

OVID-19 Outbreak Identification and Reporting Updates

ODP Announcement 23-056

AUDIENCE:

Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with an Intellectual Disability (ICF/ID)
providers

Providers in which individuals receive frequent and active healthcare interventions

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this announcement is to:

1. Draw attention to the updated guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH) describing how to identify and report COVID-19 outbreaks originating within the healthcare facility.
2. Provide updated guidance to providers of the Office of Developmental Programs' (ODP) home and community-based services (HCBS) and Private ICF/IDs regarding **which facilities may appropriately be considered healthcare settings.**

DISCUSSION:

This announcement, and the guidance contained within is intended to supplement—not replace—any federal, state, or local public health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which providers must comply.

This guidance does not change ODP’s instruction for reporting COVID-19 cases among individuals in the Enterprise Incident Management (EIMP system).

On June 6, 2023, the PA DOH distributed Health Alert Network (PAHAN) [2023-701-6-6-ADV-Outbreak Reporting.pdf \(pa.gov\)](#) that updated guidance for healthcare settings on how to identify and report COVID-19 outbreaks originating within the facility. According to the Disease Prevention and Control Law of 1955 (DPCL), unusual clusters of disease are reportable to the PA DOH’s Bureau of Epidemiology or your local health department. This would include outbreaks of COVID-19 in healthcare settings.

The 2023-PAHAN-701-06-06-ADV provides guidance, which is summarized below on identifying healthcare settings, defining an outbreak, and how outbreaks should be reported.

Identification of Healthcare facilities – Long-term care facility (LTCF):

- These include, but are not limited to, skilled nursing facilities (SNF), personal care homes (PCH), assisted living residences (ALRs), Long-Term Structured Residence (LTSR), Residential Treatment Facility for Adults (RTFA), and Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF).
- While most Department of Human Services (DHS) group home settings will typically follow community prevention strategies per CDC guidance, **for settings in which individuals receive frequent and active healthcare interventions, it may be more appropriate to follow guidance for healthcare settings.**

Definition of an COVID-19 outbreak within a LTCF Healthcare Setting

- Greater than or equal to (\geq) 1 facility-acquired probable or confirmed COVID-19 case in a resident.
- Greater than or equal to (\geq) 1 probable or confirmed COVID-19 case in a Healthcare Personnel (HCP) who was working in the facility while infectious.

Outbreak Reporting

- Report COVID-19 outbreaks in healthcare settings by calling the DOH Department's Bureau of Epidemiology or your local health jurisdiction, unless alternative arrangements for reporting have been made.
- Facilities are not required to report every new case of COVID-19 once an outbreak is identified. Only an initial report of a new outbreak, occurring greater than 14 days following the detection of the most recent case, should be made.

QUESTIONS

For additional information regarding this announcement please email RA-PWODPEMRGNCYRSPRQ@pa.gov