



Care To Stay Home COVID-19 Policy

POLICY

Care To Stay Home, herein referred to as the "Agency" will have a protocol in place to ensure the safety and well-being of clients and employees during the COVID-19 outbreak. Agency employees will follow outlined guidelines for identifying COVID-19 and protocol for containment.

PURPOSE:

To ensure employee and client safety. To reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

PROCEDURE:

AGENCY:

1. The Agency will monitor the Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and local and county authorities' websites for updates and procedures. The Agency's response and plans may adjust according to the recommendations from these organizations.
2. The Agency will review, update (if needed) and implement their Emergency Management Plan.
 - 2.1. Responsibilities during Plan implementation will be reviewed with all administrative and field staff employees, herein referred to as Home Care Aides or HCA's.
 - 2.2. All steps taken and communication during Plan implementation will be documented by all employees.
3. During a World Health Organization (WHO) declared pandemic "Phase 4" period (sustained human to human transmission), the Agency will assure adequate supplies and equipment are on hand so that cross-contamination is contained. Supplies provided to employees and clients



are intended to be used while at work, and in accordance with operating procedures provided by the Agency.

PERSONNEL:

4. Communication with personnel will be ongoing throughout the declared pandemic and/or Agency emergency management plan implementation. All communication will be documented. Communication from the Agency may come in the form of an email, text message, telephone call, or voicemail.
5. Agency personnel will be instructed on their responsibilities and education will be given to all employees on a continuing basis. All education will be documented.
6. The Agency will determine appropriate steps to follow for appropriate scheduling.
7. Employees should follow the Agency's Standard Precautions, as listed in the [Employee Handbook](#), including:
 - 7.1. Hand hygiene: Wash hands before and after client contact, after contact with any potentially infectious material, and before and after donning protective equipment, including gloves and masks. This applies to clients and all employees.
 - 7.2. Gloves: Wear gloves for any contact with potentially infectious material (e. g., secretions, tissues, dirty linens).
 - 7.3. Gowns: Gowns should be worn with client care activity when contact with body fluids is likely, including respiratory excretions. When a gown is not available, an extra set of clothing or scrubs should be on hand to change into should there be any contact with body fluids.
 - 7.4. Employees should follow Droplet Precautions for clients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 for fourteen (14) days, or longer. Droplet precautions include:
 - 7.4.1. All of the standard precautions, plus
 - 7.4.2. Placing the client in a separate room away from other residents or family members, if possible.
 - 7.4.3. Instruct on using a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to place used tissues immediately in a plastic bag for disposal in the regular trash.
 - 7.4.4. Wear a mask prior to entering the room.



- 7.4.5. Eye protection is recommended to be worn as needed during care activities likely to generate splashes or sprays of blood, body fluids, secretions or excretions, or while working within 6 feet of a client with a persistent cough.
 - 7.4.6. Instruct clients to call ahead prior to visiting a health care facility.
 - 7.4.7. Instruct clients to wear a mask, if possible, when leaving the home for appointments and to limit visitors to home.
 - 7.4.8. Instruct the client on self-quarantine and self-isolation procedures.
8. All Employees should self-check for signs and symptoms of illness prior to reporting to work. Employees with signs and symptoms of respiratory infection should not report to work and MUST contact the Agency immediately. Employees who miss work due to COVID-19 may be eligible for additional sick pay.
- 8.1. Employees will be educated to the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 which may include:
- 8.1.1. Fever
 - 8.1.2. Cough
 - 8.1.3. Difficulty Breathing
 - 8.1.4. Sore Throat
 - 8.1.5. Chills or Chills with Repeated Shaking
 - 8.1.6. Muscle Pain
 - 8.1.7. Headache
 - 8.1.8. Loss of Taste or Smell
9. If any employee develops signs and symptoms of a respiratory infection while on-the-job they should:
- 9.1.1. Immediately stop work, and call Care To Stay Home to inform the Care Manager of your symptoms, put on a facemask, and practice social distancing in the home. Do not leave the clients home without express permission from Care To Stay Home AND the Client or clients representative.
 - 9.1.2. Inform the Agency's Clinical Manager of information on individuals, equipment and locations the employee came in contact with; and
 - 9.1.3. Contact and follow the local health departments recommendations for next steps (e.g., testing, locations for treatment)



GENERAL PROCEDURES:

HCA's should take the following steps to slow the spread of COVID-19:

10. Stay home when you do not feel well or are sick.

- 10.1. If you do not feel well, are sick or have symptoms of COVID-19, remain at home and notify Care To Stay Home immediately. Provide as much advance notice as possible to allow for alternative arrangements to be made for clients and families.
- 10.2. If you have a fever, remain at home until:
 - 10.2.1. the fever has been gone for at least 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines, AND
 - 10.2.2. other symptoms have improved (for example, cough or shortness of breath have improved), AND
 - 10.2.3. at least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.
- 10.3. Confirm with your doctor when you may return to work without the risk of infecting others.
- 10.4. Seek immediate medical care if symptoms become more severe, e.g., high fever or difficulty breathing.
- 10.5. Follow the [Cleaning and Waste Management Considerations for Residences'](#) guidance to help clean your home.
- 10.6. Follow guidance from public health officials, such as staying home if you are over the age of 65 or have underlying health conditions.
- 10.7. Talk to your doctor about obtaining the flu vaccine to reduce other non-COVID-19 illnesses.

11. Wear a Face Mask or Face Covering

- 11.1. ALL Home Care Aides (HCA's) are required to wear a reusable cotton mask or face covering over their nose and mouth, while working with Care To Stay Home Clients in accordance with Local, State and Federal guidelines.
- 11.2. The Agency will provide a limited number of reusable face masks to employees for use while working with Agency Clients. If employees misplace their provided masks,



additional masks may be available for purchase. Please contact the Agency for more information on how to obtain additional masks.

12. Use “respiratory etiquette”.

- 12.1. Cover a cough with a tissue or sleeve. See [CDC’s Cover Your Cough](#) page for multilingual posters and flyers, posted at the bottom of the webpage.
- 12.2. Provide adequate supplies within easy reach, including tissues and no-touch trash cans, if feasible.
- 12.3. Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

13. Wash hands frequently.

- 13.1. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and follow [CDC guidelines for washing hands](#). Employees shall wash their hands at the beginning and end of every shift. They are also responsible to wash their hands on a frequent basis throughout the duration of their shift. This includes, but is not limited to washing before and after touching the client, preparing food, providing any hands on or personal care or other similar duties that require physician contact with the client.
- 13.2. Use alcohol-based (at least 60% alcohol) hand sanitizers to supplement routine handwashing.
- 13.3. Ask each person who enters the client’s home to immediately wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer before they do anything else. Encourage them to wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer frequently during their time in the client’s home

14. Enhance cleaning and disinfection in the home consistent with CDC guidance (see [Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations](#)). Encourage flu vaccine for those who have not had it this season to reduce illnesses.

- 14.1. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces daily, or more often, following the manufacturer’s guidance. Frequently touched surfaces include, but are not limited to, commodes, toilets, faucets, hand and/or bed railings, telephones, door handles and knobs, computer equipment, tv remotes, and kitchen food preparation surfaces. See [CDC’s Cleaning And Disinfecting Your Home](#) Guide.
- 14.2. Clean and disinfect rooms after each use by an HCA and client, if there is a reason to suspect exposure to COVID-19 or other contagious illness.
- 14.3. Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label.



14.4. Management of laundry, kitchen items and utensils, and medical waste should be performed in accordance with routine procedures.

15. Social Distancing in the Home

15.1. Limit physical contact with clients when possible and engage in physical distancing while working in the client's place of residence.

15.2. Limit physical contact with clients to activities necessary to the care and well being of the client.

15.3. Avoid close contact with (maintain physical distancing from) people who are sick.

15.4. Try to always keep a distance of at least six (6) feet between yourself and other people in the client's home and when on errands for clients.

CLIENTS:

16. Management of clients who have symptoms indicating possible COVID-19 infection during a pandemic will be handled by:

16.1. Following any local, state, or federal guidelines during the pandemic .

16.2. Implement source control measures, (i.e., placing a facemask over the client's nose and mouth).

16.3. Inform the Agency's Clinical Manager/designee of the client's condition.

16.4. Separating clients with suspected infection from others in the household.

16.5. Instruct the client and family on hand hygiene (including how to wash hands, use of hand sanitizer, and avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands), proper disposal of tissues, etc.

16.6. Instruct the client and family on cleaning all "high-touch" surfaces every day such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.

When a client has suspected or confirmed COVID-19:

When making a home visit, Home Care Aides (HCA) or Agency employees will identify clients at risk for having COVID-19 infections before or immediately upon arrival to the home. The Agency will determine the appropriate steps to follow for client care.



The HCA should notify the Agency, if applicable, and follow public health guidelines during in-person interactions within the household, including the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and physical distancing. PPE refers to specialized clothing and/or equipment designed to protect the wearer and others against the spread of germs. PPE includes, but is not limited to, gloves, gowns/aprons, goggles or face shields, facemasks, and respirators. PPE does not refer to face coverings or cloth face masks.

State public health guidance recommends the use of PPE only for care of people with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 illness. The ill person should wear a face mask, if possible. The use of PPE is needed if physical distancing cannot be accomplished and the HCA has or will have contact with a person who has suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection, while caring for the person.

In addition, HCAs should wear a disposable facemask and gloves whenever touching or having contact with the client's blood, stool, or body fluids, such as saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, vomit, or urine. After any contact with a client who has suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection, the HCA should always follow the other precautionary measures mentioned, including handwashing guidelines as described above.

Note: PPE does not guarantee total protection and must be used in combination with the precautionary measures described above, to be most effective. California is currently experiencing severe shortages of PPE. We all need to do our part to use PPE appropriately. If additional supplies of PPE are needed for recommended uses, please contact the Agency.

When a client's household member (not client) has suspected or confirmed COVID-19:

The HCA should notify the Agency, if applicable, and follow public health guidelines during in-person interactions within the household including physical distancing from household members and the ill person. HCAs should always follow the other precautionary measures mentioned above, including handwashing and physical distancing guidelines as described above.

Resources

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html> /



CMS: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-18-hha.pdf>