

Addressing Workforce Shortages Due to COVID-19

Below are ways in which State Affiliates can help long term care providers address workforce shortages due to COVID-19.

Crisis Help

- Meet with your state public health agency to see about getting help from the following sources when there is a critical workforce shortage in a building:
 - National Guard
 - [Medical Reserve Corps](#)
 - [FEMA](#)
 - [US Public Health Service](#)
- Consider asking your state to set-up a single, dedicated help line for providers to call to request help.
- Discuss with state officials about setting up “strike force” teams to help with acute, critical staffing shortages that, if not addressed, could cause facility closure or transfer of residents.
- Discuss the need for a public call for health care workers to help in nursing homes, assisted living, and ICF/IID.
- If not already done, request governor to allow licensed professionals to work across state lines and waive other licensing challenges (CEUs, testing, renewals, etc.)
- If not already done, request a waiver to allow Temporary Nurse Aid (TNA) and Temporary Feeding Assistant (TFA) positions based on AHCA/NCAL’s free 8-hour TNA and 1-hour TFA-trainings.
- Share information with your members of reputable staffing agencies.

Recruiting Clinical Staff

- AHCA/NCAL has a free training program for individuals to serve as a temporary nurse aide (www.TempNurseAide.com). As mentioned above, make sure that your state has the proper requirements or waivers of requirements to utilize this training program before promoting (AHCA/NCAL lists which states are eligible on the training websites).
- Talk to your state hospital association about finding staff to help – many have staff in elective and outpatient areas who may be free to help in SNFs.
- Reach out to fellow associations/organizations for opportunities to recruit staff who are not working due to closures (AMA, ADA, ANA, PACE, Adult Day Care, etc.)
- Reach out to local personal/home care providers as some are experiencing a lack of demand for services and have available staff
- Ask the state to reach out to all individuals in their licensing databases that are not working and are in good standing or license may have simply lapsed.
- Provide members ideas on recruiting clinical staff.
 - Recruit Elementary/High School nurses
 - Reach out to universities/tech schools/colleges to recruit staff with clinical degrees or students with clinical degrees who may be
 - Reach out to local health care providers who have had to lay off clinical staff (dentists, pediatricians, etc.)
- Coordinate efforts with workforce boards

- Contact the local vocational rehab for opportunities to help recruit staff.
- Contact the local [Health Profession Opportunity Grant](#) (HPOG) grantee organizations
- Contact staff who left on good terms.
- Remind members to use your job board, if you have one.

Recruiting Non-Clinical Staff

AHCA/NCAL has a free training program for individuals to serve as a temporary feeding assistant (www.TempFeedingAssistant.com). Currently (as of April 27), CMS has yet to issue a federal waiver for this position; therefore, **nursing homes should not utilize this training**. However, staff affiliates can continue to advocate for a state-level waiver to facilitate quick implementation should a federal waiver be issued.

Provide members ideas on recruiting non-clinical staff so that clinical staff can practice to their fullest scope.

- Contact family members of current staff and residents who might not be currently working
- Contact local hospitality groups
- Contact hotels and restaurants for housekeeping and dietary support
- Contact staff who left on good terms
- Reach out to higher learning institutions

Technology

Encourage members to explore innovative ways to connect with potential employees through technology (some examples are listed below – please note these have not been vetted by AHCA/NCAL staff and are not endorsed by AHCA/NCAL).

- Kare www.doyoukare.com
- Honor <https://www.joinhonor.com>

If your organization has a job board, consider reminding members of this opportunity to post positions.

Staff Benefits

Share ideas on how providers can incentivize employees to come to work.

- Pay for childcare for staff
- Collaborate with local restaurants, food pantries, and or the facility to provide food for staff and their families
- Provide additional healthcare benefits (100% employer covered, etc.)
- Offer “hero pay” (additional/overtime pay) during the pandemic
- AHCA/NCAL has created a [resource](#) with other ideas to support staff.

Work with the local government to ensure that childcare is available for essential workers. AHCA/NCAL has developed a [resource](#) with examples from states on daycare options for staff.

Are there other initiatives for recruiting staff during COVID-19 in your state that aren't included here? Please reach out to us at covid19@ahca.org to share more information.