



Coronavirus 100% Testing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

This FAQ offers information regarding Texas Governor Greg Abbott's May 11 order to "test 100% of residents and staff in Texas nursing homes." For a list of FAQs related to the overall pandemic, please visit the BRS coronavirus update page at BucknerRetirement.org.

Answers to these questions and other related questions may change at any time as we seek to monitor the pandemic and provide the safest living environment for residents that is reasonably possible. Our highest priority right now is the safety and security of residents, families and associates.

Q. What were Governor Abbott's orders?

A. Texas Governor Greg Abbott issued an order May 11 to "test 100% of residents and staff in Texas nursing homes." In the order, he tasked the planning and execution of testing to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), and Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Since the general order was released, Buckner has worked closely with the state to learn details around the process of testing in our communities.

Q. Governor Abbott's orders only mention residents and staff in nursing homes – what about Independent Living and Assisted Living?

A. While the Governor's mandate is specific to nursing, we believe widespread testing of our entire community, including Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care and Rehab, is an important opportunity to receive vital information needed to further mitigate risk for all residents and associates. We are working to make this testing available to anyone who chooses to participate. The state will only oversee testing in our nursing care areas, so testing of our other areas of the community will be coordinated directly by Buckner.

Q. What will coronavirus testing cost?

A. Each community's executive director will be in touch with more details closer to the testing dates.

Buckner will cover the cost for associates who choose to be tested.



Q. How long will it take to receive test results?

A. The HHSC states that the testing results will be available 3-5 days after testing is conducted, though it could be longer based on the scope of testing the state is conducting. Buckner will notify all residents, families and associates immediately of the overall results, while respecting the privacy requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Anyone with positive results will be contacted directly along with their authorized emergency contact. Positive test results will be reported to government entities, as required.

Q. What does a coronavirus test entail?

A. There are actually many tests being used to diagnose COVID-19 that the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized for use during the current emergency. All these tests identify the virus in samples from the respiratory system, such as from nasal or nasopharyngeal swabs.

The state will use a nasal cotton swab for all its testing, and Buckner will do the same. This method requires that a swab be inserted and gently rotated for 15 seconds in each nasal passage. The sample is safely secured and sent to a lab for processing.

Testing will occur onsite at each Buckner community.

Q. Will Buckner employees and third-party caregivers and providers be tested?

A. Yes. Testing will be offered to all community associates, as well as third-party caregivers and providers operating in the community.

Q. If someone is not sick, why do they need to be tested?

A. Many people experience no symptoms while still being positive for coronavirus. Even without symptoms, there can still be transmission of the virus from one person to another. According to the World Health Organization, an asymptomatic laboratory-confirmed case is a person infected with COVID-19 who does not develop symptoms. Asymptomatic transmission refers to transmission of the virus from a person, who does not develop symptoms.

It is believed that by identifying and isolating asymptomatic positive cases, we further mitigate the risk of transmission and positive cases.

Q. Can I refuse to take a coronavirus test?



A. We strongly urge every resident and associate to take advantage of this testing opportunity, as it corresponds with the guidance of our federal and state governments. However, any individual reserves the right to refuse testing.

Buckner will require signed consent forms from residents and associates for participating in the testing to be administered. Protocols provided by the governmental agencies tasked with planning and execution of the testing ordered by the Governor will be followed should a resident or associate decline to consent.

Q. What if a resident is unable to consent to testing?

A. If a resident is unable to consent, their legally authorized representative will be contacted to provide consent.

Q. What happens if a community discovers positive tests?

A. Based on what other communities around the country are experiencing, we believe it is very likely testing will reveal some asymptomatic residents or associates. We are prepared for the realistic possibility this will be true of all Buckner communities, which is why we developed comprehensive response plans.

In the event of positive tests, our communities will directly notify any resident testing positive immediately, as well as their authorized emergency contact. We will also directly notify any associate testing positive immediately.

A full report of the community's overall results will be sent to all associates, residents and their authorized emergency contacts, while respecting the privacy requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Notifications will be made to residents via printed letters and to authorized emergency contacts via our OneCall text message, email and phone notification system. Letters will also be mailed to authorized emergency contacts.

Positive test results will be sent to government agencies, as required.

Fourteen-day isolation procedures will immediately go into place for residents. Each community and its care levels will have specific protocols in place to assist with isolation depending on the community's layout.



Contact tracing will go into effect to help identify those who came into contact with the positive person, so they can follow CDC guidelines.

Q. What happens if a person tests positive but has no symptoms?

A. This is known as an asymptomatic laboratory-confirmed positive case. It is believed that an asymptomatic positive person can still transmit the disease, which is why Buckner will work with such individuals to ensure CDC guidelines are followed.

Q. What should I do if my test is negative?

A. Please continue to take all the precautions recommended by the CDC and your Buckner team to mitigate risks associated with the coronavirus. Continue to avoid leaving your room unless necessary. Use a mask in public. Frequently wash and sanitize your hands and avoid touching your face. Maintain social distancing guidelines of at least six feet from other people.

Q. Does Buckner have enough PPE (masks, face shields, gloves) to handle a significant number of positive cases in a community?

A. Our emergency preparedness plans ensure each Buckner community has a stockpile of PPE, including N95 masks, in the event of an outbreak of coronavirus. The safety of residents and associates is our number one priority.

Q. What happens if a significant number of associates test positive in one community?

A. Buckner is fortunate to have six senior living communities in Texas. We have a plan in place to supplement associates at any of the six communities by using associates from our other communities if and when needed.

Q. Will the Governor require future rounds of testing?

A. According to the most recent information made available to us, the state “will evaluate the need for future testing.”