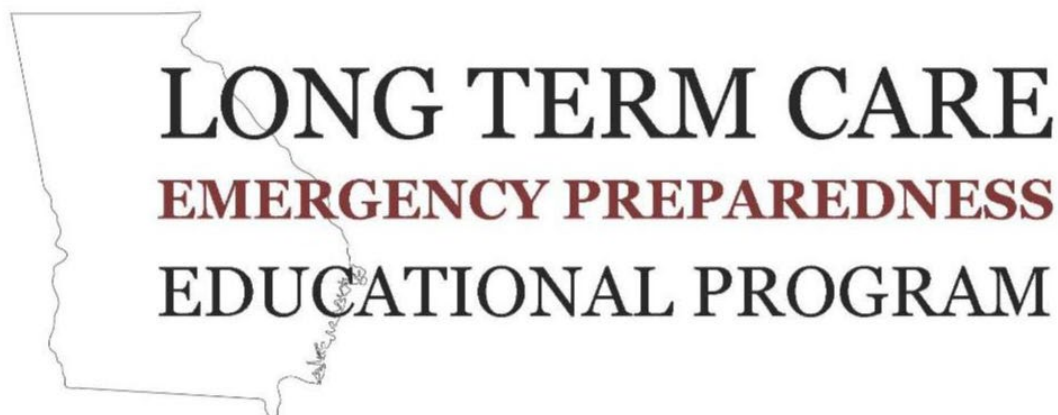


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LTC Emergency Preparedness Digest

Georgia's Long Term Care Emergency Preparedness Educational Program is funded through Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Civil Money Penalty (CMP) Funds – Emergency Preparedness in Georgia Certified Nursing Homes, Grant #: 18044G (CMP)

REQUEST #: 2017-04-GA-1219)



Special Edition: COVID-19

COVID-19 was declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization on March 12, 2020 and has continued to have drastic impacts on the health and safety of citizens worldwide.

Our most vulnerable populations have been hit the hardest, especially nursing home residents.

What is COVID-19?

The new coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, causes a new disease called COVID-19. The letters 'COVI' stand for 'coronavirus' and the letter 'D' stands for 'disease.' The '19' is short for '2019,' which is the year the virus and disease were first discovered. This infectious disease is highly contagious between people and can cause severe illness or even death in some individuals.

Symptoms:

may appear 2-14 days after exposure

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Or at least two of these symptoms:

- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

However, some people have no symptoms at all but are infected with the virus. These people can infect others with the virus even though they may feel fine and look normal.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Prevent the Spread of COVID-19:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose, and mouth

- Stay home if you feel unwell
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your elbow

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

COVID-19 Long Term Care Guidelines

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has outlined key strategies to protect long term care (LTC) facility residents and staff.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care-strategies.html>

NOTE: Healthcare personnel (HCP) include but are not limited to: *nurses, nursing assistants, physicians, technicians, therapists, pharmacists, students and trainees, contractual staff not employed by the healthcare facility, and persons not directly involved in patient care, but who could be exposed to infectious agents that can be transmitted in the healthcare setting (e.g., clerical, dietary, environmental services, laundry, security, engineering and facilities management, administrative, billing, and volunteer personnel).*

1. Keep COVID-19 from entering your facility

- **Restrict all visitors except for compassionate care situations** (e.g. end of life)
- **Restrict all volunteers and non-essential healthcare personnel** (HCP) including consultant services (e.g. barber or hairdresser)
- **Implement universal use of source control** for everyone in the facility (e.g. require everyone in the facility to wear a cloth face covering (if tolerated) while in the building, regardless of symptoms)

- **Actively screen anyone entering the building** (HCP, staff, vendors, etc.) for fever and symptoms of COVID-19 before starting each shift; send ill personnel home
 - Sick leave policies should be flexible and non-punitive

2. Identify infections early

- **Actively screen all residents daily for fever and symptoms of COVID-19**; if symptomatic, immediately isolate and implement appropriate transmission-based precautions
 - Older adults with COVID-19 may not show typical symptoms such as fever or respiratory symptoms. Atypical symptoms may include new or worsening malaise, new dizziness, or diarrhea. Identification of these symptoms should prompt isolation and further evaluation for COVID-19.
- **Notify your state or local health department immediately (within 24 hours) if these occur:**
 - Severe respiratory infection causing hospitalization or sudden death
 - Clusters (3 or more residents and or HCP) of respiratory infection
 - Individuals with suspected or confirmed COVID-19

3. Prevent spread of COVID-19

- **Actions to take now:**
 - Cancel all group activities and communal dining
 - Enforce social distancing among residents
 - Ensure all residents wear a cloth face covering for source control whenever they leave their room or are around others - including whenever they leave the facility for essential medical appointments
 - Ensure all HCP wear a facemask or cloth face covering while in the facility
 - Cloth face coverings are not considered personal protective equipment (PPE) because their ability to protect HCP is unknown. Cloth face coverings should NOT be worn instead of a respirator or facemask if more than source control is required.

4. Assess supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) and initiate measures to optimize current supply:

- If you anticipate or are experiencing PPE shortages, reach out to your healthcare coalition or state/local health department
- Consider extended use of respirators, facemasks, and eye protection or prioritization of gowns for certain resident care activities

5. Identify and manage severe illness

- Designate a location to care for residents with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, separate from

other residents

- Monitor ill residents (including documentation of temperature and oxygen saturation) at least 3 times daily to quickly identify residents who require transfer to a higher level of care

COVID-19 in Georgia Nursing Homes

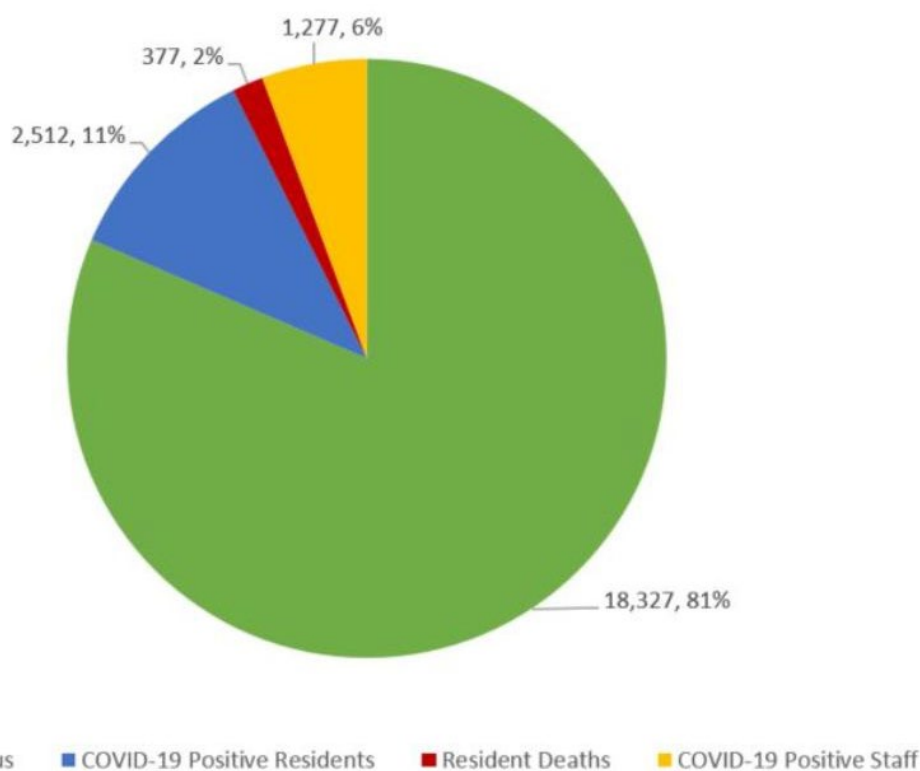


Figure 1

This data was provided by the Georgia Department of Community Health on April 24, 2020 and includes the census, cases, and deaths from 194 Georgia certified long term care facilities.

Source: <https://dch.georgia.gov/>

COVID-19 LTC Resources

- **Interim Guidance for LTC Facilities Admitting Residents from a Hospital:**
 - Link: https://mcusercontent.com/f2519b596f4c3f87efb700b0a/files/1e912foe-6295-4998-93ca-390b8d9b2550/Interim_Guidance_for_Long_Term_Care_LTC_Facilities_Admitting_Residents_from_a_Hospital.pdf
 - Source: Georgia Department of Public Health (GDPH)

- **Recorded Webinar - Masks and Healthcare Workers:** This 1 hour webinar explains the what, how, and why of mask options for healthcare workers. You can watch the webinar or download the slides using the links below.
 - Video Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcc8kVb7n_Y&feature=youtu.be
 - Slide Link: <https://repository.netecweb.org/files/original/bbed6597510fdd475dcaoddce1c4ed05.pdf>
 - Source: National Emerging Special Pathogen Training and Education Center (NETEC)

- **LTC Facility Announcement Letter:** This fillable letter is to announce to residents and their families what measures are implemented at the facility including: visitation restrictions, monitoring of staff and residents, and limiting activities within the facility.
 - Link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/healthcare-facilities/Long-Term-Care-letter.pdf>
 - Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- **COVID-19 LTC Preparedness Checklist:** This fillable checklist identifies key areas LTC facilities should consider in their COVID-19 planning and response.
 - Link: https://mcusercontent.com/f2519b596f4c3f87efb700b0a/files/104bac62-190b-4c96-a6e2-2f103c39d261/novel_coronavirus_2019_Nursing_Homes_Preparedness_Checklist_3_13.pdf
 - Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- **Recorded Webinar - Preparing Nursing Homes for COVID-19:** This 30 minute YouTube video details what steps nursing homes should take to protect residents and staff from COVID-19.
 - Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1FiVFx5O78>
 - Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- **Recorded Webinar - Closely Monitor Residents for COVID-19:** This 7 minute preventative message for facility staff details how to monitor residents for symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZbT1Njv6xA&feature=emb_logo
 - Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

 - **Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Healthcare Settings:**
 - Link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>
 - Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

 - **Strategies to Optimize the Supply of PPE and Equipment:**
 - Link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html>
 - Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

 - **Battelle Personal Protective Equipment Decontamination System: Free for Long Term Care Facilities:** This decontamination system uses vaporized hydrogen peroxide to decontaminate N-95 masks multiple times without degradation to address shortages of PPE. For more information on this program, contact your local healthcare coalition.
 - Link: <https://www.battelle.org/inquiry/offerings-and-services/covid-response/>
 - Instructions for Healthcare Facilities: https://mcusercontent.com/f2519b596f4c3f87efb700b0a/files/98873a64-e04e-430a-9c61-obcdf22b0789/Instructions_for_Healthcare_Facilities_03.29.2020_615pm_revision.pdf
-

COVID-19 and Long Term Care Facilities in the News



Life Care Center: Kirkland, Washington

The Seattle-area nursing home, Life Care Center of Kirkland, has had 129 confirmed cases of COVID-19 linked to the facility including 81 residents, 34 staff members, and 14 visitors.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) called Immediate Jeopardy on the Life Care Center of Kirkland recommending a \$611,325 fine and possible loss of federal funding.

The Immediate Jeopardy cited multiple issues within the facility:

- Failure to have an emergency plan in place when a physician is "unavailable to assist with a high volume of residents during a crisis situation"
- Failure to have an infection control surveillance program that analyzes and takes steps towards mitigating a crisis
- Failure to provide and forward reports to the State Department of Health in a timely manner

Source: National Public Radio; Brakton Booker, April 2, 2020

Link: <https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/04/02/826360394/seattle-area-nursing-home-linked-to-dozens-of-coronavirus-deaths-faces-600-000-f>

Upcoming Events

2020 EMAG Conference Cancelled



The 2020 Emergency Management Association of Georgia Conference in Savannah, GA has been cancelled due to COVID-19.

We were looking forward to sponsoring maintenance directors to attend this conference but hope to see you at our Basic and Advanced Courses.

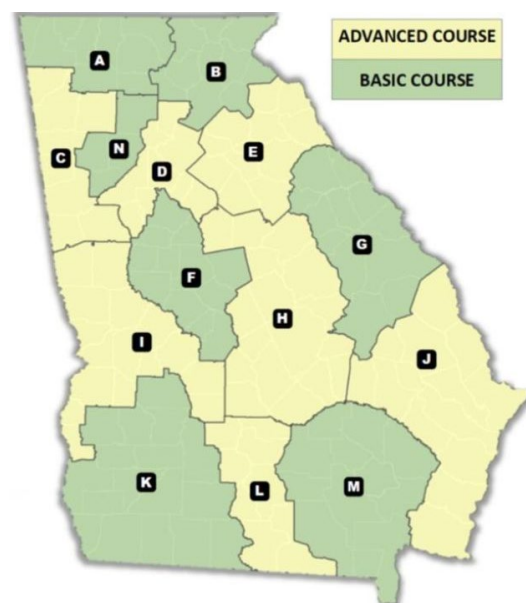
Upcoming LTCEP Courses

Year Three Long Term Care

Emergency Preparedness (LTCEP) Basic and Advanced Courses are open for registration.

All class dates are contingent on COVID-19 status at that time.

Click the button below to download a complete course schedule flyer. The first course offerings are listed below.



[Click HERE for Full Course Schedule](#)

CMS LTCEPEP Advanced Course

July 30, 2020

Region E: Athens, GA

Classic Center

300 N Thomas Street, Athens, GA 30601

Register: www.tinyurl.com/LTCEPEP2020E

CMS LTCEPEP Basic Course

August 5, 2020

Region G: Augusta, GA

Snelling Conference Center

3165 Washington Road, Suite D, Augusta, GA 30907

Register: www.tinyurl.com/LTCEPEP2020G

CMS LTCEPEP Advanced Course

August 19, 2020

Region H: Dublin, GA

Oconee Fall Line Technical College

560 Pinehill Road, Dublin, GA 31021
Register: www.tinyurl.com/LTCEPEP2020H

CMS LTCEPEP Basic Course
September 3, 2020
Region K: Albany, GA
Creekside Center at Chehaw Park Authority
105 Chehaw Park Road, Albany, GA 31701
Register: www.tinyurl.com/LTCEPEP2020K

General Resources

Family/Home Preparedness: www.ready.gov/georgia

Find your Local Emergency Management Agency (EMA):
www.gema.georgia.gov/locations

Find your Healthcare Coalition (HCC): www.gha911.org

Georgia Health Care Association (GHCA): www.ghca.info/

Regional Calendar for upcoming events and trainings: www.gha911.org/coalition-information/

Contact Us

If you have any questions about the e-newsletter, upcoming events, or



Institute for Disaster Management
College of Public Health
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

course registration, please contact
us at georgialtc@uga.edu



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Grant #: 18044G (CMP REQUEST #: 2017-04-GA-1219)

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