



State of Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Health
Health Standards Section

Memorandum

To: Louisiana Health Care Facilities

From: Louisiana Department of Health - Health Standards Section

Re: Requirements for Reoccupying and Reopening Following Emergency Events

Date: 2021

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), Health Standards Section, has established the following procedures for the repatriation of patients, residents, and clients of Louisiana hospitals, nursing homes, intermediate care facilities for developmentally disabled clients, and other licensed healthcare facilities. We are committed to the repatriation of special needs patients, residents, and clients as swiftly as possible to ensure safety and comfort, as well as to lessen the surge populations in health care facilities throughout the state.

This commitment requires that health care providers are forthcoming with the state about the status and condition of their facilities. While we do not want to impede the reopening and repatriation process, Health Standards will hold facilities responsible for the conditions to which they return patients, residents, or clients.

This memorandum applies to any healthcare facility that evacuates, temporarily relocates or temporarily ceases operation at its licensed location in an emergency event and supersedes any previously issued guidelines. Each facility will also need to comply with requirements of the LDH/Office of Public Health Sanitarian Services AND the Health Care Division of the Office of State Fire Marshal.

The procedures outlined in I and II below shall be followed in order to ensure the safest and quickest return to the healthcare facility.

- I. If the healthcare facility has not sustained any damage to the licensed location as a result of the emergency event, **AND** there was no power outage of more than 48 hours at the licensed location as a result of the emergency event, the healthcare facility may re-open/re-occupy at its licensed location and shall notify LDH, Health Standards Section (HSS) within 24 hours of reopening. (Can be done by Email or facsimile to HSS).
- II. For other evacuations, temporary relocations or temporary cessation of operations at a licensed location that do not meet the criteria noted in item I, the healthcare facility shall notify LDH, Health Standards Sections with a request to re-occupy the licensed facility.

A facility shall not repatriate the licensed location until it receives the determination by Health Standards, authorizing repatriation.

The request shall include:

- a. report of damage to the facility,
- b. the extent and duration of any power outages,
- c. the number of patient/clients that the facility plans to repatriate into the facility,
- d. staffing availability,
- e. ability to access emergency or hospital services that are operational in the area (if applicable), and,
- f. availability to access and obtain food, potable water, medications and all other necessary supplies for care of the patients/clients

NOTE: End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) facilities shall follow the technical considerations for bringing an ESRD facility back on line included in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) document, *Disaster Preparedness: A Guide for Chronic Dialysis Facilities (second Edition)* *Disaster Preparedness: A Guide for Chronic Dialysis Facilities (second Edition)* regarding disinfecting of systems, flushing and water testing. Verification that the process was followed shall be submitted with the request to re-open.

After review of the submitted documentation, LDH Health Standards Section shall make a determination for one of the following actions:

- I. An approval to re-open/re-occupy without an on-site inspection by Health Standards; or
- II. A determination of what on-site inspection(s) will be required before an approval to reopen will be granted. Such inspections may include OPH, Fire Marshall and Health Standards; or,
- III. Denial of re-opening.

The purpose of these inspections is to assure that the facility is in compliance with licensing standards including, but not limited to, the structural soundness of the building, sanitation code, staffing requirements and the execution of emergency plans.

The Health Standards Section in coordination with state and parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (OHSEP) will determine the facility's access to the community service infrastructure, including hospitals, transportation, physicians, professional services and necessary supplies.

Please Email or Fax requests to re-open/re-occupy healthcare facility to:

HSS.Mail@LA.GOV

LA Department of Health, Health Standards Section Fax #: **225-342-5073**