

# UPDATE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



**Stay informed. Take precautions. Stay safe.**

Dear Members,

Mass-ALA has gathered the following information from our frequent communications with EOEA. Here are the latest policy and regulatory updates relevant to assisted living operations and planning.

## **National Guard Testing**

National Guard Testing will likely be ending soon. If you would like National Guard Testing at your residence, it is recommended that you request it as end dates and deadlines may be announced soon.

## **Staffing Assistance**

Mass-ALA has advocated for the State's Rapid Response Staffing Teams to be made available to assisted living residences in case of severe staffing shortages. If your residence reaches a point of having 50 percent or more of its staff not working, you may contact Patricia Marchetti for assistance in making the request for the Rapid Response Staffing Teams.

For non-emergency staffing assistance, you may request it by following the instructions at this link: [https://www.mass-ala.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-19-Update-4\\_9\\_20.pdf](https://www.mass-ala.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-19-Update-4_9_20.pdf)

## **Salons/Beauty Care**

EOEA has stated that their guidance to restrict visitors remains in place, consistent with an existing DPH order, which has not been lifted. In their March 24, 2020 update of FAQs, EOEA stated: "The following are excepted from the general restriction on visitors: (1) health and home care workers (RNs, physical therapists, home care aides, etc.); (2) family members providing necessary medication to residents (e.g., insulin injections); (3) family members or pharmacy employees dropping off medication for LMA/SAMM; (4) United States Postal Service (USPS) employees and other package or parcel service delivery personnel. All those identified in the first two categories should be screened in accordance with established practices. These groups should have access limited to the Resident's unit and only for the time necessary to complete the service."

For the foreseeable future and until such time as EOEA advises otherwise, visitors shall be limited to only those who are essential in providing care to

assisted living residents as outlined above, which excludes hair stylists/barbers. Salons located within assisted living residences are to remain closed until the visitor restriction has been lifted or modified.

### **Cohorting of COVID-19 Positive Residents**

Mass-ALA advocated for residences that choose to cohort COVID-positive residents that they be given the authority to move COVID-positive residents within the residence even if they have not yet received their permission, in order to focus PPE and resident care for COVID-positive residents in designated areas, and emphasized that this should be optional if residences chose to do so.

EOEA gave serious consideration to the request and worked through some logistics and asked follow-up questions. They concluded that they would not seek an order to permit mandatory cohorting of COVID positive residents if ALRs chose to do so. They noted that residents can still voluntarily agree to cohort.

### **Fees and Charges for Resident Services Not Being Provided**

There have been some complaints that residents were still being charged fees for services they were not receiving during the State of Emergency. As a reminder, residents may only be charged for services they receive. CMR 12:8 (1) (t)

Note: This does not apply to fees that are part of an all-inclusive package.

***Please contact us if you have any questions at, [MassALA@mass-ala.org](mailto:MassALA@mass-ala.org)***

*\*The information provided in this COVID 19 update is solely for general informational purposes to assist in understanding the evolving guidance regarding the current COVID 19 public health threat. It is not intended to be a primary public health or medical resource, but is provided as a clearinghouse for or compilation of various guidance issued by official and related sources.*

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