

From: **Williams, Edwina** <edwina.williams@dss.virginia.gov>  
Date: Fri, Dec 17, 2021 at 4:31 PM  
Subject: VDSS COVID Update  
To: <DSS\_LICENSING@listserv.cov.virginia.gov>

The attached file is being sent to assisted living facilities from the Virginia Department of Social Services Email Distribution Service.

**\*\*\*Please do not reply to this email.\*\*\***

---

To unsubscribe from the DSS\_LICENSING list, click the following link:  
[https://listserv.cov.virginia.gov/scripts/wa.exe?SUBED1=DSS\\_LICENSING&A=1](https://listserv.cov.virginia.gov/scripts/wa.exe?SUBED1=DSS_LICENSING&A=1)

**SCROLL DOWN TO VIEW ATTACHMENT**



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**DATE:** December 17, 2021

**TO:** Licensed Assisted Living Facilities

**FROM:** Tara Ragland, Director, Division of Licensing Programs

**RE:** COVID-19 Update

As we continue to navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic, the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) would like to thank you for your ongoing support and partnership. Below you will find updates regarding several topics. You may also find additional information by visiting the Virginia COVID-19 Long-Term Care Task Force [website](#), which is updated regularly and provides a wealth of information and guidance.

### **COVID-19 Immunizations and Boosters**

COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations continue to impact assisted living facilities in the Commonwealth. Please continue to encourage all eligible residents and staff to get vaccinated, get boosted, and layer other prevention strategies. Additional information regarding the [COVID-19 vaccination](#) may be found on the VDH website.

### **Omicron (B.1.1.529) Variant Detected in Virginia**

VDH [announced](#) the first confirmed COVID-19 Omicron case in Virginia on December 9, 2021. Additional Omicron cases are being seen across the Commonwealth and these cases will be tracked on [VDH's Variants Dashboard](#). Despite the detection of Omicron in Virginia, more than 99% of sequenced COVID-19 cases in Virginia are currently caused by the Delta variant and COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations are increasing. Last week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [published a summary](#) about the initial Omicron cases in the United States.

### **Widespread Flu Activity in Virginia**

For the week ending December 4, 2021, the [geographic spread of influenza \(flu\) in Virginia](#) jumped from "sporadic" to "widespread" based on reported laboratory results, influenza-like illness (ILI), and outbreaks. Because flu and COVID-19 clinical presentations are

similar, both COVID-19 and flu testing are needed to distinguish these infections. Please encourage all residents and staff to get vaccinated **now** against flu to lower their risk of infection, hospitalization, and death. Please note, the COVID-19 and the flu vaccine can be administered at the same time. CDC guidance for managing residents who are infected with or exposed to flu is [available](#).

### **Outbreak Testing**

VDH continues to work in conjunction with the Virginia Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services (DCLS) to respond to outbreaks. DCLS is providing respiratory outbreak testing at the state lab and recommends all facilities coordinate specimen collection with your [local health department](#) during an outbreak.

### **Visitation**

VDSS encourages you to reevaluate your Visitation Plan and consider the CDC's following recommendations regarding visitation in your facility:

- Send letters or emails to families and post signs at entrances reminding them of the importance of getting vaccinated, [recommendations for source control and physical distancing](#) and any other facility instructions related to visitation, including not to visit if they have any of the following:
  - a positive viral test for SARS-CoV-2,
  - symptoms of COVID-19, or
  - if they currently meet criteria for [quarantine](#)
- [Further information on visitation](#) should be reviewed and adapted to your facility as necessary.

Again, thank you for your continued partnership in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. VDSS would like to wish each of you a merry and joyous holiday season.