

APPENDIX I

This timeline references, in part, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) own timeline. Note that CMS's primary method of communicating with nursing homes is through memoranda addressed to State Survey Agency directors.

Date	Activity
February 6, 2020	CMS issued a reminder memo to State Survey Agency directors advising health care facilities to conduct a “review of CDC’s guidance,” and encouraging “facilities to review their own infection prevention and control policies and practices to prevent the spread of infection.”
March 4, 2020	CMS issued a memo to State Survey Agencies suspending normal survey activity and issued guidance to nursing homes with respect to infection control.
March 10, 2020	CMS issued a memo to State Survey Agencies “expanding the types of facemasks healthcare workers may use in situations involving COVID-19 and other respiratory infections.”
March 13, 2020	CMS issued a memo to State Survey Agencies restricting nonessential medical staff and all visitors from nursing homes, except in certain limited situations. Note this guidance was revised on September 17, 2020.
March 23, 2020	CMS issued a memo to State Survey Agencies announcing a prioritization of survey activity for a three-week time frame. During that time, survey activity would focus exclusively on urgent “immediate jeopardy” situations and infection control inspections. The memo also included a simplified survey tool to be used by state surveyors.
March 30, 2020	CMS announced a suite of blanket regulatory waivers with respect to COVID-19 testing. It allowed a range of providers to perform such tests in nursing homes and other settings.
April 2, 2020	CMS issued recommendations to state governments and nursing homes relating to infection control and urging government leaders to work with nursing homes with regard to facilities’ equipment and supply needs.
April 15, 2020	CMS announced increased payment for certain lab tests to diagnose large numbers of COVID-19 cases.
April 19, 2020	CMS announced it would require nursing homes to report cases of COVID-19 to all residents, families and the CDC.

Date	Activity
May 1, 2020	CMS issued an Interim Final Rule , effective on May 8, 2020, operationalizing the April 19 announcement.
April 30, 2020	CMS announced the formation of an independent commission to conduct an assessment of the government's and nursing homes' response to the COVID-19 pandemic ("Coronavirus Commission on Safety and Quality in Nursing Homes")
May 18, 2020	CMS issued guidance regarding the reopening of nursing homes.
June 1, 2020	CMS issued a memo to State Survey Agencies revising survey activities, survey and certification funding under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, new enforcement standards for certain infection control infractions, and quality improvement activities in nursing homes. Note: This guidance was revised on January 4, 2021.
June 4, 2020	CMS posted the first COVID-19 nursing home data and Focused Infection Control survey results (since March 4, 2020) on the Nursing Home Compare website.
June 23, 2020	CMS released a Frequently Asked Questions document regarding nursing home visitation. Note: This document is now unavailable on the CMS website, as it was updated on March 10, 2021.
June 25, 2020	CMS issued a memo to State Survey Agencies ending the blanket waiver for nursing home staffing data submission.
July 10, 2020	CMS announced deployment of Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs) to nursing homes.
July 14, 2020	HHS and CMS announced the provision of point-of-care tests to Medicare-certified nursing homes possessing a Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments certificate of waiver.
July 22, 2020	CMS announced \$5 billion in Provider Relief Funds (PRF) for nursing homes, as well as the deployment of "federal Task Force Strike Teams" to provide nursing homes technical assistance.
August 7, 2020	HHS announced the distribution methodology for \$5 billion in PRF, with \$2.5 billion dedicated to increased staffing, testing, and personal protective equipment (PPE) and the remainder "linked to nursing home performance."

Date	Activity
August 25, 2020	CMS announced a national training program for nursing home staff and management.
August 25, 2020	CMS issued an Interim Final Rule including new testing requirements for nursing homes, requiring facilities to offer testing to residents in an outbreak or if a resident shows symptoms.
September 16, 2020	CMS published the findings of the Coronavirus Commission on Nursing Home Safety and Quality.
September 17, 2020	CMS issued a memo to State Survey Agencies containing new visitation guidance for nursing homes, providing “reasonable ways a nursing home can safely facilitate in-person visitation.” It also indicated CMS would approve civil money penalty funds to purchase tents and clear dividers for visitation purposes. This guidance was updated on March 10, 2021.
September 29, 2020	CMS announced an update to the methodology used to determine the rate of COVID-19 positivity in a given county for purposes of the staff testing requirement.
March 10, 2021	CMS issued a memo to State Survey Agencies that updated previous September 17, 2020 guidance regarding visitation. The memo considered various issues regarding vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals visiting nursing homes, as well as vaccinated and unvaccinated residents.