

SECTION: Administrative Guidelines

SUBJECT: Visitation of Residents Program: SNF/ALF

PURPOSE

Guidelines to establish visitation procedures within the SNF and/or ALF to ensure that the following topics are clear to staff, family and residents:

- * Establish infection control & education procedures for visitors;
- * Screening, personal protective equipment & other infection control protocols for visitors;
- * Allow for permissible length of visits & number of visitors;
- * Establish a clear designation of the person responsible for ensuring that staff adhere to the guidelines and procedures
- * Define that consensual physical contact between a resident, client, or patient and the visitor is allowable

DEFINITIONS

General Visitors – individuals that sign a consent form noting understanding of the facility's infection prevention and control guidelines, wear appropriate PPE, and pass a health screening before each visit.

PROCEDURE

- A. Screen all visitors to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus.
- B. The facility must monitor that visitors utilize proper PPE when entering and exiting the facility. General visitors must wear proper personal protective equipment when appropriate during the visit. The Administrator and Director of Nursing are designated to be responsible for ensuring that staff adhere to the established visitation and PPE guidelines.
- C. All visitors are required to review the established visitation guidelines and agree in writing to follow the facilities procedures. Suspension of visitation can occur if the visitor violates the facility procedures for keeping residents, staff and other family members safe during visitation.
- D. Upon entrance and exit to the facility, all visitors must follow proper hand hygiene protocol.
- E. Maintain a visitor log for signing in and out.
- F. Allow for visitation at any time (including meals) and with no limit as long as the visit does not interfere or upset a fellow resident or roommate of the center.
- G. Additionally, while not recommended, if a resident or responsible party chooses to engage in close contact, the facility cannot deny the resident their right to choose, as long as the residents' choice does not put other residents at risk.
- H. Notify and inform residents and their representatives of any changes in the facility's COVID outbreak status per regulation.
- I. Clean and disinfect visiting areas between visitors and maintain hand washing or sanitation stations.



Visitation and Voting: While the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency had resulted in limitations for visitors to enter the facility to assist residents, nursing homes must still ensure residents are able to exercise their Constitutional right to vote.

- A resident's rights, including the right to vote, must not be impeded in any way by the nursing home and its facility staff. Nursing homes should have a plan to ensure residents can exercise their right to vote, whether in person, by mail, absentee, or other authorized process. If a state has specific programs to enable nursing home residents to vote, the facility should coordinate and engage with those programs, as appropriate. This may include:
- Mobile Polling in residential facilities performed by a bipartisan team of workers; and/or
- Assistance in registering to vote, requesting an absentee ballot, or completing a ballot from an agent of the Resident's choosing, including family representative, LTC Ombudsmen or nursing home staff (or other personnel permitted to perform these functions, per state law).

Leave of Absence: Current residents of the facility are permitted to leave the property once LOA procedure has been completed. During a leave of absence, the following is recommended:

- Wear a mask over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Make sure the mask fits snugly against the sides of your face.
- Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread COVID-19.
- Keeping 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Keep hand sanitizer with you and use it when you are unable to wash your hands.
- Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- If possible, visit and gather outdoors.
- Ensure high touch areas and surfaces such as doorknobs, tables, phones etc. are cleaned regularly with appropriate disinfectant.

Visitation guidelines allow for in-person visitation in all of the following circumstances, unless the resident objects:

- End of Life situations,
- Resident adjustment issues or concerns to the nursing facility,
- In person help with major medical decisions,
- A resident needing cueing or encouragement to eat or drink & the visitor wants to assist,
- Resident changes in health condition.

