addition, all assisted living programs with 50 or more beds must test all staff, volunteers, and vendors who are in the facility regularly on a weekly basis for COVID-19.
- **Resident Checks.** Facilities must screen all residents daily, including observing for signs and symptoms of COVID-19—asking questions about signs and symptoms of COVID-19—and where appropriate, temperature and pulse oximetry checks.
- **PPE.** Facilities must make good faith efforts to maintain adequate supplies of all appropriate types of personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff, and as appropriate, residents.
- **Regular Reporting.** All facilities must provide informational updates on COVID-19 to residents, residents' representatives, and staff within 24 hours of the occurrence of a single confirmed infection of COVID-19, and/or whenever there are three or more residents or staff who have new-onset respiratory symptoms within a 72 hour-period.

Last week, the governor announced the beginning of limited outdoor visitation at Maryland nursing homes, where the state is conducting follow-on testing for all staff, as well as facilities with active cases. As of today, there are active COVID-19 cases in 87 of the state's 227 nursing homes.