

HEALTH AUTHORITY ORDER

TO: **FACILITY OWNER OR FACILITY DIRECTOR, ADDRESS**
FROM: Lori Palazzo, MD, Local Health Authority, Williamson County, Texas
DATE: **April 23, 2020**

Re: Orders of Control Measures for Vulnerable Populations at Long-Term Care Facilities and/or Nursing Homes

Pursuant to Texas Health and Safety Code §§ 81.082 and 81.084, I, the Medical Director for the Williamson County and Cities Health District (“WCCHD”) and the Health Authority for Williamson County, Texas, hereby issue this order imposing the below specified control measures on (name and address of property), a Long-Term Care Facility and/or Nursing Home (“Facility”).

Based on information and belief, you are the administrator of (name and address of property). This facility serves elderly individuals or individuals with underlying health conditions that make them more susceptible to infection or respiratory disease.

In addition to the guidance provided by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission COVID-19 Response for Long Term Care Facilities (April 7, 2020), you are required to put the following control measures in place or ensure that they are put in place:

- Hand sanitizer must be available and supplied to employees, patients, visitors, and volunteers;
- The facility must symptom and temperature check all employees, patients, visitors, and volunteers prior to entry to the facility (except for 9-1-1 responders);
- The facility must screen each resident at least once each shift for COVID-19 symptoms, including: cough, fever, and shortness of breath.
- Only visitors providing critical assistance should be permitted entry into to the facility. Care providers should utilize telehealth whenever possible.
- The facility may not admit any individual to the facility with a temperature of 99.6 °F or above;
- Any unexplained febrile illness (≥ 99.6 °F) of facility employees, patients, visitors, or volunteers must be reported to the WCCHD Epidemiologist On-Call at (512) 943-3660 as soon as possible.
- All individuals entering the facility must wear, at a minimum, surgical face masks or cloth face coverings, if surgical masks are not available, for the duration of their time within the facility, except while eating or while alone in an enclosed office.
- In the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 at a facility (staff or resident), all employees and contractors with responsibilities that require contact with residents within 6 feet, should utilize CDC recommended Personal Protective Equipment for COVID-19. This PPE should be utilized for all patient encounters, regardless of the COVID-19 status until cleared by WCCHD.

- In the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 at a facility (staff or resident), all patients, staff, and next of kin must be notified that a positive case exists in the facility.
- In the event of a cluster of COVID-19 cases at your facility involving two or more patients, the facility will be restricted from receiving any new patients into the facility or any returning patients to the facility until the facility has been cleared by WCCHD.
- In the event of a cluster of COVID-19 cases at your facility of two or more staff and/or patients, the facility will be required to make available for testing, if requested, all clinical staff, non-clinical staff, and contractors.
- In the event of a cluster of COVID-19 cases at your facility, a “Strike Team” of additional personnel and equipment may be deployed to perform an infection control assessment at your facility until the facility outbreak is controlled as determined by WCCHD.

I believe this order is an appropriate and necessary control measure to arrest, control, and eradicate the threat to public health based on the higher risk for severe infection or respiratory disease posed by the COVID-19 virus for elderly individuals and those individuals with underlying health conditions.

Failure to abide by this Order, including any amendments or instructions from the Department of State Health Services and/or the Local Health Authority, may result in criminal penalties ranging from a Class B misdemeanor to a felony in the third degree.

If you have any questions, information, or concerns, or if you are not the owner, person in control, or registered agent for the (name and address of property), please contact WCCHD as soon as possible at (512) 943-3660.

This order is issued under my authority as the Medical Director for the Williamson County and Cities Health District and the Local Health Authority for Williamson County, Texas, on this the 23 day of April, 2020.



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