

COVID-19 Q&A Hour for Long Term Care



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAI) Program

Shoreline, WA

Housekeeping



Attendees will be in listen only mode



Self-mute your lines when not speaking



Type questions into the question window. Please include the type of facility you are from in your question (e.g., NH) and indicate your county.



Nursing Home

Participants from long-term care, regulatory, public health



No confidential information presented or discussed. This is an educational webinar and does not constitute legal advice.



Local guidance may differ, please consult with your Local Health Jurisdiction (LHJ):

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/AboutUs/PublicHealthSystem/LocalHealthJurisdictions>

This is the LTC COVID-19 Q&A Hour!

A chance to connect, ask questions, and learn about the COVID-19 response and infection prevention guidance



Where Can I Find the Q & A Document?

Posted Wednesday

- Washington Health Care Association:

<https://www.whca.org/washington-department-of-health-covid-19-qa-session/>

- LeadingAge Washington:

FAQ emailed to members – Administrators, Directors of Nursing and Staff Development Coordinators

- Adult Family Home Council:

<https://adultfamilyhomecouncil.org/covid-19/>

Panelists





WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

ICAR PROGRAM DETAILS

Our free, non-regulatory ICARs provide facilities with infection prevention recommendations and resources on how to keep residents and staff safe.

What We Do

- Provide support with an infection prevention expert
- Assist with addressing gaps in your current infection control protocols for COVID-19 or other infections
- Offer up-to-date guidance and resources

Who We Serve

- Long Term Care Facilities (Assisted, Skilled, Behavioral Health, Nursing facilities, and Adult Family Homes)
- Outpatient Settings
- Acute and Critical Access Hospitals

To Learn More or Schedule an In-Person or Virtual Visit:

<http://doh.wa.gov/ICAR>

Contact Us:

HAI-FieldTeam@doh.wa.gov (General)



In Partnership With

- Local Health Jurisdictions
- LeadingAge Washington
- Washington Health Care Association
- Adult Family Home Council of WA State
- Washington State Hospital Association



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

HAI-AR SECTION EMAIL ADDRESSES

Please refer to the table below to find the email most appropriate for your needs

Email Path	Description
HAI@doh.wa.gov	General healthcare associated infection questions
HAI-Covid@doh.wa.gov	COVID19-specific healthcare associated infection questions
HAIepiOutbreakTeam@doh.wa.gov	Epidemiological outbreak assistance and healthcare associated infection questions
HAI-FieldTeam@doh.wa.gov	Schedule an ICAR for your facility
HAI-FITTesting@doh.wa.gov	Respiratory Protection related questions www.doh.wa.gov/ltrcpp

Long-Term
Care COVID-19
Immunization
Champion
Award



Long Term Care Facility Booster

- There is support for onsite vaccinations for residents and staff
 - Long Term Care Pharmacy
 - Local Health Jurisdiction
 - Department of Health survey to request help:
 - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DQ5K9WV>
 - Contact COVID.Vaccine@doh.wa.gov
- Onsite support may encourage staff to get vaccinated because of the ease of access

NHSN Announcement for SNFs

The NHSN Vaccination Team is providing two webinars on **Tuesday, March 29th** and **Thursday, March 31st at 2:00 PM Eastern Time** to review the new Event-Level COVID-19 Vaccination Forms. These are currently called the Data Tracking Worksheets that are available to facilities in an Excel spreadsheet format. This worksheet has now been built into the NHSN application for long-term care facilities (other modules coming soon!) to manage person-level vaccination data.

During the webinars, long-term care facilities will learn how to use this feature, which will allow them to manage person-level vaccination data directly in the application for the COVID-19 Vaccination Modules. Based on the person-level data, the application will calculate the cumulative totals for the weekly vaccination forms, and users will review the totals and submit.

Title: **Event-Level COVID-19 Vaccination Form Webinar Training**

Option 1: **March 29**, 11:00am PT, Registration link:

https://cdc.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_qyiJC0F4RTOOrEildHiU_A

Option 2: **March 31**, 11:00am PT, Registration link:

https://cdc.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_5tLABTIDRN-9zDaIA0z49w

Upcoming LTC Q&A Schedule

Please plan to attend these upcoming micro learning sessions!

Today's discussion:

- Respiratory Protection Program – Written Program

Upcoming micro learning topics -

- Mar 31 – LTCF Success Stories



RESPIRATORY PROTECTION –GENERAL



Overview and Written Program

Respiratory Protection Program

- Respiratory Protection is regulated by Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (L&I)
 - Focus is on providing a safe work environment for staff
 - Slightly different from Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- DOH HAIAR is providing resources and support to Long Term Care (LTC) Facilities for respiratory protection
 - This presentation is focused on biologic hazards in clinical care areas (e.g., viruses such as those causing COVID-19)
 - Hazards for maintenance staff may be different (example: Asbestos)
 - Contact the L&I Consultation Team for support

State Regulatory Requirement

- [WAC 296-842 Respirator Rule](#) and [WAC 296-841 Airborne Contaminants Rule](#) require employers to:
 - Provide respiratory protection for employees who are at risk of exposure to respiratory hazards, such as viruses like SARS-Cov-2
 - Identify the Respirator Program Administrator (RPA) to develop, implement, and maintain the facility's program
 - Pay staff for the time they spend on training, medical evaluation and respirator fit testing
 - Monitor employee compliance requirements for the RPP
 - Keep records of training, medical clearance, and fit testing

The Five Steps of the Respiratory Protection Program (RPP)



- ① **Written Program**
 - Program administrator (RPA)
 - Hazard(s)
 - Respirator selection
 - Accommodation
 - Program evaluation
- ② **Respirator Medical Evaluation**
 - Questionnaire
 - Clearance/Certification
 - Frequency
- ③ **Training**
 - Storage
 - Use
 - Disposal
 - Emergency
 - Limitations
 - Frequency
- ④ **Fit Testing**
 - Initial
 - Annual
 - After any physical change
- ⑤ **Recordkeeping**
 - Medical clearance
 - Training records
 - Fit testing result

Step 1.



WRITTEN PROGRAM

Written Program

- **Foundation of the Respiratory Protection Program**
 - Respiratory Protection Administrator (RPA)
 - License Health Care Provider: Medical evaluation
 - Training Provider: Respirators: Don & Doff, User seal check
 - Fit Test Conductor
- Written program outlines:
 - Type of respirators (Face Filtering Piece, Elastomeric), weight, etc.
 - Hazards (Biologic, chemical, etc.)
 - Job tasks requiring respirator use (e.g., Aerosol Generated Procedures, care provided, etc.)
 - Work effort/work environment (type of PPE, temperature, humidity, length of usage, etc.)
 - [Accommodation]
- Template from L&I: [A Respiratory Protection Program template for COVID-19 in Long-Term Care Facilities](#)

Written Program

Assign a Respiratory Program Administrator (RPA)

- [RPA Check list](#), Detailed information
- Color coded Written Template (from DOH)

Highlighted Template

Evaluation at www.respexam.com. THE COST OF THIS SERVICE WILL BE COVERED BY DOH UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR.

Step 3: If the licensed health care professional determines that a medical exam is also necessary, this will be provided at no cost to the employee, during paid work time, by *(add the name of the licensed health care professional)*. YOU WILL NEED TO FIND A LOCAL OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH CLINIC YOU CAN SEND YOUR EMPLOYEES TO IF THEY NEED TO BE EXAMINED TO USE A RESPIRATOR. IF YOU NEED HELP FINDING ONE PLEASE LET ME KNOW.

If no medical exam is indicated, the licensed health care professional will simply notify the employee and the company (at the same time) of their written recommendation as to whether or not the employee is medically able to wear a respirator with or without limitations. **No details about the employee's medical status will be revealed in the written recommendation due to confidentiality laws.**

Copies of written recommendations (but not completed questionnaires) will be kept at the following location for recordkeeping and access purposes:

- *(describe the location)*

- The yellow highlight is where your information needs to be added. Delete the text and add your information if it has not been entered for you.
- The blue highlight is information I entered in for you.
- The green highlight is my notes to you, to be deleted after you read it.
- The purple/pink highlight is information that is new with the changes from CDC.
- When you are done with the document, unhighlight everything and save it.
- Print it out and keep it in a folder or binder along with the employee's medical evaluation letter of recommendation, training record, and fit test results.

Instructions from e-mail (Partial)

Remember

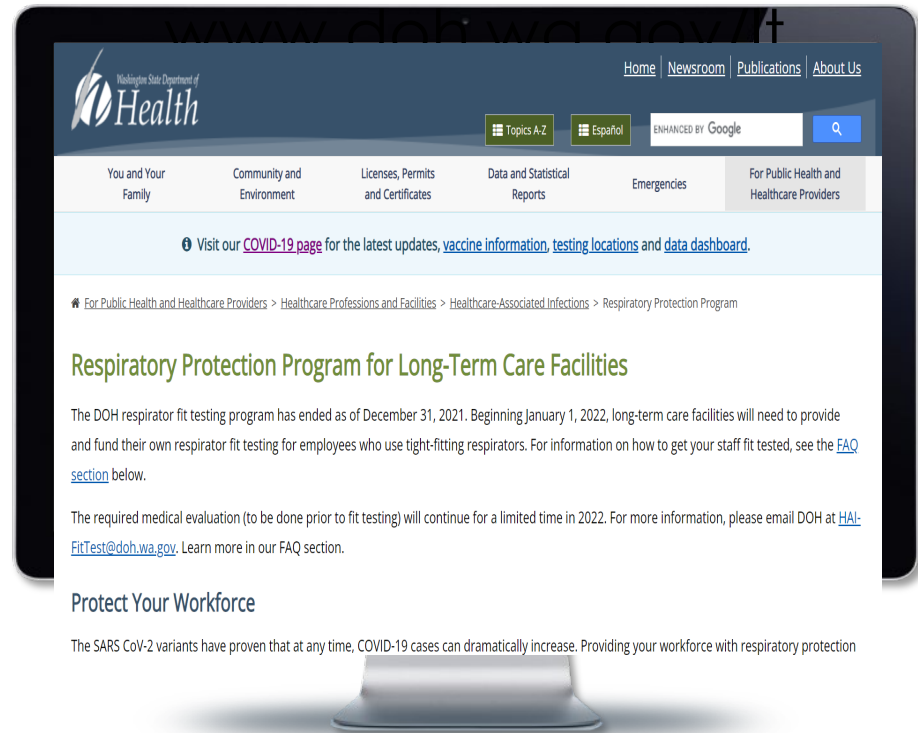
- Original template was created by L&I in Spring 2020
- Read it carefully!
 - Federal and State recommendations and guidance changed multiple times
 - For example: Reuse section
 - Tasks with risk of transmission
 - L&I requires your written plan be reviewed and updated periodically

The Five Steps of the Respiratory Protection Program (RPP)



- 1 Written Program**
 - Program administrator (RPA)
 - Hazard(s)
 - Respirator selection
 - Accommodation
 - Program evaluation
- 2 Respirator Medical Evaluation**
 - Questionnaire
 - Clearance/Certification
 - Frequency
- 3 Training**
 - Storage
 - Use
 - Disposal
 - Emergency
 - Limitations
 - Frequency
- 4 Fit Testing**
 - Initial
 - Annual
 - After any physical change
- 5 Recordkeeping**
 - Medical clearance
 - Training records
 - Fit testing result

For general or outbreak requests,
email: HAI-FitTest@doh.wa.gov



www.doh.wa.gov/lcrpp

FAQs - Respiratory Protection Program

Why do I need a written respiratory protection program?

What are facilities/agencies required to do before fit testing?

Which facilities/agencies are eligible for free online medical evaluations?

What is a respirator medical evaluation?

In what languages is the medical questionnaire available?

Who can perform respirator medical evaluations?

My employee received a "Referred" status from the online Medical Evaluation. What should I do?

What respirator user training is required?

What is respirator fit testing?

Questions?

A Modified Approach to the Q&A Call

Benefits to you:

- Ensure reliable answers to questions **prepared ahead of time** and presented on the slides during the call, including guidance source
- Reduce inconsistencies in responses
- Receive a copy of the slides with the questions and answers soon after the call instead of an FAQ posted the following week

Revised Call Structure

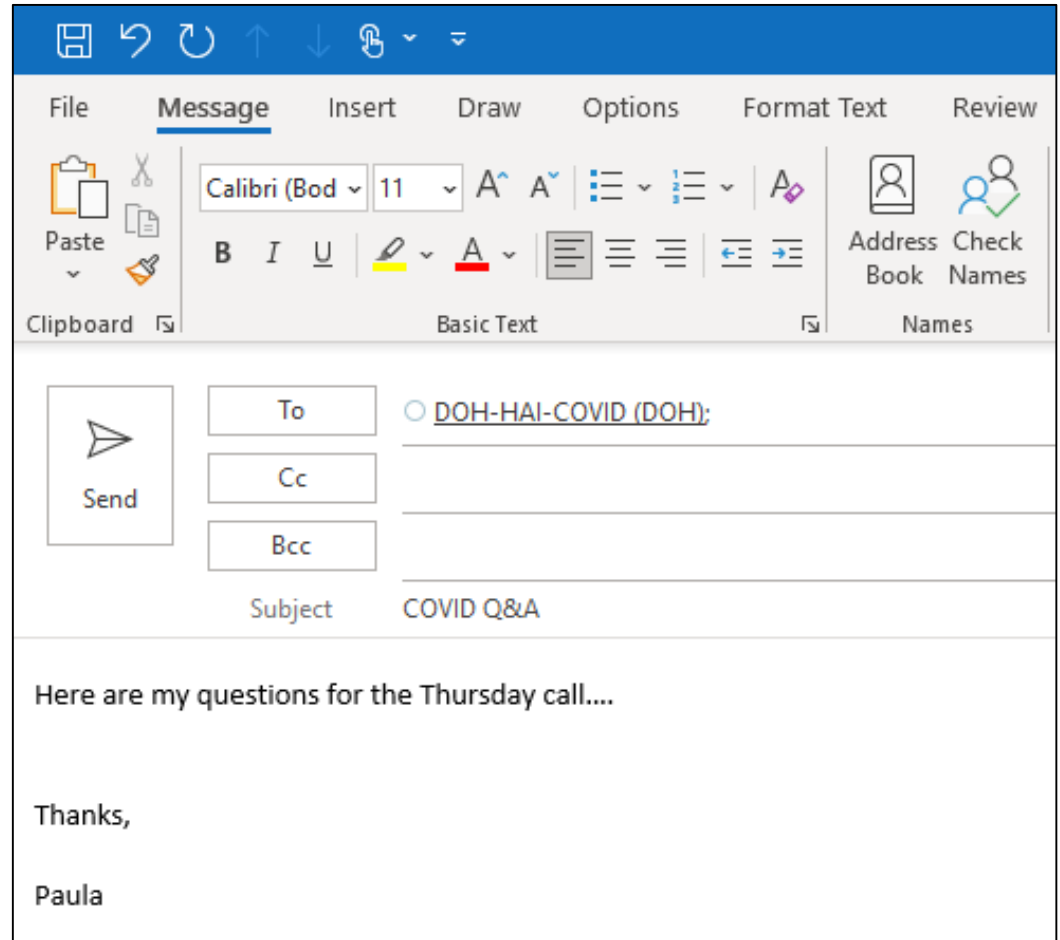
- **Start date: April 7** (email questions by 5pm Monday April 4)
- **Submit questions by 5pm on Monday each week before the Thursday call**
- Questions and answers will be presented during the call and sent to you afterwards
- Questions related to the slides will be addressed live
- Additional topics will be answered as time allows
- Any unanswered questions will roll over to the following week's slides along with any new mailbox questions

How to Submit Your Questions

Subject Line:
COVID Q&A

Email:
HAI-COVID@doh.wa.gov

Due by: COB Monday



CDC, DOH, LHJ, oh my!

CDC:

- Deliberately vague
- Help state, local, LHJs create more specific guidance

State:

- Provides greater context and implementation recommendation
- Considers state level information

LHJ:

- Facility level guidance
- Based on local facility level information

****These may be required by regulatory agencies****

MAILBOX QUESTION AND ANSWER

Question

Is eye protection still
required in all
healthcare settings?

Answer

- Yes, eye protection is still required for all resident **encounters** with no consideration of transmission rates at this time.
- **Encounter**: Encounters are in-person, interactions between staff and residents and there is less than 6 feet between the staff and resident for any period of time. These may involve medical procedures, caregiving activities/activities of daily living, medication administration, transportation, etc. Passing by a resident in a common area would not be considered a resident encounter.
- <https://doh.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-02/204-304-PPEContingencyStrategiesChart.pdf>

Question

What is adequate eye protection, and what does it do?

Answer

- Eye protection is intended to protect against splash and spray. Personal eyeglasses are not eye protection devices.
- When evaluating if a device is adequate eye protection, one should ask if it will protect the eyes from splash and spray, like being sprayed with a water bottle, from front, below, above, and the sides.

Question

Can I use “wings” as eye protection?

Answer

- The clip on “wings” do not provide protection from front, above or below, and, depending on the fit of the glasses, may not protect well from the sides either. These would not likely to be effective eye protection against splash and spray.

Question

Are we able to remove the face shields and eye protection once we are in the green status under 5% for community transmission rates?

Answer

- No, eye protection is still required with no consideration of transmission rates at this time

Question

Should kitchen employees be wearing eye protection when in the kitchen and not in resident care areas making deliveries?

Answer

- Kitchen employees do not have to wear eye protection as long as they are not having resident encounters

Question

What are DOH testing recommendations, and have they changed with the recent guidance?

Answer

- DOH testing recommendations have NOT changed
- The CMS testing requirements for testing reflect the CDC changes of 2/2/2022 & 3/10/2022. DOH has already updated the DOH testing guidance to reflect CDC guidance and DOH recommendations for testing continue to remain broader than CMS and include recommendations for testing those who are up to date, if testing resources allow.
- DOH is still recommending testing regardless of vaccination status

Question

What is the correct link to the CDC's community transmission rates?

Answer

● Correct link:

https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list_select_state=Washington&data-type=Risk&list_select_county=53061&null=Risk

we are aware of the incorrect link on the DOH testing document and are working to resolve the issue



Washington State Department of Health is committed to providing customers with forms and publications in appropriate alternate formats. Requests can be made by calling 800-525-0127 or by email at civil.rights@doh.wa.gov. TTY users dial 711.

Q & A Section

Please type your questions into the question window and tell us what type of facility you are from (e.g., ALF, SNF, AFH) and what county you are in