



January 13, 2022

Dr. Mary Bassett
Commissioner, NYS Department of Health
Corning Tower
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12237

Dear Commissioner Bassett:

On behalf of Argentum NY, Empire State Association of Assisted Living (ESAAL), LeadingAge NY, and NYSCAL, the senior living associations representing New York State's 550 private pay and publicly funded licensed adult care facilities (ACFs), assisted living residences (ALRs), and Medicaid assisted living programs (ALPs), we welcome you in your role as Commissioner of Health. We are writing to you to request that ACFs, ALRs, and ALPs be given priority access to COVID-19 testing supplies. As you know, these providers serve populations that are among the more vulnerable to negative outcomes from COVID-19, and testing supplies are difficult to obtain.

ACFs/ALRs provide a resident-centered, senior living option that allows individuals to age in place in the setting of their choice. Statewide, these providers care for approximately 52,000 New Yorkers, many of whom are among the most vulnerable to COVID-19. The average resident is 85 years of age, requires assistance with at least three activities of daily living, and has multiple co-morbidities.

ACF and ALR providers have done and continue to do an extraordinary job in protecting their residents and staff from COVID-19 with very little support from the State or Federal government. Testing residents and staff on an on-going basis is crucial to ensuring that no community experiences the devastating outbreaks seen at the beginning of the pandemic. It is critical that at-home (rapid) testing supplies be made available to all ACFs and ALRs across the State as has been done for nursing homes. Additionally, we know New York City has prioritized testing supplies for the ACFs and ALRs in that region.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you in the near future to discuss other issues and concerns related to the senior living sector. In the interim, we appreciate your support in ensuring the State's ACF, ALR and ALPs have the testing supplies they need to continue to ensure the health and safety of their residents and staff.

We thank you for your attention in this matter and are available to provide additional information.

Sincerely,

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CC: Governor Hochul