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PIN 20-42-ASC

TO: ALL ADULT AND SENIOR CARE LICENSEES

FROM: *Original signed by Pamela Dickfoss*
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SUBJECT: **CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) INFECTION CONTROL
GUIDANCE FOR CELEBRATIONS AND OUTINGS**

Provider Information Notice (PIN) Summary

PIN 20-42-ASC provides guidance on COVID-19 infection control recommendations for celebrations and outings for licensees and staff, residents, friends, and families. This PIN includes guidance for private gatherings, resident cohorting after returning to the facility, and group activities in facilities.

Background

Residents have the right to visit with friends and families and the holiday season increases the desires for outings and gatherings. During this time in the COVID-19 pandemic with a surge in positive cases throughout the state, residents may leave their facilities to celebrate with their families and friends, but should be reminded to do so in accordance with California Department of Public Health (CDPH) [Guidance for private gatherings](#).

People at higher risk of severe illness or death from COVID-19, (such as older adults and people with chronic medical conditions), are strongly urged not to attend any gatherings. However, if higher-risk individuals do attend gatherings, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), in partnership with the CDPH, is providing

infection control recommendations for licensees and staff, residents, friends, and families to safely celebrate.

Important Considerations for Facility Staff

Facility staff are strongly urged to avoid gatherings outside of their immediate household since many staff care for those at higher risk of severe illness or death from COVID-19. Since COVID-19 may be transmitted in Adult and Senior Care (ASC) facilities through facility staff, if facility staff do attend a gathering outside their immediate household, they should take the safety measures mentioned in this PIN. In addition, facility staff who have COVID-19 symptoms must isolate at home and follow the guidance in [PIN 20-38-ASC](#) regarding when to return to work. Facility staff, who are essential to the facility operation and [critical infrastructure workers](#), who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and are asymptomatic may be permitted to continue work with residents diagnosed with COVID-19 provided they:

- remain asymptomatic;
- wear an N95 respirator without a valve or surgical mask;
- wear gloves;
- practice consistent hand hygiene; and
- are screened for symptoms daily.

See prior guidance including [PIN 20-23-ASC](#) and [PIN 20-38-ASC](#) for additional information.

Recommendations for Residents and Families

If a resident is considering leaving the facility and attending an in-person gathering, residents, friends, and families should review the following resources:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Holiday Celebrations](#)
- [CDC Considerations for Events and Gatherings](#)
- [CDPH Guidance for Private Gatherings](#)
- [CDPH Travel Advisory](#)

These resources provide considerations to help protect residents and their families, friends, and communities from COVID-19. Factors to consider include the following:

1. **Community levels of COVID-19** – Consider the number and rate of COVID-19 cases in your community and in the community where you plan to celebrate. County COVID-19 tier information is available on the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#) website.
2. **Location: Gatherings must be outdoors for counties in the Purple Tier** – Gatherings that occur outdoors are significantly safer than indoor gatherings. All gatherings must be held outside in the Purple Tier, and indoor gatherings are strongly discouraged in Red, Orange and Yellow Tiers. If gathering indoors, increase fresh air circulation by opening windows or doors, as much

as possible, especially in the rooms where people are gathering. A gathering of no more than three households is permitted in a public park or other outdoor space, even if unrelated gatherings of other groups up to three households are also occurring in the same park or other outdoor space. If multiple such gatherings are occurring, mixing between group gatherings is not allowed. Additionally, multiple gatherings of three households cannot be jointly organized or coordinated to occur in the same public park or other outdoor space at the same time. This would constitute a gathering exceeding the permitted household limits.

NOTE: [CDPH Guidance for Private Gatherings](#), November 2020 defines gatherings as “social situations that bring together people from different households at the same time in a single space or place.”

3. **Duration of the gathering** – Gatherings that last longer pose more risk than shorter gatherings. Gatherings should be two hours or less.
4. **Number of people at the gathering** – Gatherings with more people pose more risk than gatherings with fewer people. Gatherings cannot include more than three households. This includes everyone present, including hosts and guests.
5. **Singing, Chanting, Shouting, Cheering and Similar Activities** – Singing, chanting, shouting, cheering, physical exertion, and similar activities significantly increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission because these activities increase the release of respiratory droplets and fine aerosols into the air. Because of this, singing, chanting, shouting, cheering, and similar activities are strongly discouraged in outdoor settings and prohibited at indoor gatherings. Please review [CDPH Guidance for Private Gatherings](#) for rules and recommendations.
6. **Locations attendees are traveling from** – Gatherings with attendees who are traveling from different places pose a higher risk than gatherings with attendees who live in the same area. Higher levels of COVID-19 cases and community spread in the gathering location, or where attendees are coming from, increase the risk of infection and spread among attendees.
7. **Practices of attendees prior to the gathering** – Gatherings with attendees who are not adhering to physical distancing (staying at least 6 feet apart), wearing a face covering, hand washing, and other prevention behaviors pose more risk than gatherings with attendees who are engaging in these preventative measures.
8. **Practices of attendees during the gathering** – Gatherings with more preventive measures in place, such as wearing face coverings, physical

distancing, and hand washing, pose less risk than gatherings where fewer or no preventive measures are being implemented.

Licensees are encouraged to distribute the [COVID-19 Safety Tips for Gatherings flier](#), available on the [Community Care Licensing Division \(CCLD\) website](#), to residents, facility staff, families, and friends and post it in a public area near the facility entrance. This flier serves as a resource about how to enjoy celebrations and take steps to help protect from getting or spreading COVID-19.

During gatherings away from the facility, licensees, facility staff, and residents should:

- Stay at home if you are sick
- Maintain physical distance of at least six feet
- Wear face coverings
- Wash hands often
- Limit the number of people handling or serving food
- Limit contact with and disinfect commonly touched surfaces or shared items
- Limit mixing between different households. Currently, [gatherings](#) of more than three households are prohibited in California

Individuals (including residents) should not attend in-person celebrations if they:

- Have been diagnosed with COVID-19
- Have [symptoms of COVID-19](#)
- May have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days and are waiting for COVID-19 test results
- Are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19

Guidance for Facilities

Facilities may hold communal activities and dining while adhering to COVID-19 infection prevention practices:

- Residents may eat in the same room with physical distancing (e.g., a limited number of people at each table and with at least six feet between each person). Facilities should consider additional limitations based on status of COVID-19 infections in the facility. Facilities should consider cohorting residents that consistently participate in communal dining together to minimize the number of people exposed if one or more of the residents is later identified as positive. Face coverings should be worn by residents going to and from the dining area and whenever not eating or drinking. Residents on isolation precautions or quarantine must not participate in communal dining or activities.
- Group activities may also be facilitated (for residents who have fully recovered from COVID-19, and for those not in isolation or quarantine) with physical distancing among residents, appropriate hand hygiene, and use of face coverings.

- Encourage as many of these activities to occur outdoors when feasible, especially when eating or drinking and face coverings will not be worn.

Important! Facility communal holiday activities and dining may not include visitors.

Reminder Regarding Residents Returning from Outings

The following supersedes guidance issued in [PIN 20-38-ASC](#) regarding residents returning from outings.

For residents returning to facilities from outings such as holiday celebrations, facilities must screen returning residents for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and immediately test and isolate symptomatic residents in a single room pending results. The screening should also include asking residents if they:

- have been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19,
- did not take precautionary measures such as physical distancing and wearing a face covering, and
- engaged in activities not recommended in this guidance (e.g. gathering indoors in a community with widespread transmission, gathering with more than three households, etc.).

In such instances CDSS strongly advises licensees to follow the quarantine/testing guidance below.

Licensees should quarantine residents returning to the facility from outings to settings in communities with substantial or widespread transmission based on the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#) website (or gatherings with participants coming from communities with substantial or widespread transmission) in an observation area (in a single room, if available) for 14 days.

Test at the end of the 14-day period before, or sooner *if the resident begins showing symptoms of COVID--19* before commingling with others in the facility.

Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) Residents

For the purposes of this PIN, an independent CCRC resident means a CCRC resident who lives in a residential living unit and is not receiving assisted living services as defined in [Health and Safety Code \(HSC\) section 1771\(a\)\(5\)](#).

Independent CCRC residents are generally exempt from testing, quarantine, and isolation guidelines listed above, except when the independent CCRC resident is:

- living with a resident who is receiving assisted living services;

- commingling with residents who receive assisted living services or live in assisted living units by, for example, participating in communal dining or activities or using common facility amenities;
- presenting symptoms for COVID-19; or
- exposed to a person who tested positive for COVID-19.

An independent CCRC resident who is not exempt as listed above, may be subject to the testing, quarantine, and isolation guidelines applied to RCFE residents as outlined in this PIN.

Additional Resources

The following are resources related to gatherings during COVID-19:

- [COVID19.CA.GOV](https://www.california.gov/COVID19)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19/)
 - [Print Resources](#)

If you have questions regarding this PIN, please contact your local [Adult and Senior Care Regional Office](#).

Resident Fact Sheet

A Companion Guide for Provider Information Notice (PIN) 20-42-ASC Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Infection Control Recommendations During Celebrations

We have prepared this Fact Sheet as a companion to **PIN 20-42-ASC** to inform you of guidance we have provided to your care providers around how to enjoy celebrations safely this year considering the COVID-19 pandemic.

You have the right to visit your friends and family and we understand the holiday season presents and increased desire for outings and gatherings. However, during this time in the COVID-19 pandemic with a surge in positive cases throughout the state, if you leave your facility to celebrate with friends or family, you must celebrate in accordance with California Department of Public Health (CDPH) [Guidance for private gatherings](#).

Celebrations typically include large gatherings of people and travel that may put people at increased risk for COVID-19 infection. Due to the higher risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 among elderly persons and those with chronic medical conditions, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is providing recommendations to you, your care providers, friends, and family.

Important Considerations for Your Care Providers

We have strongly urged your care providers to avoid gatherings outside of their immediate household since they care for those at higher risk of severe illness or death from COVID-19. We have recommended that if your care providers do attend a gathering outside their immediate household, they should take the safety measures mentioned above. In addition, care providers should not return to work if they are feeling sick, have been in contact with someone who was diagnosed with COVID-19, or have symptoms of COVID-19.

Recommendations for Residents, Families, and Friends

PIN 20-42-ASC recommends that you consider the following factors to help protect you, your family, friends, and communities from COVID-19 if you are considering leaving the facility and attending an in-person gathering:

- 1. Community levels of COVID-19** – Consider the number and rate of COVID-19 cases in your community and in the community where you plan to celebrate. County COVID-19 tier information is available on the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#) website.
- 2. Location: Gatherings must be outdoors for counties in the Purple Tier**– Gatherings that occur outdoors are significantly safer than indoor gatherings. All gatherings must be held outside in the Purple Tier, and indoor gatherings are strongly discouraged in Red, Orange and Yellow Tiers. If gathering

indoors, increase fresh air circulation by opening windows or doors, as much as possible, especially in the rooms where people are gathering. A gathering of no more than three households is permitted in a public park or other outdoor space, even if unrelated gatherings of other groups up to three households are also occurring in the same park or other outdoor space. If multiple such gatherings are occurring, mixing between group gatherings is not allowed. Additionally, multiple gatherings of three households cannot be jointly organized or coordinated to occur in the same public park or other outdoor space at the same time. This would constitute a gathering exceeding the permitted household limits. [CDPH Guidance for Private Gatherings](#), November 2020 defines gatherings as “social situations that bring together people from different households at the same time in a single space or place.”

3. **Duration of the gathering** – Gatherings that last longer pose more risk than shorter gatherings. Gatherings should be two hours or less.
 4. **Number of people at the gathering** – Gatherings with more people pose more risk than gatherings with fewer people. Gatherings must not include more than three households. This includes everyone present, including hosts and guests.
 5. **Singing, Chanting, Shouting, Cheering and Similar Activities** – Singing, chanting, shouting, cheering, physical exertion, and similar activities significantly increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission because these activities increase the release of respiratory droplets and fine aerosols into the air. Because of this, singing, chanting, shouting, cheering, and similar activities are strongly discouraged in outdoor settings and prohibited in indoor settings. Please review [CDPH Guidance for Private Gatherings](#) for rules and recommendations.
 6. **Locations people are traveling from** – Gatherings with people who are traveling from different places pose a higher risk of spreading COVID-19 than gatherings with people who live in the same area.
 7. **Practices of people prior to the gathering** – Gatherings with people who have not observed preventive measures such as physical distancing (staying at least 6 feet apart), wearing face coverings, and hand washing pose more risk of spreading COVID-19.
 8. **Practices of people during the gathering** – Gatherings with preventive measures in place, such as wearing face coverings, physical distancing, and hand washing, pose less risk than gatherings where fewer preventive measures are being followed.
- We have encouraged your care providers to distribute a flier, COVID-19 Safety Tips [for Gatherings](#), available on the [Community Care Licensing Division \(CCLD\)](#)

[website](#) to you, and your family, and friends. We have also asked them to post it in a public area near the facility entrance.

PIN 20-42-ASC indicates that during gatherings you and your care providers should:

- Stay at home if you are sick
- Physical distance of at least six feet
- Wear face coverings
- Wash hands often
- Limit the number of people handling or serving food
- Limit contact with and disinfect commonly touched surfaces or shared items
- Limit mixing between different households. Currently, [gatherings](#) of more than three households are prohibited in California.

Individuals, including you, should not attend in-person celebrations if:

- Have been diagnosed with COVID-19
- Have [symptoms of COVID-19](#)
- May have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days and are waiting for COVID-19 test results
- Are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19

Guidance to Your Facility

PIN 20-42-ASC advises your care providers that communal activities and dining may proceed while adhering to COVID-19 infection prevention practices:

- Residents may eat in the same room with physical distancing (e.g., limited number of people at each table and with at least six feet between each person).
- Limit groups of residents or “cohorts,” residents that consistently participate in communal dining together to minimize the number of people exposed if one or more of the residents is later identified as positive.
- Wear face coverings to and from the dining area and whenever not eating or drinking.
- Residents on isolation precautions or quarantine must not participate in communal dining or activities.
- Group activities may also proceed with physical distancing among residents, appropriate hand hygiene, and use of face coverings.
- Activities should take place outdoors when feasible, especially when eating or drinking and face coverings will not be worn.

Important! Facility holiday activities and dining may not include visitors.

PIN 20-42-ASC tells your care providers to take the following precautions for those residents returning to facilities from in-person celebrations:

- Screen returning residents for signs and symptoms of COVID-19; and immediately test and isolate symptomatic residents pending results.
- Follow the quarantine and testing guidance provided if, during additional screenings, they learn that you:
 - have been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19;
 - did not take steps to take precautions during an outing, such as physical distancing and wearing face coverings; and
 - took part in activities not recommended in this guidance.
- Quarantine residents returning to the facility from visits to settings in communities with substantial or widespread transmission based on the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#) website (or gatherings with participants coming from communities with substantial or widespread transmission) for 14 days, and test at the end of the 14 day period before commingling with others in the facility.

Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) Residents

If you are an independent CCRC resident, you are generally exempt from testing, quarantine, and isolation guidelines listed above except when you do the following:

- live with a resident who is receiving assisted living services
- commingle with residents who receive assisted living services or live in assisted living units by, for example, participating in communal dining or activities or using common facility amenities
- present symptoms for COVID-19
- have been exposed to a person who tested positive for COVID-19

CCLD appreciates your understanding. Your care providers, the licensee of your facility, and [the Ombudsman](#) are available to answer your questions.