

UPDATE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



Stay informed. Take precautions. Stay safe.

Dear Members,

Here is a message sent from EOEA to ALR Executive Directors today, along with the letter from Secretary Chen that they are asking to be shared with residents, families, and friends of residents:

Dear ALR Executive Directors,

Enclosed is a letter from Secretary Elizabeth Chen that we hope you will share with residents, families, and friends regarding visiting safely with each other throughout this winter.



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Dear Residents, Families, and Friends of Residents in Assisted Living,

I write to share some reminders regarding socializing safely with loved ones who live in Assisted Living Residences. COVID-19 continues to circulate in the community, and we are now also in the traditional flu season in New England.

Spending time with older relatives and friends is a treasured opportunity for everyone, and we encourage you to continue to make time for these connections. However, many people living in Assisted Living Residences are uniquely vulnerable to COVID-19 and may have health conditions putting them at a higher risk of becoming sick, or even severely ill, with COVID-19. **We encourage you to take steps to reduce the risk of unknowingly transmitting COVID-19 to older people and those who may be immunocompromised.**

I hope you will join me in helping to keep your older loved ones and their friends as safe as possible. Please take advantage of the latest tools available as you plan for visits, holiday gatherings, and other activities with the treasured older people in our lives.

- [Stay up-to-date on COVID-19 and flu vaccinations.](#)
- [Take an at-home COVID-19 test](#) immediately prior to participating in gatherings with older loved ones or visiting an Assisted Living Residence. All health care insurers are required to provide 8 free COVID-19 at-home tests per person per month and available at your local pharmacies. It is a good idea to have a supply on hand in your own home, as well as your older loved one's home. **Taking just 15 minutes to do an at-home test before a visit or a gathering can save lives.**
- Consider rescheduling and delaying a visit or not attending a gathering if you have any [upper respiratory symptoms](#) or [if you may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19](#).

Every visit with the older people in our lives, every gathering, every holiday with an older loved one is precious. Thank you for your help in keeping these special times as safe as possible from further spreading COVID-19.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth C. Chen, PhD, MBA, MPH
Secretary, Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs

If you have any questions, please contact us at Mass-ALA@mass-ala.org

**The information provided in this COVID-19 update is solely for general informational purposes to assist in understanding the evolving guidance regarding the current COVID 19 public health threat. It is not intended to be a primary public health or medical resource but is provided as a clearinghouse for or compilation of various guidance issued by official and related sources.*