**Template Message to Use with Staff on Testing**

Dear Staff:

Over the next [INSERT TIMEFRAME, E.G. TWO WEEKS], our facility will be testing all staff and residents for COVID-19. We understand that this may cause some anxiety, so we want to explain why this is important for the health and safety of both our residents and staff.

**Why is testing important?**

Coronavirus (COVID-19) poses a serious threat to older adults (especially 80 years old and older) and those with underlying health conditions. Since most of our residents fit this description, they are especially at risk if they contract COVID-19.

We also know that COVID-19 can be spread by individuals who are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic. This means that staff or residents could have the virus, but not show any symptoms or not show symptoms (sometimes very mild ones) for days. This is why facility-wide testing will be helpful to identify anyone who may have the virus but not know it.

Testing will provide a level of reassurance that staff and residents are not going to transmit the virus to each other, or their own loved ones and family members. It will allow us to take appropriate infection control steps, such as separating COVID positive patients from those who test negative, to protect them from contracting the virus.

**How is the test conducted?**

Currently, the majority of tests that diagnose COVID-19 collect samples using a nasopharyngeal swab. This uses a swap placed into the back of your nose. The collection takes approximately 20 seconds. Some people experience discomfort during the collection process, but it is momentary and does not cause long-lasting pain or any other problems.

**Who pays for my test?**

[INSERT DETAILS]

**What if I test positive?**

The CDC requires any healthcare professional who tests positive for COVID-19 remain out of work until your symptoms improve (if applicable) and you test negative for COVID-19 on two consecutive tests.

[INSERT ANY RELEVANT FACILITY POLICIES ON SICK LEAVE].

**Can I refuse?**

[INSERT ANY RELEVANT STATE OR LOCAL POLICIES ON REFUSALS]

**Remember, by participating in this testing, you are helping to keep our residents, yourself and your loved ones safe from a potentially life-threatening virus.** We are all in this together. We are here to provide support, resources and help during this difficult time. If you have additional concerns or want to discuss this further, please contact [NAME AND CONTACT INFO].