



Nursing Home COVID-19 Testing under Secretarial Order No. 4 To Continue

November 30, 2020

Required Testing and Reporting Activities under Secretarial Order No. 4 To Remain in Effect

On Sept. 21, 2020, Secretary Mandy Cohen released [Secretarial Order No. 4, Mandatory Testing for Staff in Nursing Homes](#), which updated and replaced Secretarial Order No. 2. Under Secretarial Order No. 4, the Department aligns required testing intervals for nursing homes with those established under [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services \(CMS\) Transmittal, QSO-20-38-NH](#). As was established under Secretarial Order No. 2, nursing homes are required to report applicable testing activity through the [COVID-19 Testing: Nursing Home Reporting Portal](#).

This guidance reiterates that Secretarial Order No. 4 established under the authority of [Executive Order 165](#) **will remain in effect as written** for the duration of the State of Emergency unless replaced by a subsequent Secretarial Order.

Continued Availability of CARES Act Funding for Testing Activity Occurring on or Before December 30, 2020

CARES Act funding initially reserved to support nursing home testing activity under Secretarial Order No. 2 will remain available to cover allowable testing costs for **testing activity occurring on or before December 30, 2020**. As first noted in [Special Bulletin COVID-19 #129: Reporting Requirements and Financial Support to Nursing Homes under Secretarial Order No. 2](#), payments remain subject to funding availability.

Staff/HCP testing costs associated with increased testing intervals during the holiday season, as recommended in the [NC DHHS Holiday Guidance for Residents, Staff and Visitors of Residential Settings](#), are allowable under Secretarial Order No. 4.

Payment request submissions will continue to be authorized after December 30, 2020. The DHHS Portal Coordination Team will publish applicable financial submission timelines as part of upcoming CARES Act Reconciliation communication.

Extended Reporting Timetables

The [current testing reporting schedule](#), will be amended to reflect the following additional reporting periods.

Reporting Period	Testing Weeks Covered	Submission Deadline
Reporting Period 8	11/23/2020-11/29/2020 and 11/30/2020-12/6/2020	12/14/2020
Reporting Period 9	12/7/2020-12/13/2020 and 12/14/2020-12/20/2020	12/28/2020
Reporting Period 10	12/21/2020-12/27/2020 and 12/28/2020-12/30/2020*	1/11/2020
*Abbreviated reporting period to accommodate CARES Act timeline. Additional reporting periods to report testing activity may be added.		

An updated checkwrite cycle and necessary financial submission timeline modifications will be provided as part of upcoming CARES Act Reconciliation communication.

Updates and Guidance on Submitting Actual Cases

To supplement the information provided in the [COVID-19 Testing: Nursing Home Reporting under Secretarial Orders 2 & 4 Update & Guidance on Financial Submissions](#), released on November 13, 2020 and provided through earlier trainings, the Portal Coordination Team has developed a job aid for submitting Actual Cost cases in upcoming reporting periods which will be posted [here](#) and reviewed in upcoming trainings.

Preparing for Cares Act Reconciliation and Lookback Process

As noted in earlier guidance, the Department will launch the last phase of its payment reconciliation process in December, 2020. This reconciliation process will extend into 2021.

The Department will provide an overview of the reconciliation process in a two-part webinar series on:

- Thursday, December 3, 2020, 2:00-3:00 p.m., [and](#)
- Thursday, December 10, 2020, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Providers that have drawn down CARES Act funding under the Secretarial Orders are strongly encouraged to attend both sessions.

Please register for both sessions at link provided here:

<https://attendeegotowebinar.com/register/6092745084644135184>

NC DHHS will provide additional written guidance about the CARES Act reconciliation and lookback process.

Questions about the COVID-19 Testing: Nursing Home Reporting or Related Payments?

Please email Medicaid.ProviderReimbursement@dhhs.nc.gov or visit the [DHHS Secretarial Order No. 4: Reporting and Payment Resources webpage](#).