

	<i>Policy and Procedure Manual</i>
Subject: Facility Visitation/Compassionate Caregiver During a PHE Prepared and Authorized by: Todd Zbytniewski, Administrator	Revised: 3/17/23 Original: 10/2020

Policy: It is the policy of this facility to ensure all residents have access to their families, friends, and advocates. The facility will follow the most updated Federal and State guidance for in-person visitation, personal caregiving visitation and compassionate caregiving visitation.

Procedure:

Visitation Guidelines:

- Outdoor visitation is the preferred visitation however, this facility will allow indoor visitation at all times and for all residents as permitted under state and federal regulations. The facility will not limit the frequency and length of visits for residents, the number of visitors, or require advance scheduling of visits unless directed by federal, state or local health authority.
- The facility will post instructional signage throughout providing education on core principles of infection prevention including:
 - COVID- 19 signs and symptoms
 - Use of face mask,
 - hand hygiene
- Screening/Testing:
 - In areas with high levels of community transmission, the facility may choose to actively screen all visitors prior to entering the facility. Active screening includes requiring anyone entering the facility to complete a symptom screening questionnaire or an in-person interview and/or have their temperature taken before being allowed entry into the facility. Additionally, the facility may choose to test or encourage visitors to be tested on their own before coming to the facility (e.g., within 2-3 days).
 - If the visitor is aware that they are positive or had a recent exposure they will be educated that they should defer non-urgent, in-person visitation until they meet Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) criteria for healthcare settings to end isolation. For visitors who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 infection, they will be educated that it is safest to defer non-urgent, in-person visitation until 10 days after their close contact, if they meet criteria described in CDC healthcare guidance (e.g., cannot wear source control).
- All visitors will be encouraged to be vaccinated. Showing proof of vaccination will not be required as a condition to the visit.
- Visits will be conducted in a manner that adheres to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention and does not increase risk to other residents.
- The facility will provide alcohol-based hand rub to visitors.

- Visitors will be encouraged to wear masks/source control during their visit for facilities in areas of high community transmission levels.
- The facility will encourage physical distancing during peak times of visitation (e.g., lunch time, after business hours, etc.) and large gatherings (i.e., parties, events).
- Residents, regardless of vaccination status, can choose not to wear face coverings or masks when other residents are not present and have close contact (including touch) with their visitor.
- Residents with roommates:
 - Ideally an in-room visit would be conducted when the roommate is not present, however if that is not an option, the visit could occur in a different area of the facility, occur at a time when the roommate is not in the room, or the visitors should be asked to limit the number of visitors that are in the room at one time and adhere to the core principles of infection control, including wearing a mask and performing frequent hand hygiene.
 - If a resident's roommate is unvaccinated or not up-to-date with all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses, or immunocompromised (regardless of vaccination status), visits should not be conducted in the resident's room, if possible.
 - For situations where there is a roommate and the health status of the resident prevents leaving the room, the facility will attempt to enable in-room visitation while adhering to the core principles of infection prevention.
- **Residents on Transmission Based Precautions:**
 - While not recommended, residents who are on transmission-based precautions (TBP) or quarantine can still receive visitors. In these cases, visits should occur in the resident's room and the resident should wear a well-fitting facemask (if tolerated).
 - Before visiting residents on TBP or quarantine, visitors should be made aware of the potential risk of visiting and precautions necessary in order to visit the resident.
 - Visitors should adhere to the core principles of infection prevention.
 - Facilities may offer well-fitting facemasks or other appropriate PPE, if available; however, facilities are not required to provide PPE for visitors.
- **Visitation During an Outbreak Investigation:** 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. While it is safer for visitors not to enter the facility during an outbreak investigation, visitors will still be allowed in the facility.
 - Visitors will be made aware of the potential risk of visiting during an outbreak investigation and instructed to adhere to the core principles of infection prevention including wearing of appropriate PPE during visits in isolation rooms/areas when visiting, regardless of vaccination status
 - Visits should ideally occur in the resident's room or designated visitation area.
 - The facility may limit the visitor's movement in the facility to only the location of the visit.
- If you experience any of the following symptoms contact your physician and notify the facility immediately: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle, head, or body aches, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.

Compassionate Caregiving Visitation:

In the event of federal, state or local restriction on visitation, compassionate care visits will still be allowed at all times. Compassionate Care visitation can include family, clergy, religious or other representatives. Compassionate Care includes but is not necessarily limited to end-of-life situations. Compassionate Care visits, and visits required under federal disability rights law, should be allowed at all times, regardless of a resident's vaccination status, the county's COVID-19 positivity rate, or an outbreak. Source control, hand hygiene, PPE, social distancing, and infection control measures will still need to be followed with these visits. Testing is not required. Additional examples provided by CMS include:

- A resident, who was living with their family before recently being admitted to a nursing home, is struggling with the change in environment and lack of physical family support.
- A resident who is grieving after a friend or family member recently passed away.
- A resident who needs cueing and encouragement with eating or drinking, previously provided by family and/or caregiver(s), is experiencing weight loss or dehydration.
- A resident, who used to talk and interact with others, is experiencing emotional distress, seldom speaking, or crying more frequently (when the resident had rarely cried in the past).

References:

- Nursing Home screening and Testing 3/17/23
 - https://www.health.ny.gov/press/releases/2023/2023-03-17_nursing_home_guidance_update.htm
- Nursing Home Visitation - COVID-19 (REVISED 9/23/22):
 - <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf>
- DAL- NH 21-27 Subject: Revised Nursing Home Visitation Guidelines 11/16/21
- NYS DOH Health Advisory: Nursing Home Testing, Cohorting and Visitation Guidance. 10/13/22
- NYS DOH Health Advisory Nursing Home Staff and Visitation Requirements January 12, 2022
 - [https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2022/01/health-advisory-nursing-home-visitation_1-12-22.pdf#:~:text=For%20visitors%20who%20visit%20for,7%2C%20and%20so%20on\).](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2022/01/health-advisory-nursing-home-visitation_1-12-22.pdf#:~:text=For%20visitors%20who%20visit%20for,7%2C%20and%20so%20on).)
- Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html>