



# Visitation and Communal Activity Guidance

## Long Term Care

Currently, the Monument Health Long Term Care facilities are offering limited indoor and outdoor visitation services of immediate family members, friends, and legal authorized representatives (LAR) of current residents.

Residents may have conditions that may make them more vulnerable to severe illness related to COVID-19, we are taking every precaution to ensure the health and safety of all residents. The current limitations are due to the current recommendations from the South Dakota Department of Health & Human Services for limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Long Term Care facilities.

Monument Health Assisted Living (MHAL) residents, in addition to below, may receive a visitation from immediate family members, friends, and LAR's including any individual(s) that may provide a benefit (Health, Social, Legal, etc.) or meet the needs of a particular resident provided it does not impose on the rights of another resident. At any time, an MHAL resident has the right to withdraw consent, refuse visitation, and or cease visitation as provided by South Dakota Administrative Rule 34-12-67 (1-3).

For safe visitation of a residence, please follow the guidance below:

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR VISITOR ENTRY**

- Visitors, regardless of their vaccination status, are required to wear a [well-fitting cloth mask, facemask, or respirator](#) (N95 or a respirator approved under standards used in other countries that are similar to NIOSH-approved N95 filtering facepiece respirators) [for source control](#), except as described in the scenarios below.
- Visitors are required to be screened and restricted from visiting, regardless of their vaccination status, if they have:
  - current SARS-CoV-2 infection;
  - symptoms of COVID-19;
  - or prolonged close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over 24 hours) with someone with SARS-CoV-2 infection in the prior 14 days or have otherwise met criteria for quarantine.
- For all visits, no one under the age of 12 can visit the facility. Exceptions can be made if discussed in advance with Facility Management.
  
- Please wear a mask before presenting to the main entrance of the facility.
  - a. A mask *may* be provided while supplies last.
  - b. A mask is required to be worn during the duration of the visit.**
  - c. Failure to wear a mask may prevent/stop visitation.

### **VISITOR SELF-SCREENING PROTOCOL**

- It is the responsibility of each visitor to ensure they explicitly follow the entirety of the screening protocol for self-screening. If it is determined that a visitor did not complete the screening in full, they may be asked to leave and instructed that next time they return they must fill it out in its entirety. If a visitor chooses to bypass the screening entirely or chooses to be untruthful on the screening tool, they

may be restricted from future access to the facility until the Public Health Emergency is lifted and CMS and CDC guidance is relaxed.

- At the main entrance of the facility, all visitors will be required to self-screen for COVID-19 signs and symptoms utilizing the Visitor Screening Tool to gather details about the visitor(s) including Date/Time of Visit, Name/Contact Information, and Signs/Symptoms related to COVID-19. Self-screening includes taking a temperature utilizing the provided thermometer.
  - a. If self-screening is difficult to complete for the visitor, please request assistance from an employee of the facility. Do not proceed further in the facility without a complete and proper screening.
  - b. If a temperature of greater than 100° F (or subjective fever if less than 100° F) is recorded a visitation will not be allowed.
  - c. If any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 are experienced by the visitor, visitation will not be allowed.
- If a visitor as had a known exposure (cumulative of >15 minutes within a 24 hour period) to ~~with~~ a known positive person with COVID-19, visitation will not be allowed for 14 days. Once the Visitor Screening Tool is complete, please sanitize hands using the provided alcohol foam hand sanitizer.

## **FOLLOWING FACILITY SAFETY RULES AND INFECTION CONTROL PRACTICES**

- Visitors will be expected to comply with all active facility PPE requirements and infection control guidelines.
  - a. Failure to comply with PPE requirements and infection control guidelines may prevent/stop the visitation.
  - b. Caregivers may passively monitor interactions to ensure guidelines are followed.
- At the screening station, a streamlined copy of the facility visitation policy will be available for visitors. This will include rules for visitation and core infection control practices that visitors are expected to adhere to while in the facility.
- Signing the visitor screening form acknowledges that the visitor has read and understand these documents, and that they will adhere to all facility rules and facility signage.
  - a. Completing and signing the visitation screening form is not optional. Failure to do so will result in removal from facility and restricted access to facility visitation.
- Responsibility for complying with core infection control practices during visitation (as outlined below) are the responsibility of the visitors and residents. Failure to consistently comply with, or consistently and willfully disregard facility rules and infection control practices will result in removal from facility and restrictions from future visits.
- Core infection control practices that visitors are required to adhere to are as follows:
  - a. Visitors must sanitize their hands upon entry.
  - b. Visitors must wear masks at all times regardless of vaccination status. There are no exceptions.
  - c. If indicated by signage or resident infection control/COVID-19 precautions, visitors must comply with all specified PPE requirements.
  - d. Resident must wear masks at all times unless they meet various vaccination criteria as defined in the “visitor and resident vaccination status” section of this policy.
  - e. Social distancing must be maintained unless the visitors and residents meet various vaccination criteria as defined in the “visitor and resident vaccination status” section of this policy.
  - f. Hand hygiene should be performed by the patient/resident and the visitors before and after contact.
  - g. High-touch surfaces in visitation areas should be frequently cleaned and disinfected.

- h. Visitors, regardless of their vaccination status, should physically distance (maintaining at least 6 feet between people) from other patients/residents, visitors that are not part of their group, and HCP in the facility, except as described in the scenarios below.
- i. All visits are limited to two visitors per resident unless otherwise approved by facility management.

## **VISITOR AND RESIDENT VACCINATION STATUS – EXCEPTIONS TO VISITATION RULES**

### ***Physical distancing and source control requirements when both the resident and ALL of their visitors are fully vaccinated:***

- While in the patient/resident's room or the designated visitation room, residents and their visitor(s) can choose to have close contact (including touch). However, visitors must always wear a mask regardless of their vaccination status. There are no exceptions to this rule.
- The vaccinated resident may choose not to wear a mask while visiting in their room if all of their visitors are vaccinated.
- If the visit is occurring in a semi-private room, the curtain must be pulled, regardless of whether or not the roommate is in the room while visitation is taking place and regardless of roommate vaccination status.
- Regardless of vaccination status, visitors will be required to wear source control and physically distance from other healthcare personnel and other residents/visitors that are not part of their group at all other times while in the facility.

### ***Physical distancing and source control requirements when either the resident or any of their visitors are not fully vaccinated:***

- In the event that the resident or one or more visitor is not fully vaccinated, it is recommended that social distancing is maintained throughout the visit. However, if the resident is fully vaccinated, they can choose to have close contact (including touch) with their unvaccinated visitor(s).
- During the visit all visitors **MUST** wear a mask throughout the duration of their visit, regardless of their vaccination status. There are no exceptions to this rule.
- Regardless of the resident's vaccination status, the resident is required to wear a mask for the duration of the visit. If cognitive status or other health conditions prevent or make it unsafe to wear a mask for the resident to wear the mask for extended periods of time, this requirement will be lifted for **ONLY** the resident.
- If the visit is occurring in a semi-private room, the curtain must be pulled, regardless of whether or not the roommate is in the room while visitation is taking place and regardless of roommate vaccination status.

## **NUMBER OF VISITORS PER RESIDENT**

- For all visit type, no more than two visitors per resident at a time.

## LOCATION OF VISITS

- If able, the facility respectfully asks that consideration is given to having the visitation taking place in a designated indoor/outdoor visitation area where the visit can be monitored.
- At this time, visitation in public locations are not permitted, unless that public location is a designated visit space and other residents can be reasonably and fairly removed from the location. Each Monument Health LTC facility has designated spaces for these visits. Other public spaces are not permitted for visitation.
- However, due to limited communal space, self-screening protocols, and other measures in place to keep residents safe and staff safe, visitation may now occur in a semi-private room without prior approval and without requiring roommates to leave during visitation.
  - a. If the visit is occurring in a semi-private room, the curtain must be pulled, regardless of whether or not the roommate is in the room while visitation is taking place and regardless of roommate vaccination status.
  - b. Depending upon circumstances and variables, the facility may return to no semi-private room visitation for individuals or facility-wide, unless it is medically necessary. Variables include:
    - i. Failure of resident visitors to adhere to screening and infection control requirements (on an individual or facility-wide basis);
    - ii. High county positivity rate;
    - iii. Facility COVID-19 status.
- All changes to visit location restrictions will be communicated to families, residents, and staff.

## VISIT TYPES – DESCRIBED IN DETAIL LATER IN THE POLICY

- Routine visits
- Window visits
- Compassionate care visits
- Essential visitors
- COVID-19 related Quarantine and isolation visits

## VISITATION SCHEDULING REQUIREMENTS

- All visit types (EXCEPT FOR QUARANTINE/ISOLATION VISITS) are no longer required to be scheduled with management.
- If a visitor arrives and the resident they have come to visit already has two visitors, the newly arrived visitor will be required to leave the facility and return at a later time.
- At any time, the facility may choose to return to scheduled visits for all visit types and more restrictive visitation guidelines for the entire facility or for individual residents. Reasons for returning to scheduled visits include but are not limited to:
  - a. Failure of resident visitors to adhere to screening and infection control requirements (on an individual or facility-wide basis);
  - b. High county positivity rate;
  - c. Individual resident isolation or quarantine status (visits are REQUIRED to be scheduled in these situations);
  - d. Facility COVID-19 status.
- All changes to scheduling requirements will be communicated to families, residents, and staff.

## **ROUTINE VISITATION**

- Visitors may come for visits any time Monday through Sunday between the hours of 7 AM and 8 PM.
- If a visitor arrives and the resident already has two visitors, the newly arrived visitor will be required to leave the facility and return at a later time.
- Routine visits will not take place when the county positivity rate is over 10% or when the facility is in outbreak testing due to one or more COVID positive residents or staff member (variances apply depending on timing of staff positive test and date last worked).

## **WINDOW VISITS**

- Window visits are still optional if family and resident feel that it is safer to do so in place of an indoor or outdoor visit.
- Window visits are not required to be scheduled.
- Calling ahead to ask the facility to open the window and sit the resident up is appreciated.
- Windows are no longer required to remain shut during visits.
- CONSIDERATION: please understand that temperature control in the facility is difficult when windows are open. If at all possible, other forms of visitation are preferred.
- CONSIDERATION: other types of visits aside from quarantine and isolation visits, are not required to be scheduled. This is for visitor, resident, and staff convenience. Please understand that calling ahead or coming into the facility to request the resident to be seated or the window to be opened may not always be possible immediately upon request due to staff focusing on meeting the healthcare needs of our residents. We will attempt to meet these requests as quickly as possible.

## **COMPASSIONATE CARE VISITATION**

- Compassionate Care Visitation will occur Monday through Sunday.
- Resident Representatives will be notified if the resident qualifies for this type of visitation.
- There is no time limit on the visit and visits can take place at any time.
  - a. Compassionate visitation will continue to take place during periods in which outbreak testing is occurring, the facility has one or more COVID-19 positive cases, and the community has a positivity rate of over 10%.
    - i. During these time periods, all compassionate care visitation will return to scheduled visits.
    - ii. Facility management may choose to enforce more limited and restrictive visitation during this time, but visitation will continue.

## **ESSENTIAL VISITATION**

- The facility retains the right to designate essential visitors for residents that require increased assistance above what the caregivers can reasonably provide in order to focus staff attention on providing cares to all residents.

- This category pertains to all Hospice Services (including clergy and social services) and any other personnel that provide direct resident care per resident care plan and provider orders. All essential caregivers will be permitted to enter facility to provide services.
- Essential visits may take place Monday through Sunday
- Resident Representatives will be notified if the resident qualifies for this type of visitation.
- Essential Visit timeframes are not limited.
- Essential visitation will continue to take place during periods in which outbreak testing is occurring, the facility has one or more COVID-19 positive cases, and the community has a positivity rate of over 10%.
  - a. During these time periods, all essential visitation will return to scheduled visits (except for hospice related services and other services deemed medically necessary).
- Facility management may choose to enforce more limited and restrictive visitation during this time, but visitation will continue.

### **QUARANTINE UNIT AND ISOLATION ROOM VISITATION**

- a. Visitations on the Quarantine unit will be limited to residents that are actively passing away or otherwise qualify for compassionate care visits or essential visits as deemed appropriate by the facility with consideration for the quarantined or isolation status. Residents that have not tested positive, have not had a prolonged exposure in the prior 14 days (cumulative of 15 minutes), and have been fully vaccinated are no longer required to quarantine upon admission and thus are not subject to quarantine visitation restrictions.
- b. Residents that are quarantined (being monitored but not positive for COVID-19) are able to receive essential visitors. Isolation residents (COVID positive) are not generally approved for essential visitors, but the facility reserves the right to make exceptions.
- c. These visits must be scheduled.
- d. Visitors must comply with all PPE and hand hygiene requirements. PPE will be provided, with the exception of an N95. A surgical mask will be provided in place of the N95. N95s will not be provided.
- e. Visitors must have a PPE competency on file prior to the visit occurring.
- f. Visitors that are visiting residents on the quarantine unit or on COVID19 isolation precautions will be required to sign the following waiver. The visit will not be permitted for any visitor that refuses to sign the waiver. If a resident has 2 visitors at a time, each visitor must have a completed waiver on file.



Special Waiver and  
Release of Liability for

- g. The waiver(s) will be kept in either the resident's paper records and/or under the miscellaneous section of their electronic health record.

### **RESIDENTS THAT LEAVE THE FACILITY WITH FRIENDS/FAMILIES**

- For residents that leave the facility with family, friends, or other persons, a risk assessment must be completed to determine if the resident will quarantine upon return. Facility will complete the risk assessment and inform resident and family of results prior to leaving the facility, including what quarantine will entail if it is determined they will be required to quarantine upon return.

- Patients/residents taking social excursions outside the facility should be educated about potential risks of public settings, particularly if they have not been fully vaccinated, and reminded to avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces. They should be encouraged and assisted with adherence to all recommended infection prevention and control measures, including source control, physical distancing, and hand hygiene. If they are visiting friends or family in their homes, they should follow the source control and physical distancing recommendations for visiting with others in private settings as described in the [Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#).

If you at any time develop signs & symptoms related to COVID-19 after your visit, please inform the facility Director and the COVID-19 Hotline at **(605) 755-1350** or 1-800-279-1466. You may find additional information regarding COVID-19 signs & symptoms at the Monument Health or Center for Disease Control website. Thank you for your understanding.

[Updated Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations in Response to COVID-19 Vaccination | CDC](#)

## **COMMUNAL DINING, GROUP ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER PUBLIC SPACE CONSIDERATIONS**

### *Who should not participate in communal activities?*

- Vaccinated and unvaccinated **patients/residents with SARS-CoV-2 infection, or in isolation because of suspected COVID-19**, until they have met [criteria to discontinue Transmission-Based Precautions](#).
- Vaccinated and unvaccinated **patients/residents in quarantine** until they have met criteria for release from quarantine.

In general, the remainder of this section should attempted be followed to the best of the facility’s ability. However, due to safety and infection prevention precautions that the facility has put in place, the facility may choose to relax masking, social distancing requirements, and other recommendations as outlined in the remainder of this section among facility residents in public spaces and in communal settings/group activities, regardless of the vaccination status of individual residents in the public space or group activity. The facility has determined that the benefits to our residents as it relates to their quality of life, mental health status, and overall resident experience and well-being outweigh the risks associated with potential COVID-19 transmission in the facility due to the facility COVID-19 precautions and infection control practices. **These relaxed requirements do not pertain to visits with outside individuals as outlined earlier in this policy.** Possible variables for relaxing or tightening these requirements include but are not limited to the following:

- Health and cognitive status of resident that may impact their ability to keep their mask on. This also pertains to residents that may have react poorly to sustained masking. While this applies to vaccinated and unvaccinated residents, the facility and its employees should take the resident vaccination status into consideration when making a determination of whether or not it is safe to allow for this.
- Overall percentage of fully vaccinated residents in the facility.
- County positivity rate over 10% (subject to facility management decision-making)

- Facility outbreak status

***\*\*The remainder of this section consists of recommendations, not requirements. If the facility determines that the risk of COVID-19 infection and transmission is higher than the benefits of relaxed masking and social distancing among vaccinated and unvaccinated residents in the facility, management may choose to turn the following recommendations into requirements until further notice. \*\****

### ***What infection prevention and control practices are recommended when planning for and allowing communal activities?***

Determining the vaccination status of residents/HCP at the time of the activity may be challenging. When determining vaccination status, the privacy of the patient/resident/HCP should be maintained (e.g., not asked in front of other residents/HCP). For example, when planning for group activities or communal dining, facilities might consider having patients/residents sign up in advance so their vaccination status can be confirmed and seating assigned.

**If vaccination status cannot be determined, the safest practice is for all participants to follow all recommended infection prevention and control practices including maintaining physical distancing and wearing source control.**

### **Residents**

- Group activities:
  - If all patients/residents participating in the activity are fully vaccinated, then they may choose to have close contact and to not wear source control during the activity.
  - If unvaccinated patients/residents are present, then all participants in the group activity should wear source control and unvaccinated patients/residents should physically distance from others.
- Communal dining:
  - Fully vaccinated patients/residents can participate in communal dining without use of source control or physical distancing.
  - If unvaccinated patients/residents are dining in a communal area (e.g., dining room) all patients/residents should use source control when not eating and unvaccinated patients/residents should continue to remain at least 6 feet from others.

### **Healthcare Personnel**

- In general, fully vaccinated HCP should continue to wear source control while at work. However, fully vaccinated HCP could dine and socialize together in break rooms and conduct in-person meetings without source control or physical distancing. If unvaccinated HCP are present, everyone should wear source control and unvaccinated HCP should physically distance from others.



