



## Jackson County Department of Public Health

154 Medical Park Loop • Sylva, NC 28779

Tel: 828-586-8994 • FAX: 828-586-3493

Shelley Carraway  
DIRECTOR

**For Immediate Release: November 5, 2020**

**To: Jackson County Community & Stakeholders**

**From: Jackson County Department of Public Health**

**Re: Jackson County Department of Public Health Identifies COVID-19 Outbreak at Local Skilled Nursing Facility**

Jackson County Department of Public Health (JCDPH) has identified a COVID-19 outbreak at a local skilled nursing facility. The North Carolina Division of Public Health (NCDPH) defines an outbreak in a long term care setting, like a skilled nursing facility, as two or more laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 within two incubation periods (28 days) in the same facility.

Two (2) employees at the Skyland Care Center have tested positive for COVID-19. All positive employees are following isolation orders. Symptomatic individuals who test positive will be required to remain in isolation under the following conditions: 1) At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND, 2) At least 24 hours have passed since the last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND 3) Symptoms (like cough and shortness of breath) have improved. Asymptomatic individuals who test positive will be required to remain in isolation under the following conditions: 1) At least 10 days have passed since their positive test assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test.

JCDPH and other local health departments are working to identify any additional close contacts of these employees. The CDC defines close contact as being within approximately 6 feet of a person with an infection with COVID-19 for 15 cumulative minutes during their period of infectivity. Based on the information provided, county health officials will determine the close contacts' risk of exposure and which additional measures are needed like quarantine and/or testing.

Skyland Care Center continues to comply with all [Secretarial Orders](#) from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) to ensure the safety of its staff and residents. The Orders include guidance on communal dining, in-person visitation, and mandatory testing of staff. Once the first positive case was identified, Skyland Care Center coordinated with JCDPH to determine next steps. Quarantine and testing were recommended for close contacts of the first positive case. To protect the residents, in-person visitation and communal dining were immediately halted; mandatory testing of staff increased in frequency. Upon identification of the second case, Skyland Care Center continued mandatory testing of staff, continued monitoring residents for any symptoms, and coordinated testing for all residents. The investigation is ongoing.

For information about COVID-19, look to reliable sources like JCDPH, NCDHHS, and the CDC. Visit JCDPH's website at <http://health.jacksonnc.org/covid19>. For COVID-19 questions, call the Jackson County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at 828-631-HELP.

###