

## **CDC – Considerations for Retirement Communities**

CDC offers the following considerations for ways in which administrators of retirement communities and independent living facilities can help protect residents, workers, visitors and communities and slow the spread of COVID-19. These considerations are for administrators of retirement communities and independent living facilities that are not health care facilities. These considerations are meant to supplement, NOT REPLACE, any state, local, territorial or tribal health and safety laws, rules and regulations with which retirement communities and independent living facilities must comply.

### **Guiding Principles to Keep in Mind**

Many people living in retirement communities and independent living facilities are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 because:

- Risk increases with age
- Residents may have underlying health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes or lung disease

They may also be at higher risk of getting and spreading the virus because of retirement community and independent living facility characteristics, such as frequent social activities, group dining facilities and other communal spaces, community activities and shared transportation. The more people a resident or worker interacts with and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. The risk of COVID-19 spread increases in retirement communities and independent living facilities settings as follows:

**Lower Risk for this Setting** – Residents do not spend time in each other’s individual living spaces and most communal areas (i.e., cafeteria, activity room) are closed. Workers and residents remain at least 6 feet apart at all times, undergo daily health screenings and wear masks correctly. Non-essential volunteers and visitors are not permitted.

**More Risk for this Setting** – Residents do not spend time in each other’s individual living spaces. Individual residents may use properly ventilated communal areas (i.e., dining rooms) or participate in small group, outdoor activities, but they remain at least 6 feet apart at all times. Workers, residents, volunteers and visitors remain at least 6 feet apart at all times, undergo daily health screenings and wear masks correctly. Non-essential volunteers and visitors are permitted but limited.

**Higher Risk for this Setting** – Residents spend significant time indoors together, possibly in each other’s living spaces as well as in communal areas. They may not consistently remain at least 6 feet apart, nor wear masks. They also frequently spend time in the larger community (i.e., traveling together to attend public events). Non-essential volunteers and visitors are not restricted.

COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people cough, sneeze or talk. Someone can also get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own nose, mouth or possibly their eyes. COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms. Therefore, personal prevention practices (such as frequent handwashing, social distancing and staying home when sick) and environmental cleaning and disinfection, as well as use of masks are important principles.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/retirement/considerations.html> (October 30, 2020)

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*This policy and procedure is not intended to replace the informed judgment of individual physicians, nurses or other clinicians nor is it intended as a statement of prevailing community standards or minimum standards of practice. It is a suggested method and technique for achieving optimal health care, not a minimum standard below which residents necessarily would be placed at risk.*