



4/30/2021

Subject: Nursing homes (216-RICR-40-10-1) as amended April 29, 2021. **New Personnel Surveillance Testing Requirements:**¹

- Routine testing of personnel is based on the extent of the virus in the community *and the vaccination status of personnel.*
- Currently the positivity rate is below five percent (5%) in all Rhode Island counties. When the county positivity rate is below five percent (5%): personnel who are not vaccinated must be tested at least once every fourteen (14) days. Personnel who are vaccinated must be tested at least once every month.
- The table below is adapted from CMS Table #2 (referenced below):

Routine Surveillance Testing of Personnel in Assisted Living Residences*			
Personnel Vaccination Status	County Positivity Rate		
	Positivity <5%	Positivity 5% -10%	Positivity >10%
Fully Vaccinated	Once a month	Once a week	Twice a week
Unvaccinated	At least once every 14 days	Once a week	Twice a week

*Based on requirements set forth in 216-RICR-40-10-2. This frequency presumes availability of Point-of-Care testing on-site or where off-site testing turnaround time is less than 48 hours.

- COVID-19 county positivity rates are available on the following website: <https://data.cms.gov/stories/s/COVID-19-Nursing-Home-Data/bkwz-xpvg> (See: Supporting COVID-19 testing). RIDOH will not be providing county positivity rates; facilities are responsible to access these rates and adjust their testing accordingly.
- In accordance with QSO-20-38-NH, facilities should monitor their county positivity rate every other week (e.g., first and third Monday of every month) and adjust the frequency of personnel testing accordingly.
 - If the county positivity rate increases to a higher level, the facility should begin testing personnel as soon as the criteria for the higher level are met.
 - If the county positivity rate decreases to a lower level, the facility should continue testing personnel at the higher frequency level until the county positivity rate has remained at the lower level for at least two (2) weeks before reducing testing frequency.
- Facilities with identified/suspected COVID-19 cases must conduct additional testing in accordance with RIDOH guidance.

For questions, please contact: DOH.OFR@health.ri.gov. Please include “COVID-19 Testing” in the subject line.

Reference: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services ("CMS") "Table 2: Routine Testing Intervals Vary by Community COVID-19 Activity Level" as contained in the Interim Final Rule (IFC), CMS-3401-IFC, Additional Policy and Regulatory Revisions in Response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency related to Long-Term Care (LTC) Facility Testing Requirements and Revised COVID-19 Focused Survey Tool, State Survey Agency Directors Memo, Ref: QSO-20-38-NH, dated August 26, 2020, <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-38-nh.pdf>

¹ These requirements represent the minimum frequency of routine testing. Facilities may opt to perform more frequent routine testing based on their particular circumstances.