

Q & A from DSHS Survey Platform and DOH Upload of NHSN Data for NURSING HOMES

Do I need to enter data in both the DSHS Survey and in NHSN?

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) requests that long term care facilities enter COVID-19 data twice weekly, per DSHS Administrator letter 020-04-20

CMS requires at least weekly reporting in NHSN for CMS-certified Skilled Nursing Facilities and/or Nursing Facilities.

To reduce burden and streamline data reporting Department of Health (DOH) can upload DSHS survey data to NHSN on your behalf. To select this option, select “Yes” to “Submit to NHSN” in the DSHS Survey. Allowing DOH to upload your DSHS survey data to NHSN is optional. If you chose not to select this option, you will have to directly enter your facility’s NHSN data using your SAMS access and the NHSN platform to meet CMS requirements.

[DSHS Administrator letter #020-04-20 - DEPARTMENT REQUEST FOR ONGOING COVID-19 STATUS UPDATES](#)

[DSHS Administrator letter #020-034 - UPDATE ON STATE PORTAL TO REPORT REQUIRED COVID-19 DATA TO CDC](#)

[DSHS Administrator letter #020-032 - QSO-20-29-NH INTERIM FINAL RULE UPDATING REQUIREMENTS FOR NOTIFICATION OF CONFIRMED AND SUSPECTED COVID-19 CASES AMONG RESIDENTS AND STAFF IN NURSING HOMES](#)

Do I have to allow DOH to upload my data?

No. You are not required to allow DOH to upload your DSHS data to NHSN. This is optional. DOH recognizes that facilities have to report data to multiple agencies and offered to upload to NHSN to help streamline. Many facilities prefer to enter their COVID-19 data to NHSN directly.

To assist facilities with the NHSN reporting requirement, the DOH and the DSHS collaborated to create a system to collect the data using the DSHS Survey and upload it to NHSN as a batched state submission. The intention is to consolidate reporting of the COVID-19 information into a single portal and reduce the burden for nursing homes. Facilities may choose to submit the required data via the DSHS Survey Portal instead of entering directly into NHSN.

How often do I need to report to DSHS?

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) requests that long-term care facilities enter COVID-19 data twice weekly, per [DSHS Administrator letter 020-04-20](#).

Do I have to report my DSHS data on specific days?

DSHS requests data be reported on Mondays and Thursdays as per [DSHS Administrator letter 020-04-20](#).

How often do I need to report to NHSN?

While daily reporting will provide the timeliest data to assist with COVID-19 emergency response efforts, retrospective reporting of prior day(s), unless otherwise specified, is encouraged if daily reporting is not feasible. **At a minimum, facilities should report data at least once per week (every 7 days).** For questions requiring counts, including *Suspected*, *Confirmed*, *Total Deaths*, and *COVID-19 Deaths*, only include new counts since the last date these counts were collected for reporting in the NHSN COVID-19 Module.

CMS does not prescribe which day(s) of the week data must be submitted. Reporting should remain consistent with data being submitted on the same day(s) each week. The collection period should also remain consistent (for example entering data each week for Monday through Sunday data). Each Monday, CMS will review the data submitted to assess if each facility submitted data at least once in the previous seven days.

[Centers for Medicare and Medicaid \(CMS\) COVID-19 NHSN Reporting Requirements for Nursing Homes](#)

[Interim Final Rule Updating Requirements for Notification of Confirmed and Suspected COVID-19 Cases Among Residents and Staff in Nursing Homes](#)

When will the new DSHS Survey be available?

The new survey went live on July 3, 2020. If “Submit to NHSN” selection is Yes, the additional NHSN questions are clearly labeled. NHSN counts include new cases since the last report to DSHS for NHSN data.

How do you define current number of cases in the DSHS survey?

For DSHS questions only, the current number of cases is the number of confirmed or suspected cases in the facility on the date of reporting.

Who should we contact with questions or identify problems with my facility’s data?

- For problems at the state portal website or data entry questions for the DSHS survey, please email RCSPolicy@dshs.wa.gov.
- For NHSN data upload questions, please email HAI-COVID@doh.wa.gov.
- For NHSN questions, please email nhsn@cdc.gov
- For SAMS access questions, please email samshelp@cdc.gov

How do we know that DOH has uploaded the DSHS correctly?

DSHS exports data entered in DSHS survey with the “NHSN” notation and provides it to DOH as CSV files for an upload to NHSN. A confirmation email is sent to the facility confirming the upload to NHSN based on the collection date in DSHS survey. DOH cannot edit or overwrite facility data in NHSN. Each facility should verify their data in NHSN. Facilities can export CSV report from NHSN to maintain a data record file.

Facilities may correct their data in NHSN at any time by accessing the applicable calendar date and editing the data then saving to retain changes.

What is the definition for hospitalized cases in NHSN? Should I include cases that may have acquired COVID-19 in the facility but are not residents?

NHSN's definition for COVID-19 admissions was revised on July 6 to capture all transfers:

Admissions is defined as residents admitted or readmitted who were previously diagnosed with COVID-19 from another facility.

See examples in [Table of Instructions](#)

What is the definition of suspected cases in NHSN?

Suspected is defined as a resident who is being managed as though he/she has COVID-19 because of signs and symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 as described by CDC's guidance but does not have a laboratory positive COVID-19 test result. This may include residents who have not been tested or those with pending test results. The count may also include residents with negative test results but whom continue to show signs/symptoms suggestive of COVID-19. A patient without a laboratory confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis who, in accordance with CDC's Interim Public Health Guidance for Evaluating Persons Under Investigation (PUIs), has signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19 (most patients with confirmed COVID-19 have developed fever and/or symptoms of acute respiratory illness, such as cough, shortness of breath or myalgia/fatigue) is considered a suspected case.

See examples in [Table of Instructions](#)

Do I have to report to DSHS and NHSN if you have no cases?

Even if there are no positive or suspected COVID in your facility or agency, this data reporting is valuable to DSHS. It is used to help in determining PPE supplies needed as well as COVID testing supply needs.

CMS requires a minimum of weekly reporting in NHSN regardless of number of cases. If there are no cases, enter zero into the data fields so there are no blank entries. Blanks are considered missing data and the data will show as incomplete.

Resources:

- CMS memo QSO-20-29-NH <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-29-nh.pdf>
- CMS Reporting Requirements <https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/pdfs/covid19/lctf/cms-covid19-req-508.pdf>
- DSHS Administrator letter 020-04-20 <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/AL TSA/rcs/documents/multiple/020-04-20.pdf>
- DSHS Administrator letter #020-034 <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/AL TSA/rcs/documents/nh/020-034.pdf>
- DSHS Administrator letter #020-032 <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/AL TSA/rcs/documents/nh/020-032.pdf>
- NHSN LTCF COVID page: <https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/lctf/covid19/index.html>
- Resident Impact and Facility Capacity Table of Instructions: <https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/pdfs/covid19/lctf/57.144-toi-508.pdf>

- Staff and Personnel Impact Table of Instructions:
<https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/pdfs/covid19/lctf/57.145-toi-508.pdf>
- Supplies and Personal Protective Equipment Table of Instructions:
<https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/pdfs/covid19/lctf/57.146-toi-508.pdf>
- Ventilator Capacity and Supplies Table of Instructions:
<https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/pdfs/covid19/lctf/57.147-toi-508.pdf>
- For questions on CMS compliance, fines, contact CMS enforcement at
DNH_Enforcement@cms.hhs.gov
- For questions on how data is displayed on CMS website, contact: NH_COVID_Data@cms.hhs.gov