



IHSS Caregiving: Tips to Protect Yourself and Others

As an essential IHSS worker, your care helps members of LA Care live independently in the safety of their home. The more steps you take to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the safer we all will be.

Know How It Spreads

COVID-19 is a virus that may be passed from a person to person. This generally happens when people infected, cough, sneeze, sing, talk, or breathe and are physically near each other. It's possible that people who have COVID-19, won't show symptoms.

To protect yourself and prevent bringing COVID-19 into your client's home, wear a mask, wash your hands, and stay at least 6 feet apart, when you are around people who don't live in your home.

Wash Your Hands Often



- Use soap and water for at least **20 seconds**.
 - Before and after any caregiving activities.
 - This includes when you are putting on or taking off gloves and protective clothing.
- When soap and water are not available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**.
- If you can see dirt on your hands always use soap and water.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Wear a Mask in Shared Spaces and Around Others



- If your client has a respiratory illness, both of you should wear a **disposable** facemask.
- Disposable facemasks and gloves should only be used one time. Throw them in the trash after each use.
- Children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious and cannot take off the mask without assistance should **not** wear a mask.

Clean and Disinfect Surfaces Often



- Clean & disinfect areas that you and your client touch often.
- Use detergent or soap and water before you start to disinfect the area then, use a household disinfectant.



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Helping with Bathing Activities

- Bed baths are a good idea for patients with respiratory illness symptoms. This will help to keep your mask dry.

Helping with Bathroom Activities

- Close the toilet lid prior to flushing to avoid spraying or splashing.

Helping with Laundry

- Wear disposable gloves.
- Keep the soiled clothing and any dirty items away from your body.

Helping with Mealtime Activities

- Wash your hands before preparing meals.
- When you are helping your client eat, **remember** to wear your mask and gloves.
- It's important to wear your gloves when washing the dishes too.

Protective Gowns May Be a Good Idea

- Wear use a reusable or washable gown for caregiving activities where splashes and sprays are expected. Be sure to disinfect between uses. This will help keep your clothing dry.

During this outbreak, anyone in Los Angeles County with fever, cough, or shortness of breath is assumed to have **COVID-19** and must self-isolate at home.

This is by order of the Los Angeles County Public Health Department (LAC DPH) for all residents of L.A. County. Follow the LAC DPH Home Isolation instructions:

- Stay at home until at least **10 days** have passed after your symptoms first appeared AND you have had no fever for at least 24 hours (without the use of medicine that reduces fevers) AND your symptoms have improved (**for example, cough or shortness of breath**).
- Tell everyone you had close contact with, starting 48 hours before your symptoms, that they need to quarantine for 14 days. LAC DPH details guidance about home quarantine.
- Keep track of your symptoms and seek medical care right away if your symptoms get worse