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Dear Member:

CDC Updates Guidance for Fully Vaccinated Staff Outside of Health Care Settings

CDC has released new [public health guidance](#) for individuals who are fully vaccinated. CDC is now recommending that in non-health care settings, fully vaccinated people can:

- Visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing;
- Visit with unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19 disease indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing; and
- Refrain from quarantine and testing following a known exposure if asymptomatic.

CDC defines “fully vaccinated people” as individuals who:

- Received either two doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, or the single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine; and
- Two weeks have passed from the date of their final vaccination.

CDC indicates that fully vaccinated people should continue to take basic precautions such as wearing masks in public, avoiding medium to large size gatherings and testing if symptomatic. More information and complete guidance are available on the [CDC website](#).

While the new guidance does not directly apply to LTC settings, it does apply to staff outside of work. Providers can use this new guidance to encourage staff to become vaccinated. Positive messages about the value of the vaccine are shown to be a top [strategy](#) in encouraging staff uptake.

Please note that **CMS has NOT issued changes to any of their nursing home visitation or quarantine guidance, so existing guidelines remain in effect.** Also, some states have specific guidance on visitation and quarantine in LTC that must continue to be followed.

AHCA/NCAL will continue to [advocate](#) to CDC and CMS on updating restrictions on visitation and other guidance in LTC settings given the evidence on vaccine effectiveness continues to grow.

Updates/Notes from Today’s MD Call with Maine CDC, DHHS, and Licensing

CDC and DLC state that although the new guidance was announced this DOES NOT apply to Group A or B congregate care settings. DHHS will be doing a communication to assist facilities in helping the residents and their loved ones understand that this guidance does not apply to us. CMS HAS NOT changed their guidance for federally certified homes. DHHS is reviewing the guidance for the group B (state certified) settings. Group A and B should continue to follow the state guidance at this time. CMS federal certified homes should continue to follow federal guidance until this changes.

From DLC Bill Montejo:

Facilities should be allowing family visitation while following CDC principles of infection control and prevention. The reality is that although the majority of residents are vaccinated and staff are vaccinated NOT ALL are vaccinated so there is still the need to follow source control and social distancing.

In terms of return to work following out of state travel, staff members who have traveled to a NON-EXEMPT state there is no requirement /recommendation from Maine CDC for COVID testing. The governor's order can be found here: <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/keepmainehealthy/faqs>.

According to DLC: facilities can't pick and choose the guidance they follow. The best case scenario is that the worker be work restricted for 14 days; however, if the worker is essential (the facility absolutely needs that employee to return to work) then they can come back to work and facility must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of residents/staff. This may include additional source control measures and continued daily screening. Also note that the facility can use a risk assessment to determine their response. These risk assessment tools can be found on the MHCA website [here](#).

Vaccinations:

- For 2nd doses: go back to the original provider of the first dose. If the provider DOES NOT agree to provide the second dose call Maddie Squibb at Madeleine.Squibb@maine.gov
- For new vaccinations: No new update on process at this time.
- If you have a question about vaccination variants (when a resident or staff tests positive following full vaccination) call Maine CDC - 1800-821-5821.

Maine DHHS offers Rides for COVID-19 vaccination appointments

Maine DHHS is partnering with ModivCare, one of the organizations that coordinates rides for MaineCare members, to provide rides for any Maine resident who is unable to drive, lacks reliable transportation or is otherwise unable to travel to their appointment. ModivCare will in turn partner with Community Action Programs and transportation companies to provide rides. Individuals must have a vaccination appointment before requesting a ride. Rides will be provided to and from the appointment. MaineCare members who already use a Non-Emergency Transportation broker to arrange rides to their MaineCare-covered services should call that same broker for rides to vaccination clinics. This program is for MaineCare members who are ineligible for Non-Emergency Transportation as well as any other Maine resident who does not have access to reliable transportation to get to their vaccination appointment.

Sincerely,

Nadine L. Grosso
Vice President and Director of Communications
ngrosso@mehca.org