

Questions to BHSL on Reopening AL/PC

1. Please confirm what constitutes an outbreak? Please delineate by staff and resident.

Answer: An outbreak would be any first new case.

The way that DOH defined a resident outbreak was if the resident contracted COVID-19 in the residence – not at the hospital or other setting. What DOH is looking for is COVID-19 being spread within the facility.

Based on that, I would apply the same to staff – the staff should be restricted from coming to work immediately, but restrictions would not have to be re-applied unless a resident was subsequently determined to be positive.

If the facility had multiple staff test positive, they should use their judgement and consider restricting visitors again.

2. Please confirm what constitutes a significant outbreak?

Answer: This is subjective to the facility to some extent—5 in a very large facility would not be significant as 5 in a very small facility

3. In the reopening document it notes the following “the Department will inspect those PCHs, ALRs and ICFs that experienced a COVID-19 outbreak prior to reopening to ensure the facility is adequately preventing transmission of COVID-19.” Please explain which PCHs and ALRs will fall under this requirement. Is it any PCH/ALR that had an outbreak at any time during the pandemic – March forward or is it the PCHs/ALRs that had a more recent outbreak? Is there a date attached to this requirement?

Answer: This language should have been “may” – we will determine this as needed and do not intend to inspect each home before it can open. This will be clarified in the FAQ.

4. If there are multiple licensed entities on a campus can each licensed entity be in a different Step, based on their Reopening Implementation Plan?

Answer: Yes

5. Is a separate Reopening Implementation Plan required for each licensed entity?

Answer: If they intend to approach the criteria and protocols in the same way for all facilities, they can create one plan that references the facilities included.

6. According to the document the community requires the Reopening Implementation Plan to include a “plan to allow visitation to begin, pursuant to the guidance provided in Section 6d “ Visitation Requirements,” no later than 28 days after the date the county in which the facility is located moved into the green phase and all other prerequisite criteria are met. An additional 10 days is allowable, if needed to address the risks and complications of the facility’s current situation.” Given that a number of counties went into the green phase in late May and early June, this may not provide facilities adequate time to develop a comprehensive plan. If a facility is not able to meet that timeframe, what steps should the facility take to address? What guidance can be offered as to how to address this situation with their residents’ families?

Answer: One of the prerequisites is to have an implementation plan, as well as meet the criteria for no positive cases in 14 days or universal testing, and have adequate staffing Due to our delay in issuing, my recommendation would be to try to have a plan in place within the next 2 weeks if possible

7. If a PCH/ALR conducted baseline testing prior to June 12th are they able to obtain a waiver related to the requirement that testing must be done between June 12 and August 31st? If so what is the process for requesting that waiver?

Answer: The facility should email Jeanne Parisi at jeparisi@pa.gov and provide the date that testing was completed and whether or not there have been any positive results/cases since that time. A formal waiver is not required.

8. To move to Step 1, is it required that baseline testing be completed or that they have a plan to conduct baseline testing in compliance with the order for testing?

Answer: The facility can enter Step 1 once they have a plan in place.

9. Does facility onset of a new COVID-19 case include either a resident and/or a staff member?

Answer: Resident

10. If there is a new facility onset in the facility when does the 14-day count begin? Date of positive test, date became symptomatic, or some other date?

Answer: A positive test

11. Any assistance on how a facility can handle families that refuse to abide by the home's rules related to visitation? Of particular concern is in communities where the PCH and an Independent Living Units are in the same building.

Answer: No – other than trying to explain the intent to ensure health and safety.

12. Regarding the Regional Response Health Collaborative, our members would appreciate the opportunity to have a call with the RRHCs in each region to share what needs they have and how the RRHCs can assist them in preparing for potential future outbreaks around cohorting, testing, etc. Is this something that can be arranged?

Answer: Yes