Ohio | Department of Health

Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt.Governor

Lance D. Himes, Interim Director

Director's Order

RE: Director's Order for the Testing of the Residents and Staff of all Residential Care Facilities

I, Lance D. Himes, Interim Director of the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), pursuant to the authority granted to me in R.C. 3701.13 to "make special orders…for preventing the spread of contagious or infectious diseases" and because the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that due to the congregate nature and population served, residential care facilities are at high risk for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, spreading among their residents, and the presence of COVID-19 must be identified so that it can be addressed, **ORDER** the following:

1. Effective 12:01 a.m. August 24, 2020, each residential care facility licensed by ODH shall cooperate with COVID-19 testing for residents and staff as required by the State. In order to protect the health and safety of residents and staff, the State has determined this testing shall include, but is not limited to, staff testing and strategic testing of residents in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within a facility and a community.

2. Each residential care facility shall require its staff to be tested in accordance with state issued guidelines.

3. Testing shall be conducted in accordance with State issued guidelines. Such guidelines will consider the individual circumstances of residents. The residential care facility shall assist in creating a testing plan for residents and staff.

4. Residential care facilities may be required to provide additional information as necessary to address the health of its residents and staff related to COVID-19.

5. The State will provide guidance to mitigate facility staffing shortages in the event staff test positive for COVID-19 and are unable to work, consistent with CDC guidance.

6. Test results shall be reported in accordance with the Journal Entry of March 14, 2020, "Amended Reporting Requirements for 2019 - Novel Coronavirus Under Ohio Revised Code 3701.14 and 3701.23."

7. This Order takes into consideration and is intended to be consistent with resident rights in R.C. 3721.13.

8. To the extent possible, residential care facilities are encouraged to use the Ohio Department of Aging's comprehensive testing program that supports COVID-19 testing in residential care facilities.

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The State of Ohio is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider of ADA Services.

9. This action is taken to protect residential care facility residents and staff during this unprecedented pandemic. This Order shall be effective at 12:01 a.m. August 24, 2020 and shall remain in full force and effect until the State of Emergency declared by the Governor no longer exists, or the Director of the Ohio Department of Health rescinds or modifies this Order at a sooner time and date.

Accordingly, I hereby **ORDER** that residential care facilities implement this Order to protect residential care facility residents and staff during this unprecedented pandemic. This Order shall be effective 12:01 a.m. August 24, 2020, and shall remain in full force and effect until the State of Emergency declared by the Governor no longer exists, or the Director of the Ohio Department of Health rescinds or modifies this Order at a sooner time and date. Nothing in this Order shall replace or modify any other Order regarding residential care facilities.

Lance D. Himes
Interim Director of Health

8/20/2020
Date