

Covid-19 Resident Visitation Changes UPDATE: 12/24/2021

CMS released new clarification to visitation guidance on Friday 12/23/2021 Summary of changes is noted below:

****We are asking that all visitors wear masks at all times to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in an effort to keep all residents safe.**

KEY POINTS:

- Visitation is allowed for all residents at all times.
- Large gatherings are on hold at this time to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, please consider holding off on outings and gatherings that cannot maintain physical distancing.
- Visits will be now limited to 2 visitors per resident.
- If there is a roommate present in the room, visitors must visit at an open table space in the Chapel. Exception: Married couples sharing the same room would not need to leave the room.
- All visitors must sign in and sign out on the nursing units to keep track of visitors in the facility.
- Visitors need to help with adhering to the core principles of infection prevention including wearing a mask, performing hand hygiene (use of alcohol-based hand rub and/or hand washing) frequently and before / after each visit, and practicing physical distancing.
- There are still concerns associated with visitation such as visitation with an unvaccinated resident with the COVID-19 level of transmission is substantial or high.
- Visitors who have a positive viral test for COVID-19, symptoms of COVID-19 or currently meet the criteria for quarantine should not enter the facility.
- We must continue to screen all visitors who enter the facility.
- Visitors should not be roaming throughout the facility; they need to go directly to the visiting area.
- Residents are permitted to leave the facility – educate the resident and family to follow the core principles of COVID-19 (Masking, social distancing, get vaccinated and hand hygiene). We are recommending rescheduling large gatherings at this time due to high levels of community transmission.

While residents have the right to receive visitors at all times and make choices about aspects of their life in the facility that are significant to them, there may be times when the scope and severity of an outbreak warrants the health department to intervene with the facility's operations. We expect these situations to be extremely rare and only occur after the facility has been working with the health department to manage and prevent escalation of the outbreak. We also expect that if the outbreak is severe enough to warrant pausing visitation, it would also warrant a pause on accepting new admissions (as long as there is adequate alternative access to care for hospital discharges). For example, in a nursing home where, despite collaborating with the health department over several days, there continues to be uncontrolled transmission impacting a large number of residents (e.g., more than 30% of residents became infected*), the health department advised the facility to pause visitation and

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new admissions temporarily. In this situation, the nursing home would not be out of compliance with CMS' requirements.

OUTDOOR VISITATION:

- Outdoor visitation is preferred when the residents and/or visitors are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as they pose less risk for transmission.