



Visit our COVID-19 Page
Here

Dear Member,

The Maine CDC updates COVID-19 testing data once each day, Monday through Friday by 12 PM EDT. You may access the information here:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus>

As of today, March 25, 2020 at 12:00 PM:

Total Confirmed Cases	142
Persons With Negative Tests	3177

There are 15 hospitalized patients. No nursing home residents so far. The average age of positive case is between 50-60 yrs old.

Summary of LTC Specific Maine CDC call today

- Maine CDC will be changing the ZOOM connection information for this weekly Wednesday call. MHCA will share this as soon as we receive it and post to our website.
- For facilities who have Canadian employees – For now Canada is at a Level 3 for travel, which means they can come back and forth between borders. You should follow existing procedures for staff screening. Be thinking about how staffing will be impacted if Canada rises to a Level 4, effectively stopping travel back and forth.

PPE

- PPE continues to be in short supply nationwide and in Maine. Maine CDC is monitoring supply and demand regularly and adjusting Tiers of distribution as needed. It is CDC's understanding that long term care facilities are receiving partial or complete orders. If this is not the case, please communicate this to MHCA (ngrosso@mehca.org or dwatford@mehca.org).
- The following are things facilities should do when there are cases in their community but none in their facility.
 - Healthcare Personnel Monitoring and Restrictions:
 - Consider implementing universal use of facemasks for HCP while in the facility.
- In addition to the actions described above, these are things facilities should do when there are cases in their facility or sustained transmission in the community.
 - Healthcare Personnel Monitoring and Restrictions:
 - Implement universal use of facemask for HCP while in the facility.
 - Consider having HCP wear all recommended PPE (gown, gloves, eye protection, N95 respirator or, if not available, a facemask) for the care of all residents, regardless of presence of symptoms. Implement protocols for extended use of eye protection and facemasks.
 - Resident Monitoring and Restrictions:
 - Encourage residents to remain in their room. If there are cases in the facility, restrict residents (to the extent possible) to their rooms except for medically necessary purposes.
 - If they leave their room, residents should wear a facemask, perform hand hygiene, limit their movement in the facility, and perform social

- distancing (stay at least 6 feet away from others).
- Implement protocols for cohorting ill residents with dedicated HCP.
- Cloth Masks: This keeps coming up as people want to be helpful in this time of crisis. IF you are accepting or making cloth masks, CDC recommends commercial laundering first, keeping them away from your existing legitimate supply and still, using these ONLY as a last resort.
- For complete stratification of PPE utilization depending on level of capacity and outbreak, see: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html>

Testing: The Maine HETL in Augusta is prioritizing long term care resident testing but Nordx is NOT. Using the HETL requisition form, you may choose to bypass Nordx and submit to HETL, however, you are responsible for coordinating a courier to get it there. See <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/public-health-systems/health-and-environmental-testing/micro/download-forms.htm>.

In general, Maine CDC:

- Urges limiting per diem staff or others moving back and forth in between facilities to minimize spread.
- Discourages outside packages coming in for all previous stated reasons.
- Can't release town names only Counties where there are COVID-19 positive test results.
- Reiterates that the COVID-19 quarantine period is still 14 days, the incubation period is up to **16** days.
- Knowing there are slight variations in published information around temperatures, Maine CDC recommends using 100 degrees F as the threshold. Someone else should be taking the temperatures at all times.
- In response to concerns about nebulizers being in short supply and an aerosol-generating procedure, should residents switch from nebulizers to inhalers? According to Dr. Sears, IDP, it is generally ok but facilities need to discuss with Pharmacist or Med. Dir./provider.

Governor Mills issues Executive Order to provide flexibility and access to health care services

Today, Governor Mills has signed an Executive Order (PDF) allowing licensed physicians, physician assistants, and nurses greater flexibility to contribute to Maine's response during the civil state of emergency. Those who are licensed and in good standing in other states can now:

- Receive an emergency license to provide health care in person or through telehealth to Maine people, with no application fee
- See Maine patients through telehealth without obtaining a Maine license, if already serving those patients at out-of-state locations
- Have their licenses automatically renewed if up for renewal during the state of emergency
- Suspend conforming to physician oversight requirements (for physician assistants and advanced practice registered nurses)
- Reactivate their license immediately with no application fee, if retired.

Additionally, all physicians, physician assistants and nurses licensed in Maine and those authorized under the order may provide services through all methods of telehealth, including video, audio and other electronic technologies to treat Maine people for all medical needs.

MaineCare, or Medicaid, already pays the same rate for most covered services whether delivered in person or through telehealth. Last week, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) announced an expansion of this policy through an emergency rule change that allows for prescribing through telehealth. See the Maine DHHS telehealth [fact sheet](#).

Mental health resources during this time

Maine's 2-1-1 program is available to address mental health needs generally, and specific to COVID-19. Mainers may dial 2-1-1- on the phone or visit <https://211maine.org/>

Maine Crisis Hotline - 1-888-568-1112 (Voice) or 711 (Maine Relay)

The Maine Crisis Hotline helps to stabilize individuals and families while assisting in crisis resolution and action planning. If you are concerned about yourself or about somebody else, call the 24-hour crisis hotline and speak with a trained crisis clinician who can connect you to the closest crisis center.

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

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