

**11/29/21- We are excited to announce that we are able to do all visitation at this time and visits do not need to be scheduled. Please contact the Social Services Director if you have any questions regarding the new policy.**

### **COVID-19 Updates and Notifications**

Dear Residents, Resident Representatives, Resident Loved Ones and Staff,

COVID -19 is a respiratory illness that is spread through coughing, sneezing, and contact with mucus or saliva from the nose, mouth or throat of an infected individual. Older patients and those with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States put a temporary ban on all visitors and nonessential personnel allowed in skilled nursing facilities due to COVID-19 and vulnerable population we serve. That same day, our facility followed all Executive Orders and continued to only allow essential personnel into the facility after passing our COVID-19 screening process. Essential personnel included facility staff, physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, therapy staff, EMT, x-ray technicians, pharmacy staff and transport drivers for essential medical appointments.

On November 15, 2021, the Arizona Department of Health Services updated their visitation guidelines for long term care facilities. The following are requirements and measures for all visitation:

- Outdoor visitation is the preferred visitation method, even if both visitor and resident have received a COVID vaccine, and can occur when outdoor temperatures are considered safe according to the resident's individual medical condition and plan of care.
- Indoor visitation is allowed at all times for all residents except with the following entry restrictions:
  - a) Visitor has a positive viral test for COVID 19
  - b) Visitor has COVID like symptoms
  - c) Visitor meets criteria for quarantine per CDC guideline
- Prior to visitation, all visitors will be screened for:
  - a. Fever ( $T \geq 100.0^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) or chills
  - b. Cough
  - c. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - d. Fatigue
  - e. Muscle or body aches
  - f. Headache
  - g. New loss of taste or smell
  - h. Sore throat
  - i. Congestion or runny nose
  - j. Nausea or vomiting
  - k. Diarrhea
- A COVID test is not required for visitation.
- Medical appropriate masks to be worn by residents (when safe), and visitors. Bandanas and neck gaiters do not qualify as masks.
- Visitors must follow the social distancing guidelines for maintaining safety within the facility which is six (6) feet between people.

- Visitors must utilize proper hand hygiene and must sanitize hands before throughout and after their visit.
- Visitors to inform facility if they develop fever or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 within 14 days of visiting the facility.
- Visitor required to complete visitor log for contact tracing purposes. Visitors who do not comply with these measures will be denied access to the facility.
- Visits will be conducted with an adequate degree of privacy by requiring staff to maintain a reasonable distance during visitation.
- Visitors understand there are risks associated with visitation to both the resident as well as themselves.
- Indoor Visitation during an outbreak investigation:
  - a) Visitation can still occur in the facility during an outbreak investigation. An outbreak investigation is initiated when a new nursing home onset case is identified
  - b) Visits will occur in the resident's room unless the resident has an unvaccinated or immunocompromised roommate.

Compassionate care visits are allowed at all times. Compassionate care visits include visits for end-of-life or terminal diseases. These visits also include visits by clergy, necessary healthcare professionals and professionals assisting individuals with disabilities, including the use of licensed sign language interpreters and other communication service providers.

Regulatory and investigative personnel who are not employees of the facility but ensure health and safety of the residents, such as law enforcement, ADHS/CMS licensing surveyors, APS Investigators, and health plan quality assurance investigators, etc., will be permitted to come into the facility as long as they are not subject to a work exclusion due to an exposure to COVID-19 in the past 14 days or show signs or symptoms of COVID-19 after being screened.

Our facility is currently following the CDC guidelines for outbreak testing. Our facility continues to follow all Executive Orders, Centers for Disease Control guidelines and Arizona Department of Health Services regulations for skilled nursing facilities. Our facility also works closely with the Mohave County Public Health and follows their continued guidance in our efforts to keep our residents and staff safe.

Our facility has followed and continues to follow CDC guidelines and everyday preventative actions such as:

- Washing hands as this is the number one way to prevent the spread of infection. All essential staff wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water immediately upon entrance of facility, after providing resident cares, using the restroom, before and after eating, shaking and holding hands.
- Utilization of alcohol based hand sanitizer
- Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue and immediately throw the tissue in the trash and clean hands with soap and water.
- Masks worn in facility when within six (6) feet of staff or resident
- Screening of all staff prior to entry of facility, staff self-screening though out their shift and screening of staff prior to exiting the facility after shift. Screening requires staff to stay home when sick and having symptoms such as temperatures over 100 degrees F, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of smell or taste, sore throat, congestion or runny nose and nausea or vomiting or those who have had any contact with a COVID-19 patients outside the facility.

Our facility continues to be proactive by vigorously following all cleaning and disinfection procedures and be using EPA approved cleaning products. This means daily sanitizing of highly touched surfaces which include but are not limited to flat surfaces, door knobs, objects that are touched often, such as bathrooms, water fountains, tables, handrails, faucet handles, phones, etc. Our facility participated in our COVID-19 Focused Survey for Nursing Homes with the Arizona Department of Health Services to determine whether our facility is implementing proper infection prevention and control practices to prevent the development and transmission of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases and infections. We completed this survey with no issues or concerns.

As of August 15, 2022 our facility has 8 active cases of COVID-19, which includes 2 resident and 6 staff members.

We will continue to monitor closely and follow all Arizona Department of Health Services, Mohave County Health Department and CDC guidelines. In the event we would have a positive or suspected COVID-19 case within our facility, we would notify you within 24 hours or by 5:00 pm by next day, whichever is sooner. This update will be via our COVID-19 Update link on the homepage of our facility web page.

We appreciate your understanding as we navigate through these unprecedented times. If you have any questions, please reach out to the facility Administrator.

Sincerely,

Julio Casas, Administrator

August 15, 2022, at 2:45 pm

# Long Term Care Visitation | Frequently Asked Questions

## Testing

### **Who is allowed inside the home/facility without proof of a negative COVID-19 test?**

Normal visits are permitted without proof of a negative COVID-19 test or proof of vaccination. Outdoor visitation is always permitted and indoor visitation is generally permitted except under certain conditions and with specific requirements. Therapy dogs should be permitted, however, any handler must adhere to the facility's visitation policy. Regulatory and investigative personnel who are not employees of the facility but ensure the health and safety of the residents, such as law enforcement, ADHS/CMS licensing surveyors, APS Investigators, and health plan quality assurance investigators, etc., are permitted to come into the facility as long as they are not subject to a work exclusion due to an exposure to COVID-19 or show signs or symptoms of COVID-19 after being screened. These agencies should adhere to the facility's infection control policies and any other applicable guidelines (i.e. PPE, etc...), but their access will not be denied due to the pandemic.

## Protection and Privacy

### **When do I need to wear a mask?**

For all visitation, both indoor and outdoor, vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals will be required to wear a medically approved mask (bandana and gaiter mask not permitted) that covers their nose and mouth at all times while they are visiting their loved ones. Visitors who are unable or unwilling to adhere to the requirements of COVID-19 infection prevention, such as wearing a medically approved mask at all times and maintaining six (6) foot physical distance (if required), will not be permitted to visit or will be asked to leave.

### **What happens if a resident is unable to wear a mask due to medical purposes, such as dementia, or is on supplemental oxygen?**

We understand that there are situations where residents are unable to wear masks. In such cases, our facility will accommodate the situation and not ban a family member or resident from visitation if the resident is unable to wear a mask. The visitor, however, is required to wear a medically approved mask at all times even when the resident is unable to.

### **As a resident, will I have privacy during my visitation?**

Our facility will enable visits to be conducted with an adequate degree of privacy by requiring staff to maintain a reasonable distance during visitation. Visitors who are unable to adhere to the requirements of COVID-19 infection prevention, such as wearing a medically approved mask at all times and maintaining six (6) foot physical distance (if required), will not be permitted to visit or will be asked to leave.

### **What can I do to keep myself and my loved ones safe?**

As recommended by the Arizona Department of Health Services, it is encouraged that visitors wear a medical grade mask, wash hands frequently or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, maintain a six (6) foot physical distance when able, and stay home if feeling symptomatic.

## **Visitation**

### **What if a resident is bed restricted and cannot be moved outside for visitation?**

Our facility allows visitation for resident's who are bed restricted and unable to attend visitation outdoors or in an identified location.

Additionally, for situations where there is a roommate and the health status of the resident prevents leaving the room, our facility will attempt to enable in-room visitation while adhering to the infection prevention requirements for COVID-19.

### **Can I be visited by my pastor or religious figure?**

Yes. However, visitation is subject our facility policies and the visitor must wear a medically approved mask, hand sanitize with alcohol based hand sanitizer before and after the visit, and complete a visitor log for contract tracing purposes.

### **Can the Arizona Center for Disability Law visit the facility in person?**

Yes, ACDL plays an important role and is permitted into our facility unless the ACDL staff member has an active COVID-19 case or the resident they seek to visit is actively infected.

### **Are Attorneys considered essential visitors for the purposes of urgent legal matters?**

Most attorneys are offering virtual services, which is preferred. However, attorney visitation will be allowed unless they are subject to a work exclusion due to an exposure to COVID-19 or show signs or symptoms of COVID-19 after being screened.

### **When can visits take place and how long can visits be?**

Designated visiting hours are necessary to ensure adequate staffing for screening visitors and enhanced cleaning and sanitation of areas after visitation.

Designated facility visitation hours are Monday through Saturday between 8 am and 4 pm by appointment only. Within reason, there is not a time limit on how long a visit can be by a Designated Essential Visitor. For all other visitors, there is only one (1) visit permitted per day. The length of visitation in our facility is fifteen (15) minutes and only two (2) visitors are allowed per resident. The total number of visitors allowed in our facility at one time will be limited to two due to staffing requirements to accommodate each visitation.

### **If I am visiting, can I bring my loved one a gift or outside food/drinks (homemade or store bought)?**

Yes, visitors are welcome to bring gifts or food. We know gifts can be important to both the giver and the recipient and something as small a coffee or cookie from a restaurant or made at home can brighten a resident's day. Our facility will need to be aware of and approve any gifts of food to ensure the food conforms to the resident's dietary restrictions if applicable. Also, food brought into the facility as a gift must be consumed within two (2) hours of the visit or the food will be discarded for food safety purposes. Food will not be reheated by the facility and refrigerated food cannot be stored by the facility.

## Miscellaneous

### **What phase is my county in?**

Please click below to find out what phase Mohave County is in (minimal, moderate, or substantial).

<https://data.cms.gov/stories/s/COVID-19-Nursing-Home-Data/bkwz-xpvg>

### **My loved one is in a memory care facility, do these guidelines apply to memory care?**

Yes. The term “memory care,” is often used by licensed Residential Care Facilities (Assisted Living) or licensed Nursing Care Institutions (Nursing Homes, or Long-Term Care) to describe a type of service or care unit within the facility.

### **Why are there various requirements for long-term care visitation while other establishments (gyms, restaurants, salons, etc.) do not have to abide by many of the same rules?**

For several months, long-term care facilities including skilled nursing facilities and assisted living facilities have strictly limited visitation to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 among residents whose ages and conditions make them especially vulnerable to the illness. The mitigation efforts of Arizonans plus the temporary visitation guidance is in place to keep our vulnerable populations safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.