



## COVID-19 VISITATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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Approved By: <u>Oluranti Alade</u> Administrator		<u>2/14/2023</u> Date

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### **POLICY**

It is the policy of Lawrence Nursing Care Center to promote and support visitation for residents, families and resident representatives while ensuring safety and adherence to infection prevention strategies to minimize any potential spread of infection. This will be done in accordance with all State and Federal guidance for the prevention of COVID-19.

### **PURPOSE**

To enhance resident quality of life by implementing visitation to reduce psychological impacts of isolation from family and representatives.

### **NYSDOH CRITERIA (revised 2 22 21)**

Nursing Homes may conduct **limited visitation and activities under the following revised NYSDOH guidelines.**

The facility is in full compliance with all state and federal requirements, state Executive Orders and guidance, state reporting requirements including COVID-19 focus surveys, HERDS and staff testing surveys, and federally required submission of COVID-19 data to the NHSN.

1. The facility has protocols to separate residents into cohorts of positive, negative, and unknown as well as separate staff teams to deal with COVID-positive residents and nonpositive residents.
2. The facility has completed the NY Forward Safety Plan and submitted a copy of the complete plan to [covidnursinghomeinfo@health.ny.gov](mailto:covidnursinghomeinfo@health.ny.gov). The facility must retain a copy of the plan at the facility where it is accessible and immediately available upon request of the Department or local health department.

The **absence of any new onset of COVID-19 cases in the last 14 days and the facility is not currently conducting outbreak testing** as reported on daily HERDS submissions.

3. Adherence to written screening protocols for all staff during each shift, each resident daily, and all persons entering the facility or grounds of the facility, including visitors. Visitors may be asked for ID as needed.
4. Documentation of screening will be maintained in an electronic format and available upon request of the NYSDOH.
5. Resident monitoring must include daily symptom checks, vital signs, and pulse oximetry.

**PROCEDURE:**

- Beginning February 26, 2021, Nursing Homes may expand visitation and/or activities, while following NYSDOH revised guidance.
- Facility visitation may be conducted through a variety of means:
  - Dedicated visitation spaces
  - Outdoors (weather permitting)
- In order to limit movement in the facility during visitation, the following guidelines will be followed:
  - When weather permits, visitation will take place in the designated outdoor area(s).
  - When weather does not permit, visitation will take place in the designated monitored indoor area(s).
    - Visitor(s) will go to designated area for visitation on the first floor.
- Visits will be made in advance and scheduled by Activities Staff.
  - The facility will assign staff to assist with the transition of residents, monitoring of visitation, and cleaning and disinfecting areas used for visitation after each visit using an EPA-approved N-List disinfectant.
  - The facility will post signage regarding facemask utilization and hand hygiene and uses applicable floor markings for social distancing.
  - A log will be kept for all visitors that includes:
    - First and last name of the visitor;
    - Daytime and evening telephone number;
    - Date and time of visit;
    - Email address, if available;
    - Temperature will be taken at the kiosk
  - Visitors and residents must wear a facemask or face covering (must always cover both the nose and mouth) when on the premises of the facility. Masks will be available on hand for visitors as needed. (Residents refusal to wear face mask will be documented).
  - Visiting areas will have easily accessible alcohol-based hand rub for residents, visitors, and staff.
  - Visitors who are younger than 16 years old must be accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.
  - **No more than 20 percent** of the resident census shall have visitors at any one time and the number of visitors / times allocated for each visit should be considered as many loved ones will want to avail of such visits.
  - Current COVID-19 positive residents, residents with COVID-19 signs or symptoms, and residents in a 14-day quarantine or observation period are not eligible for visits.

- The facility will post a fact sheet outlining visitor expectations including appropriate hand hygiene and face coverings.
- Facilities must use [COVID-19 county positivity rates](#) to determine how to facilitate indoor visitation, and must follow the below:
  - **Low (<5%)** = Visitor testing is strongly advised. Facilities may use rapid testing.
  - **Medium (5%-10%)** = Visitor testing is required. Visitors must present a negative COVID-19 test result from within the past 72 hours, or facilities may utilize rapid testing to meet the testing requirement. Alternatively, the visitor(s) may provide proof of having completed the COVID-19 vaccination series no less than 14 days prior to the date of the visit but also within 90 days of the last vaccination. NYSDOH has indicated that proof of vaccination is not a guarantee that a visitor is not transmitting COVID-19, so testing is still recommended.
  - **High (>10%)** = Visitation must only occur for compassionate care situations. Facilities should offer rapid testing whenever possible.
- Facilities should limit movement in the facility.
  - i.e. Visitors should not walk around throughout the facility. Instead, they should go directly to the area dedicated to visitation. If a resident shares a room, visitation should not be conducted in the resident's room.
- Residents will also be assisted to go outdoors with staff supervision weather permitting. The appropriate infection control and safety and social distancing requirements must be maintained.
- The IDT Team will review the Visiting program and monitor for any needed adjustments and report to QA Committee as needed.
- If any visitor fails to adhere to the protocol, he/she/they will be prohibited from visiting for the duration of the COVID-19 State declared public health emergency.

### **Compassionate Care Visits:**

Compassionate Care Visits are permitted when visitation may not otherwise be permitted (in accordance with NYSDOH current visitation guidance), and facilities may waive requirement of a visitor presenting a negative COVID-19 test prior to commencement of such visit under the following circumstances:

- Newly admitted residents with difficulty adjusting to the facility environment and lack of in-person family support
- Residents recently grieving the loss of a friend or loved one.
- Residents who previously received in-person support and/or cueing from family for eating and drinking and are now experiencing dehydration and/or weight loss.
- Residents who are exhibiting signs and symptoms of emotional stress (i.e. seldom speaking or crying more frequently when the resident had rarely cried in the past, refusing to participate in an activity/activity, staying in bed longer than usual, exhibiting behavior considered abnormal for the resident).
- Residents who receive religious or spiritual support from clergy or another layperson.

The situations above are not intended to be an exhaustive list. Additional companionate care situations may be considered by the facility on a resident-specific basis. Testing to be encouraged / facilitated wherever possible.

## **End of Life Visits**

For any resident assessed to potentially be at the end-of-life, family/resident representative will be contacted by SW/Designee to allow visitation. Testing is not required for end-of-life visits. Family will be screened, provided with PPE and escorted to resident's room.

On November 16, 2021, Revised visitation guidelines was issued by the Department of Health which was detailed in [QSO-20-39-NH Revised \(PDF\)](#).

Lawrence Nursing Care Center will comply with this regulation to adhere to the Core Principles of COVID-19 infection Prevention which includes the following:

- Visitors who have a positive viral test for COVID-19, symptoms of COVID-19, or currently meet the criteria for quarantine, will not be allowed to enter the facility. Lawrence Nursing Care Center will continue to screen all visitors.
- Hand hygiene with the use of alcohol-based hand rub is provided
- Face masks are provided at the entrance which must cover the mouth and nose and physical distancing at least six feet in between people in accordance with CDC guidance.
- Instructional signage is posted throughout the facility on COVID-19.
- Cleaning and disinfecting high frequency touched surfaces and designated visitation areas after each visit.
- Appropriate staff use of personal protective equipment.

Residents and Staff testing conducted as required at 42 CFR & 483.80(h) (see [QSO-20-38-NH REVISED \(PDF\)](#)) as referenced in NH-DAL 21-23 issued October 27, 2021.

Visitors must present a negative COVID-19 test performed within 72 hours at the time of visit. If unable to present, Lawrence Nursing Care Center will do a rapid antigen test prior to visitation.

Ombudsman and the NYSDOH agencies will continue to have access to the facility and residents as required by this regulation.

Communal Activity and Dining are permitted for residents and patients while adhering to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention.

In conjunction with the CDC directives outlined in NYSDOH DAL 23-02 and CMS QSO 20-39, Lawrence Nursing Care Center will follow all guidelines for Infection Control Source Control to prevent the transmission of Covid-19 and other viral diseases i.e. Influenza. As per NYSDOH, Facilities are to follow the Community transmission levels found on the CDC Tracker. If levels for covid transmission is HIGH; then all staff must continue to wear Masks on all Resident Care Units. However, the Facility reserves the right to continue Mask Mandate

despite community transmission levels in an effort to protect our residents from covid-19 virus transmission.

In addition; any staff who did not have the flu vaccine must wear a mask at all times to prevent transmission of Influenza as per ongoing DOH directives

All visitors to the Facility will continue to be screened and are expected to continue to comply with wearing Masks to prevent covid and viral transmissions to our Residents and Staff. All visitors are expected to comply with all Infection Control and Source Control directives for the safety of our Residents and staff.

The Facility staff will continue to follow all Infection Control measures for residents with known or suspected covid virus including full PPE, gloves and Masks. The Facility will continue to comply with ongoing Infection Control education to our staff, Visitors and all who enter our building with CDC information, Posters and diligent hand hygiene for the protection of our residents.

The Facility will continue to respect and follow all covid testing guidance for residents who are symptomatic of viral illness in conjunction with testing of staff as needed. Our notification system to families and Significant Others will remain active for the duration of the covid pandemic.