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To: Illinois Long Term Care Facilities, Illinois State Police, Illinois Fingerprint Vendors

Cc: Illinois Department of Aging Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, Illinois Long Term Care Trade Associations

From: Debra Bryars, Deputy Director, Office of Health Care Regulations
Chinyere Alu, Division Chief, Patient Safety and Quality

Date: March 20, 2020

Re: Long Term Care Facility Guidance for Screening and Assessment of Identified Offenders

To promote health and safety of long term care (LTC) facility residents and the public in light of COVID-19 spread, **the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is suspending all in-person resident assessments for the Identified Offenders Program effective immediately.**

The [Identified Offenders Program](#) aims to prevent abuse and promote the safety of residents, staff, and visitors in LTC from the risk of harm posed by residents with criminal backgrounds. Illinois legislation (210 ILCS 45/1-101 et seq., 210 ILCS 47/1-101 et seq., 210 ILCS 49/1-101 et seq., 210 ILCS 46/1-101 et seq.) requires that LTC and interim care facilities conduct background screening on all prospective admissions and notify IDPH and the Illinois State Police of those residents who are identified offenders. After an in-person criminal history investigation and risk assessment are completed, the facility is provided with a risk report and recommendation for security measures to incorporate into the resident's care plan.

Per March 13, 2020 revised COVID-19 [guidance](#) from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, nursing homes are to restrict visitation of all visitors and non-essential health care personnel, except for certain compassionate care situations. **Considering public health and public safety priorities and LTC resources, IDPH is instituting the following until further notice:**

- LTCs should only conduct name-based background checks for residents admitted to the facility. Fingerprinting of LTC residents should be suspended until further notice.
- LTCs should continue to report identified offenders to IDPH using the [web-based submission portal](#).
- Assessments of identified offender residents will be conducted via phone as feasible, with priority for offenders who pose highest risk of harm.

Facilities are responsible for taking all steps necessary to ensure the safety of residents at all times. Please direct all questions DPH.IOS@ILLINOIS.GOV.