

# SHARED RESIDENT ROOMS

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Many long-term care facilities utilize shared rooms for residents. Shared rooms, however, increase the risk of disease transmission between roommates, so moving a symptomatic or potentially infectious resident to a private room is a priority. It is valuable to plan ahead so that rooming options are available to provide for a private room for a symptomatic or positive resident(s).

## Resident with Respiratory Symptoms or Illness (unknown cause)

Scenario Example: One resident has been identified with respiratory symptoms and the other resident(s) in room are asymptomatic.

- Relocate a symptomatic or known positive resident to a private room.
- When a private room is not available, use enhanced safety measures such as:
  - Create a barrier around the resident using curtains or privacy shields.
  - Staff should utilize [Aerosol Contact Precautions](#) for all residents in the room until testing has identified a respiratory pathogen.
  - Consider assigning each resident in the room to different direct care providers (CNA or Nurses) to minimize a single staff member having cross-over contact between two residents in the same room.
  - Reinforce with all staff that hand hygiene must be performed between residents.
  - Ensure staff fully change PPE between each resident.
  - Safety permitting, encourage masking of residents while in the room during the period of infectiousness.
  - Consider implementing measures to improve indoor air quality in the room by:
    - Use of portable air purifier / HEPA air scrubber(s).
    - Consider patient placement so that positive residents are placed closest to air intake vents.
    - Air should be drawn toward the infected resident and out of the room through intake vents, exhaust fans, or open window.

## COVID-19 Positive Resident

- Do not place symptomatic residents that test negative together in the same room.
- Relocate a COVID-19 resident to a private room, or to a shared room with another COVID-19 positive resident.
- Place the exposed roommate(s) on [Aerosol Contact Precautions](#) and begin [monitoring for symptoms](#) of COVID-19.
- Implement asymptomatic testing of remaining (exposed) resident following outbreak testing routine.
- If there are absolutely no private room alternatives and the COVID-19 positive resident must remain in a shared room, discuss with your local health department.
  - Create a barrier around the resident using curtains or shields.
  - Staff should utilize Aerosol Contact Precautions for all residents in the room.

- PPE must be removed and new PPE donned between care of each resident.
- Safety permitting, encourage masking of all residents while in the room during the period of infectiousness.
- COVID-19 positive residents having [aerosol generating procedures](#) should not share a room with COVID19 negative or asymptomatic residents.
- Consider implementing measures to [improve indoor air quality](#) in the room by:
  - Use of portable air purifier / HEPA air scrubber(s).
  - Consider patient placement so that positive residents are placed closest to air intake vents.
  - Air should be drawn toward the infected resident and out of the room through intake vents, exhaust fans, or open window.

## Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGPs)

[Aerosol Generating Procedures](#) may increase the risk of spreading disease by creating small particles that float and spread through the air. During times of high [Community Transmission](#), or where there are symptomatic or positive COVID-19 cases present in the building, consider implementing enhanced infection control measures by:

- Prioritize private rooms for residents receiving AGPs, such as suctioning, CPAP or BiPAP or nebulizing medications.
- When a private room is not available, consider using enhanced safety measures such as:
  - Consider roommate selection risk factors. Avoid cohorting with residents who are unvaccinated, not current with boosting, immunocompromised, obese, have cancer, diabetes, chronic heart, lung, liver, or kidney disease.
  - Prioritize roommates that are fully vaccinated or recently recovered (within 90 days) from COVID-19.
  - Establish routine symptoms monitoring for both the resident and roommate(s) each shift.
  - Consider implementing a serial testing schedule for residents with AGPs and their roommates to identify asymptomatic COVID-19 early.

