

novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Information For Home Care Staff

Important Information re: COVID-19

To protect yourself and others from COVID-19, refer to the [Guidelines for Continuous Mask and Eye Protection Use: Home Care & Congregate Living Settings](#) and ensure that you have completed your daily [Fit for Work](#) assessment.

The [return to work guide](#) will help you understand when it is appropriate to return to work after you have experienced symptoms, been tested, or been in close contact with a person with COVID-19.

Client Assessment and Care

When able to call ahead prior to providing care, have the client complete the self-assessment online or ask them the questions over the phone. When you arrive at a client's home or clinic, always do [a point of care risk assessment](#), and ask the self-assessment questions again. All household members must complete the self-assessment prior to care being provided. If any individuals are experiencing symptoms initiate [modified respiratory precautions](#).

Updated testing and self-isolation criteria shall be followed as per CMOH orders and [prevalence testing for congregate settings](#).

Waste Disposal:

- Wrap and double bag any general waste including used PPE. Refer to the [Provincial Guide: Community Based Services Waste Disposal](#) for more information.

***Follow [IPC healthcare attire recommendations](#) for wearing or laundering of uniforms or work attire. If attire is soiled during care, change attire and place soiled items in plastic bag to launder at home.

Backup Plan

Home care may need to adjust services in response to this situation. Your leadership team will advise you of details when this needs to be implemented.

You are encouraged to check-in with your clients by telephone to see how they are managing after adjustments to their services have been made (i.e. monitoring and surveillance). If a client is at risk of hospitalization, talk with them about what informal supports (e.g., informal caregivers or community resources) may be available to assist them in remaining safe and in their home. Adjust services as necessary to avoid any emergency department visits or acute care admissions.

All clients should have a backup plan in place should they decide to cancel home care services or home care can only provide essential services. If a client has cancelled services, ensure you follow up with the client on a regular basis.

A backup plan should consider the following:

- Who can help care for client if they are sick or their home care provider is sick?
- Can they provide care for a period lasting from one week to several months?
- Can care be provided safely in the home?
- Can frequency of care visits be reduced?

Staffing

Staff who are following handwashing guidelines, using appropriate PPE, and applying it correctly while caring for clients with suspected, probable, or confirmed COVID-19, are not considered close contacts and may safely attend to work.

Assign/cohort staff to the greatest extent possible, to either:

- Exclusively provide care/service for clients that are asymptomatic (no illness or symptoms of illness), or
- Exclusively provide care/service for clients who are symptomatic (have suspected or confirmed COVID-19).

When cohorting of staff is not possible:

- Minimize movement of staff between clients who are asymptomatic and those who are symptomatic, and
- Have staff complete work with asymptomatic clients first before moving to those clients who are symptomatic.

Visit <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16947.aspx> for the most up-to-date COVID-19 information.