

March 14, 2020

To: Adult Foster Homes Licensed Under OAR 411, Division 50
Adult Foster Homes Licensed Under OAR 411, Division 360
Adult Foster Homes Licensed Under OAR 309, Division 40

Re: Executive Letter specifying immediate additional policies to limit spread of
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Dear Providers:

Background:

Oregon has recently seen COVID-19 cases in people without high-risk exposures (i.e., travel to affected regions or contact with known cases). This means COVID-19 has spread in communities in Oregon. Community-wide measures like hand hygiene and staying home when ill are essential to decrease further community spread.

The following guidance is effective immediately to prevent the spread of COVID-19 to some of Oregon's most vulnerable community members, and is consistent with the key goals for the U.S. healthcare system in response to the COVID-19 outbreak:

1. Reduce morbidity and mortality
2. Minimize disease transmission
3. Protect healthcare personnel
4. Preserve healthcare system functioning

The Oregon Health Authority and the Department of Human Services, consistent with the declaration of emergency in [Executive Order 20-03 issued by the Governor on March 8, 2020](#), are adopting policies to:

- Restrict and limit entry of individuals into Adult Foster Homes;
- Require screening of all individuals who are allowed to enter the foster home;
- Document screening procedures for all visitors; and
- Limit community and group activities.

These extraordinary actions are being taken to limit the potential for staff and residents' exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19. Adult Foster Homes should use infection control principles for respiratory infections and outbreaks to manage COVID-19.

We encourage Adult Foster Home providers to monitor the CDC website for information and resources and contact their local health department as needed (CDC Resources for Health Care Facilities: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/index.html>).

AUTHORITY

Governor Brown's [Executive Order 20-03](#) dated March 8, 2020.

APPLICATION

This executive letter applies to all licensed Adult Foster Homes. These actions are required until further notice, with the understanding this policy may change as the situation evolves.

RATIONALE

This executive letter stems from a desire to have a uniform policy that is clearly communicated to stakeholders and maximizes Adult Foster Home Providers' ability to prevent and contain the spread of the virus COVID-19.

DEFINITIONS

a. *Essential* individual is limited to:

- Foster care Staff/Licensees;
- Resident's case manager;
- Adult protective services (APS) staff or its designees (Area Agency on Aging staff) who are engaged in an active abuse investigation;
- Disability Rights Oregon staff for the purpose of investigating allegations of abuse and neglect;
- Emergency responder personnel including EMS, Fire and Police;
- Prospective residents for trial visits or other placement activities;
- Law enforcement;
- Legal counsel for residents;
- Licensing/Survey staff;
- Long Term Care Ombudsman and Deputies (not volunteers);
- Legal guardians
- Friends or family members visiting during end-of-life stages;
- Friends, family, and peers who are essential for the foster care resident's emotional well-being and care;
- Office of Training, Investigations, and Safety (OTIS) staff or delegates;
- Outside medical and behavioral health personnel; and

- Vendors who must enter the home in order to deliver medical supplies or other essential items.
- b. *Screening* means the evaluation by foster care staff of every individual entering the Adult Foster Home according to the screening criteria.
 - c. *Screening criteria includes identifying:*
 1. Signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat.
 2. Contact in the last 14 days with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, or under investigation for COVID-19.
 3. Whether there has been international travel within the last 14 days to countries with sustained community transmission. For updated information on affected countries visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>
 - d. *Restricting* means not being allowed into the foster care home at all.
 - e. *Limiting* means not being allowed into the foster care home, except for certain situations as described below.

POLICY

Effective March 14, 2020, Adult Foster Homes must:

1. Restrict visitation of non-essential individuals.
2. Screen 100% of essential individuals prior to entry into the building consistent with screening criteria.
3. Limit or restrict visitation of essential individuals.
 - a. Limit points of entry to Adult Foster Homes to ensure appropriate signage and/or check-in stations are accessible;
 - b. Except for emergency responders, allow only two essential visitors per resident at a given time;
 - c. If an essential visitor meets screening criteria #1, #2, or #3 above or is under the age of 12, the Adult Foster Home must prohibit the visit;
 - d. Exceptions to (c) may be considered in an end-of-life situation or if the visitor is essential for the resident's emotional well-being and care on a case-by-case basis. In such cases, the Visitor must be educated to:
 - i. Limit their movement within the home to the resident's room only;
 - ii. Limit touching environmental surfaces;
 - iii. Use and dispose of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) – gown, gloves and mask; and
 - iv. Limit physical contact with resident; avoid coming within 6 feet.

e. All other essential visitors must be educated to:

- i. Use good hand hygiene: before entering room, wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, or clean hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer, avoid touching face; and
- ii. Use good respiratory etiquette: cover coughs and sneezes with elbow and use and dispose of tissue properly.

All screenings must be documented via a form and logged. Screening documentation must be maintained and made available for inspection by regulatory agencies.

Adult Foster Home providers shall post signage clearly summarizing the essential individual visitor policy.

If an Adult Foster Home has a suspected, presumptive, or confirmed COVID-19 resident, the home staff must:

- Consult with local public health immediately;
- Maintain a log of visitors and staff who interact with a resident who is isolated for presumptive or confirmed COVID-19; and
- Restrict all internal group activities to prevent infection exposure to other residents.

Effective immediately, Adult Foster Home providers shall discontinue group community outings. Adult Foster Home providers shall provide guidance and education to residents who independently engage in community outings, but MAY NOT prevent residents from embarking on those outings. Adult Foster Home providers must also:

- Continue to accommodate medical and behavioral health visits, regardless of whether such visits are routine, preventive or critical.
- Continue to accommodate visits for the purpose of placement activities.

Visitation and socialization promotes emotional wellness for residents. As such, Adult Foster Home providers must provide guidance and technological solutions for telehealth and virtual visits.

This policy may be updated as additional information is released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and guidance is released by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS). The Authority will also provide technical assistance and tools to assist Adult Foster Home providers with implementation.

It is so ordered that this policy letter is in effect from March 14, 2020, until rescinded in writing.



Patrick M. Allen, Director
Oregon Health Authority



Fariborz Pakseresht, Director
Department of Human Services