



EL MIRADOR HOME HEALTH AGENCY COVID-19 Protocol- Albuquerque NM

POLICY

El Mirador will implement current New Mexico Department of Health and CDC guidelines, and report to the Department of Health for NM immediately, any patients or staff who are feeling ill with a fever or a dry cough that could possibly be diagnosed as the COVID-19.

PURPOSE

To prevent or decrease exposure of patients and staff to the COVID-19. To identify testing centers and what system prompts that indicate when testing is warranted.

PROCEDURE

1. All El Mirador Office Staff employees that have access to work at home should do so.
2. Patients', patient care givers, El Mirador staff members must correctly identify the people that require testing.
3. El Mirador will allow, whenever possible, the use of telephone visits.
4. Comprehensive assessments may be postponed or be done virtually by phone or by facetime and Skype (if available).
5. Telephone supervisory visits are mandated
6. Identify to every contact the areas by **NM DOH** considered drive through testing.
7. Anyone identified symptomatic must automatically be quarantined – if this is a patient or patient's family, extreme caution must be paid by the El Mirador staff to provide care.
8. El Mirador employees will be outfitted with surgical masks, and gloves, along with hand sanitizer.
9. In areas with confirmed human cases of COVID-19 infection, the risk for transmission can be reduced through a combination of actions. No single action will provide complete protections, but an approach combining the following steps can help decrease the likelihood of transmission. These recommended actions are:
 - a. Wash hands frequently with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub, as specified on label.
 - b. Cover your nose and mouth with your elbow when coughing or sneezing.
 - c. Avoid touching your face, especially eyes, nose and mouth.
 - d. People who are presenting with (fever plus at least cough or sore throat to start, and possibly other symptoms, e.g., body aches, headaches, chills, fatigue, vomiting and diarrhea) must quarantine at home. Keep away from others including avoiding travel for at least 14 days after fever is gone.
 - e. Avoid close contact (e.g., being within about 6 feet) with persons symptomology of COVID-19
10. El Mirador will maintain services 24/7 access to individuals with authority to authorize services. Those individuals are:
 - i. Louis Perea- -505-238-6680
 - ii. Daniel Juckette – 505-480-7242
 - iii. JJ Juckette- 505-463-6911



11. All employee or patients that are suspected of or exhibit any signs of COVID-19 will be quarantined immediately and reported to the **NM DOH**
12. Any patient or employee that have traveled to high risk areas will be immediately reported for follow-up investigation and to a drive through testing site or to their primary care physician for virus testing.
13. Gowns, gloves, masks will be supplied by EL Mirador Healthcare for any patient suspected or in isolation for COVID-19.
14. All employees are required to stay at home and self-isolate if they have had contact with or exhibit signs and symptoms of the COVID-19.
15. Drive through testing centers include:
 - a. Presbyterian Hospital's Drive through on Alameda and Balloon Parkway (follow the signs)

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES FOR EMPLOYERS TO USE NOW:

1. ACTIVELY ENCOURAGE SICK EMPLOYEES TO STAY HOME:

- a. Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever (100.4° F [38.0° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Employees should notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.
- b. Ensure that your sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies.
- c. Talk with companies that provide your business with contract or temporary employees about the importance of sick employees staying home and encourage them to develop non-punitive leave policies.
- d. Do not require a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate their illness or to return to work, as healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely way.
- e. Employers should maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member. Employers should be aware that more employees may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members than is usual.

2. SEPARATE SICK EMPLOYEES:

- a. CDC recommends that employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be separated from other employees and be sent home immediately. El Mirador Home Health will contact the NM DOH to report the sick employee and help with the contact tracing as much as possible. Any employees in contact with the sick employee will be required to get tested.

3. EMPHASIZE STAYING HOME WHEN SICK, RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE AND HAND HYGIENE BY ALL EMPLOYEES:

- a. Place posters that encourage [staying home when sick](#), [cough and sneeze etiquette](#), and [hand hygiene](#) at the entrance to your workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen.



- b. Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees.
- c. Instruct employees to clean their hands often with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.
- d. Provide soap and water and alcohol-based hand rubs in the workplace. Ensure that adequate supplies are maintained. Place hand rubs in multiple locations or in conference rooms to encourage hand hygiene.
- e. Visit the [coughing and sneezing etiquette](#) and [clean hands webpage](#) for more information.

4. PERFORM ROUTINE ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING:

- a. Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label.
- b. No additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is recommended at this time.
- c. Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (for example, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks) can be wiped down by employees before each use.

5. ADVISE EMPLOYEES BEFORE TRAVELING TO TAKE CERTAIN STEPS:

- a. Check the [CDC's Traveler's Health Notices](#) for the latest guidance and recommendations for each country to which you will travel. Specific travel information for travelers going to and returning from China, and information for aircrew, can be found at on the [CDC website](#).
- b. Advise employees to check themselves for symptoms of [acute respiratory illness](#) before starting travel and notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.
- c. Ensure employees who become sick while traveling or on temporary assignment understand that they should notify their supervisor and should promptly call a healthcare provider for advice if needed.
- d. If outside the United States, sick employees should follow your company's policy for obtaining medical care or contact a healthcare provider or overseas medical assistance company to assist them with finding an appropriate healthcare provider in that country. A U.S. consular officer can help locate healthcare services. However, U.S. embassies, consulates, and military facilities do not have the legal authority, capability, and resources to evacuate or give medicines, vaccines, or medical care to private U.S. citizens overseas.

6. ADDITIONAL MEASURES IN RESPONSE TO CURRENTLY OCCURRING SPORADIC IMPORTATIONS OF THE COVID-19:

- a. Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and refer to CDC guidance for [how to conduct a risk assessment](#) of their potential exposure.
- b. If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain



confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed COVID-19 should refer to CDC guidance for [how to conduct a risk assessment](#) of their potential exposure.

FOR EL MIRADOR STAFF AND PATIENTS THAT EXHIBIT EMERGENCY SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS and WHAT TO DO

1. Monitor the person for worsening symptoms. Know the emergency warning signs.
 - Have their healthcare provider's contact information on hand.
 - If they are getting sicker, call their healthcare provider. For medical emergencies, call 911 and notify the dispatch personnel that they have or are suspected to have COVID-19.

People who develop **emergency warning signs** for COVID-19 should get **medical attention immediately**. Emergency warning signs include*:

- Increasing difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

*This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

2. Prevent the spread of germs when caring for someone who is sick
3. Have the person stay in one room, away from other people, including yourself, as much as possible.
 - a. If possible, have them use a separate bathroom.
 - b. Avoid sharing personal household items, like dishes, towels, and bedding
 - c. Both patient and caregiver must wear masks during the home health visit and instruct patient and caregivers to wear the facemask when they are around people, including you.
 - d. If the sick person can't wear a facemask, you should wear one while in the same room with them and use extreme caution in providing care.
 - e. If the sick person needs to be around others (within the home, in a vehicle, or doctor's office), they should wear a facemask.
4. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after interacting with the sick person. If soap and water are not readily available,



use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.

5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
6. Every day, clean all surfaces that are touched often, like counters, tabletops, and doorknobs
 - a. Use household cleaning sprays or wipes according to the label instructions.
7. Wash laundry thoroughly.
8. If laundry is soiled, wear disposable gloves and keep the soiled items away from your body while laundering. Wash your hands immediately after removing gloves.
9. Avoid having any unnecessary visitors.
10. For any additional questions about their care, contact their healthcare provider or state or local health department.

SYMPTOMS

1. Watch for symptoms
 - b. Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases.
 - c. The following symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure.**^{*}
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath

TAKE STEPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF

1. **CLEAN YOUR HANDS OFTEN**
 - a. **Wash your hands** often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - b. If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.** Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
 - c. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.
2. **AVOID CLOSE CONTACT**
 - a. **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick
 - b. Put **distance between yourself and other people** if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for [people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.](#)
3. **STAY HOME IF YOU'RE SICK**
4. **COVER COUGHS AND SNEEZES**
 - a. **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
 - b. **Throw used tissues** in the trash.



- c. **Immediately wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
5. **WEAR A FACEMASK AT ALL TIMES IF YOU ARE IN PUBLIC.**
6. **IF YOU ARE SICK:**
 - a. You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then you should do your best to cover your face with a bandana or other types of face coverings, and people who are caring for you should wear a facemask if they enter your room.
[Learn what to do if you are sick.](#)
 - b. If you are NOT sick: You must still wear a facemask. Facemasks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers.
7. **CLEAN AND DISINFECT**
 - a. **Clean AND disinfect [frequently touched surfaces](#) daily.** This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
 - b. **If surfaces are dirty, clean them:** Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

ACTION PLANS FOR IN-PERSON VISITS WITH PATIENTS' WHO HAVE A CONFIRMED DIAGNOSIS OF COVID-19

1. Clinicians should immediately implement quarantine of a patient has tested positive of having COVID-19.
2. They should also inform their supervisor or manager in charge of El Mirador and their state or local health department if a patient is classified
3. Caregiver must identify if there is a caregiver within the home that is capable of taking over care of the patient. If there is an available caregiver, the onboarding of the care giver will be accomplished sometime after the individual has been allowed in the home
4. If there are no available in-home care givers, the supervisor of the location of the patient will assume duties.
5. Patients will be placed on the priority list of care dependents on the patient's acuity.
6. Office personnel with medical experience may be used temporarily to fill in where needed.
7. Any caregiver that enters the home must wear PPE as provided by the organization and use extreme care in disinfecting their equipment and washing their hands.

BACK-UP PLANS ARE FOR PROVIDING CARE WHEN THE MEMBER'S CAREGIVER HAS BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19

1. Caregivers that have been diagnosed with the COVID -19 virus will be required to stay home and self-isolate. **** Isolation is defined as the separation or restriction of activities of an ill person with a contagious disease from those who are well**
2. Alternate caregivers will be placed if possible.



3. If alternate caregivers are not able to assume the patient the supervisor has the responsibility to assume care of the patient.
4. All El Mirador Home Health Agency Office Staff members will be asked to work at home if possible, (**Isolation is defined as the separation or restriction of activities of an ill person with a contagious disease from those who are well**) during the emergency pandemic.

This protocol has been updated in July 2020. And will be updated quarterly thereafter.