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## LOCAL NEWS

# Records detail deficiencies in San Antonio nursing home's COVID-19 control practices

Outbreak at Southeast Nursing and Rehabilitation Center led to deaths of 18 residents

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**Dillon Collier**, Investigative Reporter

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**SAN ANTONIO** – The Texas Health and Human Services Commission on Thursday released a 460-page report detailing complaints against Southeast Nursing Home and Rehabilitation Center, where COVID-19 ran rampant among residents and staff in April.

The partially redacted records were released in response to a records request filed by the KSAT 12 Defenders in July. According to state figures, a total of 17 employees and 77 residents were infected with COVID-19 at the nursing home, the site of San Antonio's first outbreak of the deadly virus. Eighteen residents in total have died of the virus.

HHS investigators investigated the nursing home in early May, records showed.

After a resident began showing symptoms of the infection in late March, "the facility failed to prevent six staff members from returning to work to provide care for residents" even after it was determined they were exposed to the virus. Four of the staff members, who had pending COVID-19 tests, were still working in the facility.



Staff members who tested positive for COVID-19 were supposed to self-isolate at home. "Based on interviews, this did not occur," according to the report.



compliant with multiple aspects of care, including resident rights, quality of life, quality of care, infection control and state and local regulations.

As a result, they were cited and had to submit a plan of correction to address the deficiencies found in May, records showed.

In June, two family members **sued the nursing home** for its handling of the outbreak.

In 2019, the nursing home had been cited for violations 28 times and **fined \$68,000**.

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A spokesperson who previously represented the facility said he no longer works with the facility.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS:



### Fares Sabawi

Fares Sabawi has been a journalist in San Antonio for three years. He has covered several topics, but specializes in crime, courts and data visualization.

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## Dillon Collier

Emmy-award winning reporter Dillon Collier joined the KSAT 12 Defenders in 2016. Dillon's investigative stories air weeknights on the Nightbeat. He provides restaurant health reports for KSAT's "Behind the Kitchen Door." Dillon is a two-time Houston Press Club Journalist of the Year and a Texas Associated Press Broadcasters Reporter of the Year.

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Unfortunately, hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies are all in it for the money. It's not for the staff or patients. The only time these places get things in order is when they will be reviewed by agencies or the state. Nursing homes are cash cows that play on family member's emotions to keep their loved one alive. They don't tell you they might be short staffed and some residents will be neglected.

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