

# Dramatic decline seen in COVID-19 cases, deaths at U.S. nursing homes

3 March 2021



New COVID-19 cases in U.S. nursing homes have fallen to their lowest number since the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) started keeping track in May 2020, which suggests that vaccines are helping and that it might be possible to loosen some nursing home restrictions, a new report says.

There has been an 82 percent decline in new COVID-19 cases among residents at nursing homes since the peak during the week of Dec. 20, when there were more than 30,000 new cases, CMS data show, according to the report from the American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL). During the same period, COVID-19 cases in the [general population](#) decreased by 46 percent, indicating that vaccines are especially helping to protect nursing [home](#) residents. The data also show that since Dec. 20, COVID-19 deaths in nursing homes fell by a substantial 63 percent.

The AHCA/NCAL represents more than 14,000

nursing homes and [long-term care facilities](#) nationwide that care for about 5 million people each year.

"We still have a long road ahead, but these numbers are incredibly encouraging and a major morale booster for frontline caregivers who have been working tirelessly every day for a year to protect our residents," Mark Parkinson, president and CEO of AHCA/NCAL, said in a statement. "This new data showcases just how important it is for nursing homes residents and staff, as well as the general public, to get the vaccine because it is clearly working."

In light of the new data, the AHCA/NCAL calls "on the [Biden] Administration to review its current guidance to nursing homes on restricting visitors and group activities," Parkinson said. "With millions of residents and caregivers now fully protected thanks to the vaccines, residents must be able to safely reengage in meaningful activities and be reunited with their loved ones."

**More information:** [More Information](#)

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