# Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

| Prevention Steps | Triggers points | Response Actions |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Prevention messaging: message residents, staff, and families regarding prevention.<br>2. Prevention practices: step up hand hygiene and training, cough etiquette, increasing frequency of environmental cleaning<br>3. Staff: illness policy review, ensure that all staff stay home when ill and supporting staff with little leave to stay home; no volunteers should work ill<br>4. Infection control practices: Review and strengthen infection control protocols and practices. (e.g. visitor symptom and travel screening questions during sign-in cough, fever, shortness of breath, identify immunocompromised, separate from people with symptoms, people maintaining 6-foot distance as much as possible)<br>5. Ensure COOP plans are in place<br>6. Review and step up implementation of infection control practices.<br>7. Ensure adequate supply of PPE.<br>8. Establish or reinforce strong communication channels with hospitals and EMS for patient transfers. | Other US states with community spread (Met) | 1. Work with Boulder County Public Health to establish isolation protocols. |
| | Case in metro Denver are with known exposure and is contained (Met) | 1. Prepare for cases to increase and plan for cases in Denver Metro Area with unknown exposure. And reinforce prevention messaging.<br>2. Maintain tight screening of visitors for illness and travel.<br>3. Protect PPE resources and supply management.<br>4. Supervisors should be monitoring staff health and empowered to send people home. |
| | Case in Boulder County with known or unknown exposure | 1. Actively monitor all residents (at least daily) for fever and respiratory symptoms (shortness of breath, new or change in cough, and sore throat). If positive for fever or symptoms, implement recommended IPC practices<br>2. Cancel group field trips and activities and consider cancelling communal dining.<br>3. Protect PPE resources and supply management.<br>4. Restrict all visitors & develop alternatives for family communication.<br>5. Screen all staff for illness prior to shifts. |
| | Case in Denver metro area with unknown exposure (Met) | 1. Actively monitor all residents (at least daily) for fever and respiratory symptoms (shortness of breath, new or change in cough, and sore throat). If positive for fever or symptoms, implement recommended IPC practices<br>2. Cancel group field trips and activities and consider cancelling communal dining.<br>3. Restrict all visitors & develop alternatives for family communication.<br>4. Protect PPE resources and supply management. |

# Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Cases in the Facility or Sustained Transmission in the Community | 1. Restrict all visitors to the facility. Exceptions might be considered in limited circumstances (e.g., end of life situations). In those circumstances the visitor should wear a facemask and restrict their visit to the resident's room.<br><br>2. Healthcare Personnel Monitoring and Restrictions:<br>• Implement universal use of facemask for HCP while in the facility.<br>• Consider having HCP wear all recommended PPE (gown, gloves, eye protection, N95 respirator (or facemask if not available)) for the care of all residents, regardless of presence of symptoms. Implement protocols for extended use of eye protection and facemasks.<br><br>3. Resident Monitoring and Restrictions:<br>• 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.<br>o 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).<br>• In addition to cancelling group field trips and activities, cancel communal dining.<br>• Implement protocols for cohorting ill residents with dedicated HCP. |

# Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

**Background**

COVID-19 is a "novel coronavirus", which means it is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans. In general, these viruses are spread when a sick person coughs or sneezes. It is also possible to become sick by touching surfaces contaminated with a virus, and then touching one's own eyes, nose, or mouth. Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or an upper sleeve and washing hands with soap and water or with an alcohol-based hand rub are essential in stopping the spread of respiratory viruses. During the influenza season, individuals should consider getting a flu vaccine.

The majority of people with COVID-19 develop a mild illness which may include fever, cough, or shortness of breath. The elderly or people with underlying medical conditions are more likely to develop more severe disease requiring hospitalization.

**PLANNING**

**Prepare**

- Form a response committee that includes internal and external partners that can develop, formalize and approve a plan for response
- Refer to the https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/prevent-spread-in-long-term-care-facilities.html for resources
- Develop a plan that includes:
    - Prevention messages
    - Staff and volunteer illness policy
    - Visitor policy
    - Sanitation checklist/housekeeping
    - Screening questionnaires and procedures
    - Isolations plans/social distancing actions
    - Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
    - Caregiver plans
    - Continuity of Operation plans
    - How to contact and receive information from local public health agency
    - A list of needed supplies

**Communicate with staff and residents**

- Reassure them that you are monitoring the situation and working with partners to have appropriate plans in place
- Describe what actions the facility is taking to protect them, including answering residents and families questions and explaining how they can protect themselves and each other
- Make sure communications are provided in a way that can be understood by all languages, reading levels

# Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

**Monitor health of staff**

- Ensure staff are aware of sick leave policies and they stay home if they are ill with respiratory symptoms
- Monitor staff daily prior to the start of their shift for signs of respiratory illness. Notify their supervisor if they become sick during their shift
- Instruct staff not to return to work until their symptoms resolved and they have not have a fever without use of fever reducing medication for 24 hours
- Do not require a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick with respiratory illness; this could place an increased demand on the medical system.

**Be aware of emotional impacts**

An outbreak may be stressful for people and communities. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children.

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations. The emotional impact of an emergency on a person can depend on the person's characteristics and experiences, the social and economic circumstances of the person and their community, and the availability of local resources. People can become more distressed if they see repeated images or hear repeated reports about the outbreak in the media, particularly:

- People who have preexisting mental health conditions including problems with substance use
- Children
- People who are helping with the response to COVID-19, like doctors and other health care providers, or first responders

Reactions during an infectious disease outbreak can include:

- Fear and worry about your own health status and that of your loved ones who may have been exposed to COVID-19
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

**Share mental health resources**

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Disaster Distress Hotline: 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 (available via relay service for those with hearing impairment)
- Instruct staff to call their health or mental health care provider if stress reactions interfere with their daily activities for several days in a row.

Things people can do to support their mental health:

- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage of COVID-19.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep and avoid alcohol and drugs.

## Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

- Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories. It can be upsetting to hear about the crisis and see images repeatedly. Try to do some other activities you enjoy to return to your normal life.
- Connect with others. Share concerns and how you are feeling with a friend or family member. Maintain healthy relationships.
- Maintain a sense of hope and positive thinking.

# Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

## Key Points to Know about COVID-19

### What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

### Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in parts of the United States. Risk of infection with COVID-19 is higher for people who are close contacts of someone known to have COVID-19, for example healthcare workers, or household members. Other people at higher risk for infection are those who live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Learn more about places with ongoing spread at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html#geographic.

### Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html.

### How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html.

### What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

### What are severe complications from this virus?

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure and in some cases death.

### How can I help protect myself?

People can help protect themselves from respiratory illness with everyday preventive actions.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

### If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

### What should I do if I recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19?

If you have traveled from an affected area, there may be restrictions on your movements for up to 2 weeks. If you develop symptoms during that period (fever, cough, trouble breathing), seek medical advice. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

### Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to take everyday preventive actions, like avoiding close contact with people who are sick and washing your hands often.

### Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.

For more information: **www.cdc.gov/COVID19**

# Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

**PREVENTION MESSAGES (EXAMPLE)**

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
    - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
    - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
    - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

For information about handwashing, see CDC's Handwashing https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html
For information specific to healthcare, see CDC's Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings
These are everyday habits that can help prevent the spread of several viruses. CDC does have specific guidance for travelers.

# Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

**Actively encourage sick employees to stay home**

- Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness should stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Employees should notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.
- Ensure that your sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies.
- Talk with companies that provide your business with contract or temporary employees about the importance of sick employees staying home and encourage them to develop non-punitive leave policies.
- Do not require a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate their illness or to return to work, as healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely way.
- Employers should maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member. Employers should be aware that more employees may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members than is usual.

**Separate sick employees**

- Employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be separated from other employees and sent home immediately.
- Sick employees should cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or an elbow or shoulder if no tissue is available).

**Emphasize respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene**

- Place posters that encourage staying home when sick, cough and sneeze etiquette, and hand hygiene at the entrance to your workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen.
- Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees.
- Instruct employees to clean their hands often with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.
- Provide soap and water and alcohol-based hand sanitizer in the workplace. Ensure that adequate supplies are maintained. Place hand sanitizers in multiple locations/conference rooms to encourage hand hygiene.
- Visit the CDC coughing and sneezing etiquette and clean hands webpage for more information.

**Advise employees who may be traveling**

- Check the CDC's Traveler's Health Notices for the latest guidance and recommendations.
- Check for symptoms of acute respiratory illness before starting travel and notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.
- Notify their supervisor and call their healthcare provider if they become sick while traveling

**Assess risks**

## Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

- Instruct employees who are well but who have a household member sick with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and refer to CDC guidance to assess their risk.
- Inform fellow employees if an employee is sick with COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Follow CDC guidance to assess risk.

# Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

**VISITOR POLICY (EXAMPLE)**

Due to the evolving situation of COVID-19, our Visitor Policy may be updated frequently. The health and well-being of our clients and staff are our top priority. Thank you for understanding.

Visitors that meet any of the following conditions are not allowed into our facilities:

- Had travel history to an area or community with widespread travel within the last 14 days;
- Had come into close contact with suspect/confirmed cases within the last 14 days;
- Experiencing fever or respiratory symptoms.

# Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

**SANITATION GUIDELINES (EXAMPLE)**

This guidance provides both recommendations for general cleaning and on the cleaning and disinfection of rooms or areas of those with suspected or with confirmed COVID-19 have visited. It is aimed at limiting the survival of novel coronavirus in key environments.

**General Recommendations for routine cleaning of areas where there is not known illness**

During widespread illnesses, frequency of cleaning should be increased. Using gloves, practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks) with household cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectants that are appropriate for the surface, following label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

**Recommendations when there is known COVID-like illness**

- Wear disposable gloves and gowns for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash.
    - Gloves and gowns should be compatible with the disinfectant products being used.
    - Additional personal protective equipment might be required based on the cleaning/disinfectant products being used and whether there is a risk of splash.
    - Gloves and gowns should be removed carefully to avoid contamination of the wearer and the surrounding area. Be sure to **clean hands** after removing gloves.
- Remove gloves after cleaning a room or area occupied by ill persons. Clean hands immediately after gloves are removed.
- Report breaches in personal protective equipment (e.g., tear in gloves) or any potential exposures to supervisor.
- **Clean hands often**, including immediately after removing gloves and after contact with an ill person, by washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60%-95% alcohol may be used. If hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.
- Follow normal preventive actions while at work and home, including cleaning hands and avoiding touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
    - Additional key times to clean hands include:
        - After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing
        - After using the restroom
        - Before eating or preparing food
        - After contact with animals or pets
        - Before and after providing routine care for another person who needs assistance (e.g., a child)

# Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

**Cleaning and disinfecting**

*Surfaces*

- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Discard gloves after each cleaning. If reusable gloves are used, dedicate them for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces for COVID-19 and no other purpose. See the CDC-recommended list of cleaning and disinfection products to use. Clean hands immediately after gloves are removed.
- If surfaces are dirty, clean them using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants are effective.
    - Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
        - 5 tablespoons (1/3$^{rd}$ cup) bleach per gallon of water or
        - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
    - Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims are expected to be effective against COVID-19 based on data for harder to kill viruses. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.)
    - For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, remove visible contamination if present and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces.
    - Launder items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely, or use products with the EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims that are suitable for porous surfaces.

*Clothing, towels, linens and other items that go in the laundry*

- Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry from an ill person and then discard after each use.
- If possible, do not shake dirty laundry. This will minimize the possibility of dispersing virus through the air.
- Launder items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely. Dirty laundry from an ill person can be washed with other people's items.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to guidance above for surfaces. If possible, consider placing a bag liner that is either disposable (can be thrown away) or can be laundered.

# Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

**INTAKE SCREENING QUESTIONS (EXAMPLE)**

Assess symptoms of respiratory infection upon admission to the facility and implement appropriate infection prevention practices. Any patient with respiratory symptoms or suspected respiratory illness should put on a face mask immediately.

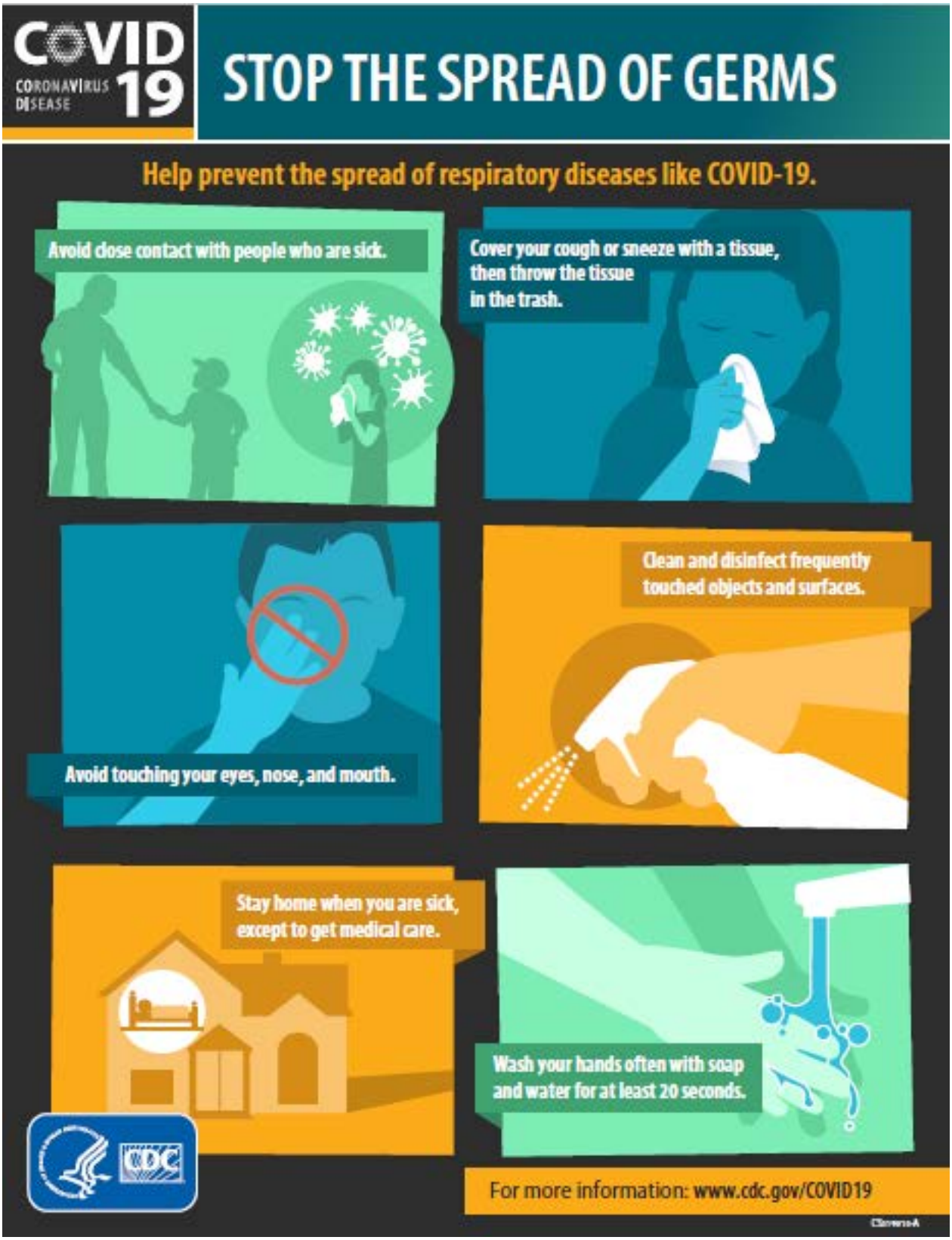
Post signage at entrances to prompt visitors to self-identify if they are having respiratory symptoms or may be at risk of having COVID-19.

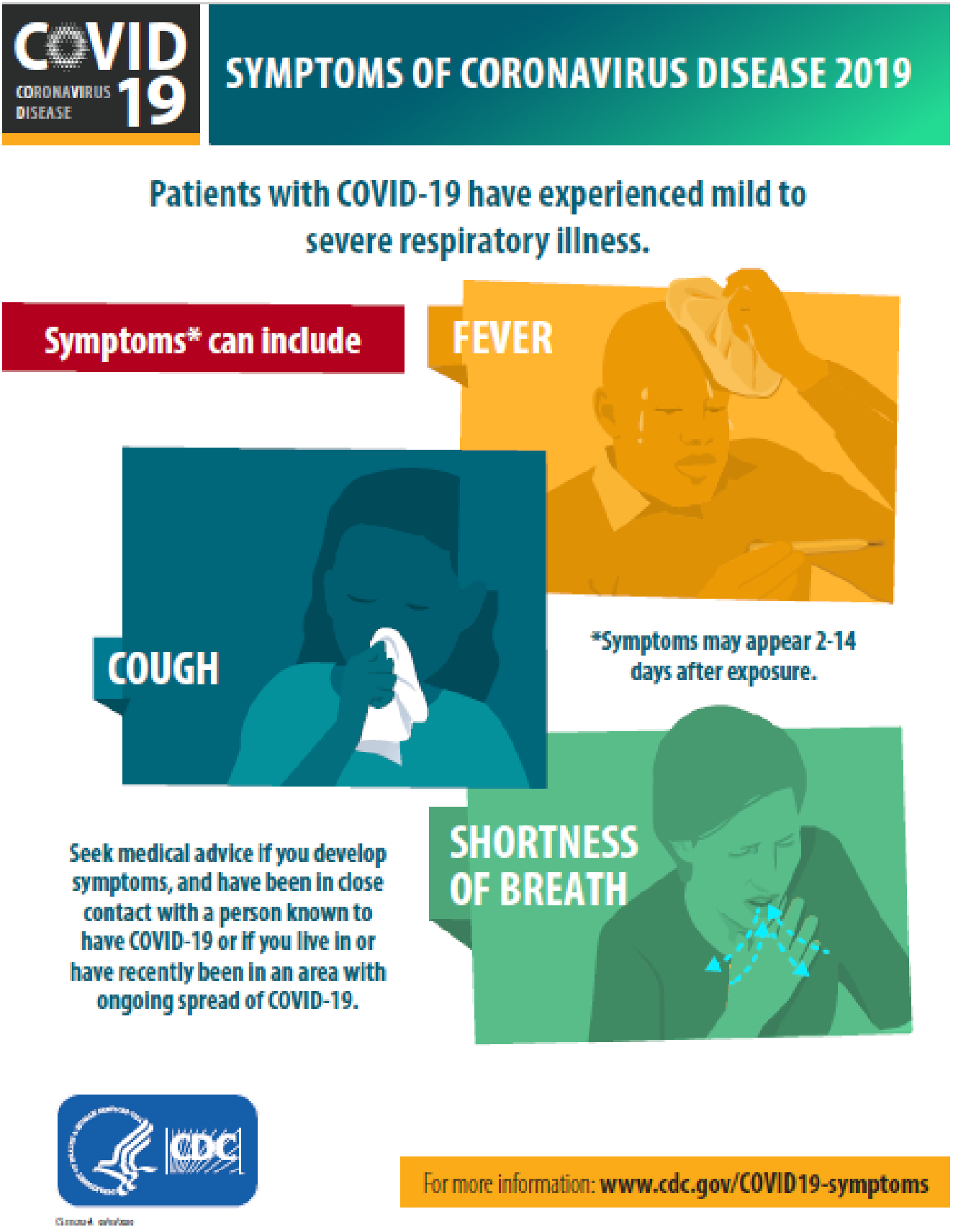
- ☐ Do you have any of the following symptoms? (Patients with any of these symptoms should be considered symptomatic)*
  - Fever _____ F Tympanic/Oral
  - Cough
  - Shortness of Breath
- ☐ Have you been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus?**
- ☐ Have you traveled from an area with ongoing community transmission of COVID-19?**

**Visitors with a positive screening should not be allowed into the facility.**

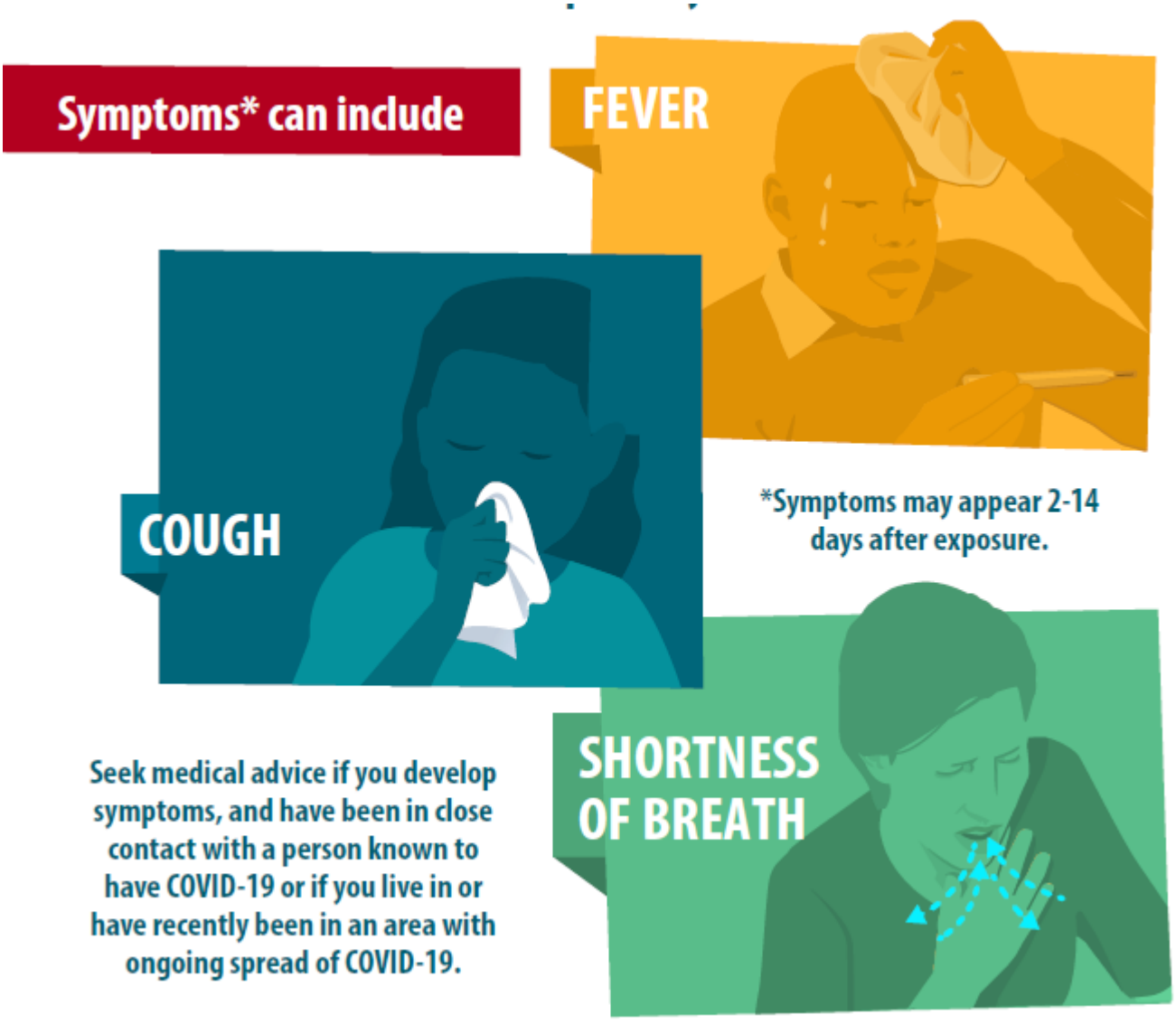
# Considerations for LTCF and Senior Communities during a COVID-19 Outbreak

**Signage/Posters**




COVID 19
CORONAVIRUS DISEASE
SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019
Patients with COVID-19 have experienced mild to severe respiratory illness.
Symptoms* can include
FEVER
COUGH
*Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.
SHORTNESS OF BREATH
Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.
For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19-symptoms

Hands that look clean can still have icky germs!
1 Wet
2 Get Soap
Wash Your Hands!
3 Scrub
4 Rinse
5 Dry
CDC
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

# ATTENTION VISITORS

To keep our clients and staff healthy, please do not enter this facility if you have any of the following symptoms, if you have had travel to areas of high COVID-19 transmission, or have been exposed to someone with a COVID-19 or influenza illness.