



Visit our COVID-19 Page Here

### Dear Member:

#### Today's CDC Call for Congregate Care Providers Garnered 580 Participants

Dr. Shah, Maine CDC Director, kicked off today's CDC call for congregate care providers with a situational update on COVID-19. Unfortunately, as community spread increases, so does the risk that COVID-19 can enter your buildings and we are seeing a number of outbreaks across the state. Dr. Shah urged providers to shore up their crisis staffing plans now before an outbreak occurs. Representatives from Maine CDC, DHHS, Division of Licensing, and OADS also reviewed protocols, practices and regulatory expectations of providers.

#### Two Key Points:

- Effective Friday, December 4, 2020, the State of Maine adopted the federal CDC standards for [shortened alternatives to its recommended quarantine](#) for people who were exposed to someone with COVID-19. Although providers may opt to use the more stringent 14-day quarantine, you may also now use the 10-day quarantine if that works for your operation.
- Maine DLC updated its Long Term Care Crisis Staffing Guidance to better reflect the current dynamics of the pandemic. Of note, DLC is no longer requiring providers to obtain permission to use extreme crisis staffing measures but does seek notification. This guidance was emailed today and can also be found at [Maine DLC revised LTC COVID-19 Staffing Guidance \(12/08/20\)](#).

In addition, there was plenty of information on today's call, which was recorded. MHCA will share the file with members as soon as it is available.

#### AHCA/NCAL Webinar: Preparing for COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics Thursday

COVID-19 vaccine clinics are starting as early as next week. Providers need to act now to get ready. AHCA/NCAL's webinar will walk you through how to get ready and promote high vaccination rates in your building.

#### Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 4:00PM Eastern

The webinar is open to everyone. Registration is required, but lines are limited. This webinar will be recorded and made available if you are not able to join live.

REGISTER: <https://educate.ahcancal.org/p/12042020>

#### How to Register:

- To avoid technical problems, use Google Chrome.
- You must [log in](#) using your existing AHCA/NCAL username and password in order to register.
- Once you are logged in to the website you will be able to register by clicking the green

register button at the top of the page.

- If you have forgotten your password click [here](#).
- If you are new to the site, you can create an account [here](#). Answer all fields on the create an account page- especially locating your company name. You can search by name or zip code. After creating an account, you will be able to register for the webinar.
- Need further assistance? Email [educate@ahca.org](mailto:educate@ahca.org)

### **A Message from the Maine Fire Marshal: Holiday Decorations**

The holiday season is upon us again and that means decorations for the Christmas season! It's been a long year so let's decorate but please be safe. Live trees are prohibited in nursing homes. Please follow manufacturers instruction on the installation of holiday lights. Any damaged electrical cords or lights shall be thrown away. The following is from NFPA 101, 2012 Edition for decorations in your facility.

"Combustible decorations shall be prohibited in any health care occupancy, unless one of the following criteria is met:

- They are flame-retardant or are treated with approved fire-retardant coating that is listed and labeled for application to the material to which it is applied.
- The decorations meet the requirements of NFPA 701, Standard Methods of Fire Tests for Flame Propagation of Textiles and Films.
- The decoration exhibits a heat release rate not exceeding 100 kW when tested in accordance with NFPA 289, Standard Method of Fire Test for Individual Fuel Packages, using the 20 kW ignition source.
- The decorations, such as photographs, paintings, and other art, are attached directly to the walls, ceiling, and non-fire-rated doors in accordance with the following:
  - Decorations on non-fire-rated doors do not interfere with the operation or any required latching of the door and do not exceed the area limitations of 19.7.5.6(B), (C), or (D) [Items 2, 3, 4 below].
  - Decorations do not exceed 20 percent of the wall, ceiling, and door areas inside any room or space of a smoke compartment that is not protected throughout by an approved automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 9.7.
  - Decorations do not exceed 30 percent of the wall, ceiling, and door areas inside any room or space of a smoke compartment that is protected throughout by an approved automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 9.7.
  - Decorations do not exceed 50 percent of the wall, ceiling, and door areas inside patient sleeping rooms, having a capacity not exceeding four persons in a smoke compartment that is protected throughout by an approved automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 9.7.

Nursing home staff should also keep an eye out for the following issues as they perform their daily rounds:

- Decorations should not obstruct or block fire extinguishing or fire alarm equipment such as fire extinguishers or manual pull stations.
- Decorations should not be hung from sprinklers, or located adjacent to a sprinkler such that it would obstruct the sprinkler discharge pattern.
- Decorations should not be placed on fire rated doors having a required rating of 45-minutes or greater, regardless of their size.
- Decorations should not obstruct the required clear width of corridors.
- It's always best to use decorations that are already listed for flame retardance when you can.

Our caregivers and healthcare workers are working in heroic ways during this pandemic and we certainly appreciate all that you do. Our hearts are overflowing with gratitude for your courage and strength every day you care for the sick. The Office of State Fire Marshal wishes you all a safe and happy holiday season. MHCA would like to thank Greg Day of the Maine Fire Marshal's office for providing this reminder and for the kind words regarding the efforts of all our caregivers across the state.

### **Maine CDC Creates Exposure Investigation Checklist & Recommendations**

Me CDC has developed an Exposure Investigation checklist & recommendations in response to feedback from various healthcare facilities struggling with internal contact tracing and determination of any restrictions (e.g. quarantine) for both patients/residents and healthcare providers who are close contacts. The purpose of the document is to provide guidance for performing an exposure investigation to identify close contacts and any necessary restrictions. You can find the document on the [MHCA COVID Webpage](#) under the Maine CDC heading.

### **CMS Temporarily Allows 1-hour Training Course for Paid Feeding Assistant**

According to Bill Montejo of the Maine Division of Licensing and Certification, when CMS modified the requirements at 42 CFR §§ 483.60(h)(1)(i) and 483.160(a) regarding required training of paid feeding assistants they modified the minimum timeframe requirements in these sections, which had originally required this training to be a minimum of 8 hours. The CMS modification; however, now allows that the training could be a minimum of 1 hour in length. CMS has not waived any other requirements under 42 CFR §483.60(h) related to paid feeding assistants or the required training content at 42 CFR §483.160(a)(1)-(8), which contains infection control training and other elements. Additionally, CMS is also not waiving or modifying the requirements at 42 CFR §483.60(h)(2)(i), which requires that a feeding assistant must work under the supervision of a registered nurse (RN) or licensed practical nurse (LPN).

AHCA/NCAL has a FREE one hour training you may access here:

<https://educate.ahcancal.org/products/temporary-feeding-assistant>

### **Updated Link: Maine Health Care Financial Relief Grant Program – December 10th Application Deadline**

The deadline to apply for a Maine Health Care Financial Relief Grant is by **December 10, 2020** (11:59 PM). This grant program is available to health care organizations that have lost revenues or expenses related to the disruption of business operations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Administered by the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) in coordination with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the new grants will provide up to \$100,000 in financial relief to health care organizations that serve MaineCare members. Many members had trouble accessing the link so we were able to obtain an updated one [here](#).

### **LTCOP Reaching Out to LTC Residents**

From Maine LTCOP: "The Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman Program is reaching out to residents through telephone calls, face time, zoom and post cards. We would like your help in connecting with residents who do not have family members or friends who check in on them. We want to provide whatever support we can to residents during this very challenging time. If you have residents who you think would benefit by this outreach, please let us know. You can contact us at [mltcop@maineombudsman.org](mailto:mltcop@maineombudsman.org) Our Regional Ombudsmen will follow up with residents. Thank you so much!"

Thank you for all you do to care for your residents and staff.

Nadine L. Grosso  
Vice President and Director of Communications  
[ngrosso@mehca.org](mailto:ngrosso@mehca.org)