

	<i>Policy and Procedure Manual</i>
Subject: COVID-19 Visitation Guidance	Effective Date: 1/13/2022
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Policy Statement:

COVID-19 has been detected in multiple communities around New York State. Visitors may introduce COVID-19 infection into the Nursing Home. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) is issuing the following guidance regarding visitors to Nursing Homes and other precautions and procedures Nursing Homes must take to protect and maintain the health and safety of their residents and staff during the ongoing novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

I. Purpose:

It is the goal of Glendale to facilitate person-centered visitation, while considering the residents physical, mental and psychosocial well-being while supporting their quality of life. Glendale will assure resident visitation policies and procedures are consistent with the NYSDOH guidance and aligns with CMS and CDC guidelines.

II. Guidance:

The NYSDOH and CMS guidance provides specific criteria that Glendale will follow regarding general nursing home visitation and will ensure visitation for family members, loved ones, representatives from the long-term care ombudsman program (LTCOP), and resident advocacy organizations. This policy does not change the guidance previously issued relative to visitation for Compassionate Care or end-of life.

The specific criteria which is required for visitation is described below:

1. Full compliance with both state and federal reporting requirements including COVID-19 focus surveys, daily HERDS, weekly staff testing surveys, and the federally required weekly submission of COVID-19 data to the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN).
2. Glendale will retain a copy of the revised facility’s visitation plan at the facility where it is easily accessible and immediately available upon request of the Department of Health. The plan will clearly articulate the space(s) to be used for visitation (outdoors and indoors) including the number of visitors and residents that could be safely socially distanced within the space(s). The plan will reference relevant infection control policies for visitors. A copy of the facilities visitation plan will be posted on the facility’s website to provide visitors with clear guidelines for visiting.
3. Glendale will allow indoor visitation at all times and for all residents (regardless of vaccination status), except for a few circumstances when visitation should be limited due to a high risk of COVID-19 transmission (exception - compassionate care visits/end of life visits should be permitted at all times).

Indoor Visitation During an Outbreak

An outbreak exists when a new nursing home onset of COVID-19 occurs (i.e., a new COVID-19 case among residents or staff). Visitation can still occur when there is an outbreak.

Potential Visit Related Exposure

If a visitor tests positive and the visit to the nursing home occurred from two days before the visitor's symptoms onset, to the end of the visitor's isolation period, there is a potential for exposure. Exposures among visitors and residents shall be evaluated using community contact tracing guidelines.

The following will be evaluated to determine the appropriate follow-up when there is identification of a visitor who tests positive for COVID-19. If the following are confirmed;

- the visit was supervised by an appropriate facility staff member; and
- the visit was conducted in a common area or outdoor area that does not require the visitor to enter a resident unit; and
- the visitor complied with all COVID-19 precautions including hand hygiene and appropriate use of face mask
- the visitor and the resident maintained at least 6 feet of distance from each other for the entire duration of the visit; and
- the visitor maintained at least 6 feet of distance from all other visitors, residents, and staff for the entire duration of the visit

If all of the above are confirmed, the resident who received the visit shall be placed on a 14-day quarantine in a single room in the designated observation area using contact plus droplet precautions. The resident shall be tested and monitored per facility protocol.

If all of the above cannot be confirmed by the facility, protocols shall be followed similar to the identification of a COVID-19 positive staff member, including contact tracing to determine the extent of the exposure within the facility.

4. Adherence to screening protocols for all staff during each shift, each resident, and all persons entering the facility or grounds of the nursing home, including visitors, vendors, students, and volunteers.
5. Visitors must be able to adhere to the core principles including infection prevention and control policies, and staff must provide monitoring for those who may have difficulty adhering to core principles, such as children.
6. Glendale will limit movement in the facility. For example, visitors should not walk around different halls of the facility. Rather, they should go directly to the resident's room or neighborhood living room. Visits for residents who share a room **will not** be conducted in the resident's room. For situations where there is a roommate and the health status of the resident prevents leaving the room, Glendale will attempt to enable in-room visitation while adhering to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention.
7. While taking a person-centered approach and adhering to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention, when possible, outdoor visitation shall be conducted in a manner that reduces the risk of transmission. Outdoor visits pose a lower risk of transmission due to increased space and airflow. Therefore, all visits should be held outdoors whenever practicable. Aside from weather considerations (e.g., inclement weather, excessively hot or cold temperatures, poor air quality), an individual resident's health status (e.g., medical condition(s), COVID-19 status), or a facility's outbreak status, outdoor visitation should be facilitated routinely.

In addition, Glendale will follow the guidelines outlined below:

- Adequate staff present to allow for personnel to help with the transition of residents, monitoring of visitation, and cleaning and disinfecting of areas used for visitation after each visit using an EPA-approved disinfectant.

- Appropriate signage and proper visitor education on COVID-19 signs and symptoms, infection control precautions including use of facemask or face covering utilization and hand hygiene.
- Adequate PPE shall be made available by the nursing home to ensure residents wear a face mask if medically able to utilize a face covering during visitation. Visitors must wear a face mask or face covering at all times when on the premises of the nursing home and maintain social distancing.
- The nursing home shall have an adequate supply of masks on hand for visitors and make available to visitors who lack an acceptable face covering. An acceptable mask must be a well-fitting non-surgical paper mask or a mask of higher quality. Cloth masks are not acceptable.

III. Procedure:

1. Visitation will occur in an outside area on the facility campus, weather permitting. If weather not permitting, visitation will occur at Glendale in resident rooms or nursing unit in the neighborhood living room.
2. All visitors will be screened for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Visitation will be refused if the individual(s) exhibits any COVID-19 symptoms, or they do not pass the screening process. Screening shall consist of temperature checks and screening questions.
3. Visitors must provide proof of a negative COVID test result. Test results must clearly state when they were performed. For antigen/point of care testes, results must be within 24-hours of the visit. For PCR tests, results must be within two days of the visit.
4. If the visitor does not have proof of a negative test result, the facility will provide the visitor with a test kit. If a test kit is provided to the visitor, the following must occur;
 - a. Visitor is screened by reception and completes screening form.
 - b. Visitor signs into the visitor log.
 - c. Test kit is provided to the visitor.
 - d. Visitor should conduct self-test in their vehicle or outside.
 - e. Visitor should wait for results prior to re-entering the building.
 - f. If results are negative, visitor may come into the facility for visitation.
 - g. If results are positive, visitor should call the receptionist to make her aware of the positive test result. Visitors should also call the county health department of the county they reside in
 - h. All used test kits should be disposed of in the red trash container in the vestibule at the main entrance.
5. For visitors who visit multiple days, including a visitor who comes every day, proof of negative testing is required as often as feasible, at a minimum every third day (meaning at a minimum testing is required on day one, day 4, day 7 and so on).
6. . Once the visitation requirements have been met the following will occur:
 - A copy of the facility visitation guidelines will be provided to each visitor at their initial visit, upon revision and upon request anytime thereafter.
 - Glendale will issue a face mask to each visitor if the visitor is unable to provide an acceptable face mask. Visitors must wear a mask the entire time they are in the facility. If the mask becomes wet or soiled, visitors may ask staff for a new mask.
 - A visitor sticker will be provided to each visitor and worn at all times while in the nursing home.

- Visitors must practice social distancing. Visitors are to maintain a distance of 6 feet from the resident and others.
- Hand sanitizer will be utilized prior to entering the resident room/neighborhood living room and upon exiting.
- Visitation is restricted to the resident room or neighborhood living room. Visitors may not leave the resident room/neighborhood living room during the resident visit for the entire visit and are not to visit other areas of the facility.
- Staff will be available to assist with the transition of residents as needed during the visit and to monitor visitation.
- The area where the visit occurred will be sanitized utilizing an EPA-approved disinfectant after the completion of the visit.
- Visiting hours are as follows:
 - Monday - Friday, 9:00AM – 6:00Pm.
 - Saturday & Sunday, 10:00AM – 4:00PM

6. If any visitor fails to adhere to the protocol, he/she/they may be prohibited from visiting for the duration of the COVID-19 state declared public health emergency.

End of Life and Compassionate Care Visits

Terminally ill and/or compassionate care visits must follow the aforementioned visitation guidance. Reasoning for compassionate care visits may include:

- 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 cuing from family for eating and drinking and are now experiencing dehydration and/or weight loss.
- Residents who are exhibiting signs and symptoms of emotional distress including, but not limited to, seldom speaking or crying more frequently (when the resident had rarely cried in the past), refusing to participate in an activity or activities, staying in bed longer than usual, or exhibiting behavior considered abnormal for the individual.
- Residents who receive religious or spiritual support from clergy or another layperson.

The situations above are not intended to be an exhaustive list. Additional compassionate care situations may be considered by the facility on a resident-specific basis.

For End of Life and Compassionate Care Visits the following will occur:

- Administration will authorize visitation.
- The screener is to be notified and provided the names of approved visitors, as well as the location and name of the resident being visited. This information will be added to the “Approved Visitor Log”.
- Family members as well as clergy and lay persons offering religious and spiritual support will be allowed to visit. Name and contact information for visitors, the date(s) of their visits, and the name of the resident visited are maintained by the facility. Visitors under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.
- Two (2) visitors may visit at one time. Visitors will be given a visitor sticker with room number noted.

IV. References

July 10, 2020 - New York State Department of Health Nursing Home Advisory: Skilled Nursing Facility Visitation.

September 17, 2020-New York State Department of Health Nursing Home Advisory: Skilled Nursing Facility Visitation.

February 23, 2021- DOH “Health Advisory: Revised Skilled Nursing Facility Visitation”

March 25, 2021- DOH “Health Advisory: Revised Skilled Nursing Facility Visitation”

April 27, 2021 – CMS QSO-20-39-NH, **Revised 4/27/21**

July 12, 2022 - New York State Department of Health, Health Advisory: Nursing Home Staff & Visitation Requirements