



August 26, 2020

## Interim COVID-19 infection control guidance for workers providing in-home personal care

### This guidance applies to:

- In-home care agencies licensed under ORS 443.305-443.355; and
- Individuals providing in-home personal care where no individual or agency license is required under state or federal law.

### In-home care agencies are required to:

- Train and educate their caregivers about the symptoms of COVID-19 and the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Encourage caregivers with COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19 to be tested; and prohibit them from providing in-home care services until the danger of their being contagious has passed (see requirements for in-home caregivers, below).
- Provide appropriate PPE for its caregiver employees.
  - Gloves and surgical masks should be worn when providing direct services and support to an individual, such as helping with personal care, and when in the individual's home. Otherwise, PPE is used when there is a risk of contact with bodily fluids.
  - If employers cannot obtain PPE through usual means, they should contact their [local public health authority](#) for assistance.
  - PPE may not be reused and must be disposed of immediately after use. Immediately after touching or removing PPE and after contact with respiratory secretions, clean hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Ensure that caregivers wear a surgical mask (medical respirator not required) and place carefully to cover mouth and nose securely to minimize gaps between the face and the mask. While in use, avoid touching the mask.
- Request that clients wear a mask or other face covering while caregivers are in their home unless they have a medical condition that prevents use of a mask or face covering.

## In-home caregivers are required to:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60–95% alcohol content), covering all surfaces of the hands and rubbing them together until dry. Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty.
- Stay home if they have tested positive for COVID-19 or have cough, fever, or shortness of breath until at least 10 days after their symptoms began, 24 hours after fever has resolved (without the use of fever-reducing medicines or cough suppressants), and other symptoms are improving.

## In-home caregivers should:

- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover coughs and sneezes using a flexed elbow, not hands. If using a tissue, throw tissue away immediately and wash hands.
- Contact a health care provider if they experience fever, cough or shortness of breath, and discuss testing for COVID-19. They should tell their provider that they provide healthcare for vulnerable populations.
- Clean all “high-touch” surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets and bedside tables, every day. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool or body fluids on them. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the label instructions.
- Use appropriate PPE, do not reuse PPE and dispose of PPE immediately after use.
- Limit time with clients when together in an enclosed space to the time necessary to comply with the needs and services identified in the client service plan.
- Make sure that shared spaces in the home have good airflow (e.g., an air conditioner or an opened window, weather permitting).
- Minimize face-to-face interactions with other individuals in the client’s household, and maintain a distance of at least 6 feet except as necessary to provide services to the client.
- Assist and remind the client to practice good hand hygiene and cough etiquette.
- If close contact with a client showing [symptoms of respiratory illness](#) cannot be avoided, follow standard infection prevention practices as recommended by the CDC.
- Assist clients in gathering resources they would need to stay at home for up to 2 weeks if they become sick or need to minimize contact with others (such as medication refills).
- If a client is showing symptoms of respiratory illness:
  - Contact the client’s health care provider and case manager, if applicable, or other support agencies to find alternative ways to support them.
  - Notify the In-Home Care Agency of the situation so that the agency can arrange to continue care using appropriate precautions.

## Resources

CDC recommendations for people who have close contact in a home setting with a person who has COVID-19 are available [here](#).

Contact your [local public health authority](#) in Oregon for more information.

If you have additional questions, please visit Oregon Health Authority's COVID-19 [webpage](#) and review the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section. Specific health-related concerns not addressed in the FAQs may be sent to [OrESF8.Liaison@dhsoha.state.or.us](mailto:OrESF8.Liaison@dhsoha.state.or.us)

If you have regulatory or workforce questions as they relate to developmental disabilities, please contact [ODDS.FieldLiaison@dhsoha.state.or.us](mailto:ODDS.FieldLiaison@dhsoha.state.or.us)

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