**COVID-19 Testing Requirements**

**Staff and Residents**

**March 2022**

CMS published an update to **QS0-20-38-NH**, the Long-Term Care (LTC) **Facility Testing Requirements for Staff and Residents.**

Facilities are required to test residents and staff, including individuals providing services under arrangement and volunteers, for COVID-19 **based on community transmission rates set by federal CDC**.

* CMS replaced the term “vaccinated” with **“up-to-date with all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses”** and
* CMS has **deleted** the term **“unvaccinated”.**
* CMS recommends testing individuals **within 90** days after **recovering from COVID-19.**

Included in this updated guidance was specific guidance routine testing of staff, who are not up to date. By definition, “Up-to-Date” means a person has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including any booster(s) when eligible.

**Routine testing frequency** for those staff members who are **NOT “up-to-date”** should be **based on community transmission or the extent of the virus in the community.**

This metric uses a **two-factor calculation:**

* **Total number** of **new cases** per **100,000 people** within the **last 7 days**; and
* **Percentage of positive** diagnostic and screening nucleic acid amplification tests (NAAT) during the **last 7 days.**

Staff, who are up to date, do not have to be routinely tested.

Facilities should use their **community transmission level** as the trigger for **staff testing frequency**.

Reports of **COVID-19 level of community transmission** are available on the CDC COVID-19 Integrated County View site: <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#countyview>.

COVID-19 Testing section on the CMS COVID-19 Nursing Home Data webpage: <http://data.cms.gov/covid-19/covid-19-nursing-home-data> for information on how to obtain current and historic levels of community transmission on the CDC website.