

COVID-19 UPDATE

2-26-2021 – COVID-19 Updates/Resumption of Visitation Information

Dear Residents and Family Members:

The Governor announced that the positivity rate of COVID tests done yesterday in NYS was 3.34%, and there was a slight decline in ICU admissions. Additionally, he emphasized that with vaccine distribution accelerating, there is light at the end of the tunnel. However, he continues to encourage New Yorkers to remain vigilant until the war on COVID is won by donning a mask, staying physically distanced and washing your hands frequently.

This week's COVID testing results at Lutheran Care Center confirms to us that there is light at the end of the tunnel. As of today, our designated COVID unit is empty, and no residents have tested positive since our last update. Two staff persons are completing their 14-day quarantines at home, and there have been no new positive staff results.

As I'm sure many of you have heard, the NYS DOH has indicated that nursing home visitation is now permitted to resume. That is music to the ears of so many families that have not seen their loved ones in months. However, as we all know, nothing is as simple as it appears—we have been here before. Nursing homes may resume visitation "in accordance with CDC and CMS guidelines" and that is the challenging part, so I will outline what this actually means for us.

First and foremost, prior to resuming visitation, there must be **NO new onset of COVID-19 cases** in the facility (**resident or staff**) for a period of no less than fourteen (14) days. Also, new guidance requires "county positivity rates" to be monitored to determine how to facilitate indoor visitation. This will require visitor testing, and if the county rate is above 10%, visitation will be paused and limited to compassionate care situations ONLY. All previously issued guidance relative to nursing home visitation remains in effect. Should our status remain COVID-19 free, **LCC is projecting March 3 as our date to resume visitation.**

1. Prior to resident access, **all visitors will be screened for signs and symptoms of COVID-19**, and a rapid antigen test will be administered by LCC staff. **Anyone with a positive result will be ineligible for visitation.** Visitors will also be required to **provide their contact information** in the event contact tracing is necessary. **Please complete the attached form BEFORE YOU ARRIVE to save time.**
2. **Visitation will be limited to 20 individuals at each session, with a maximum of TWO (2) visitors allowed per resident at any one time.** Visitors **under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult.**
3. **You must contact the Lutheran Care Center Receptionist at 845-486-9494 to schedule a visit. No visits will be permitted without an appointment.**
4. In order to accommodate as many visitors as possible, we will conduct two (2) visitation sessions **Monday through Friday**, for a **maximum of 30 minutes each**:
 - a. 10:45 – 11:15 a.m. – **Arrive at 10:15 a.m.** for screening and check-in.
 - b. 2:45 – 3:15 p.m. – **Arrive at 2:15 p.m.** for screening and check-in.
 - c. Evening and weekend visitation will remain virtual until further notice.
5. In the best interest of our residents, due to winter temperatures and conditions, we will be utilizing our **Adult Day Care Center** space as our designated visitation area. The ADHC program is suspended temporarily due to COVID, and the space is large enough to allow for physical distancing.

- a. Park in the back of the building.
 - b. Follow the signs directing you to the ADHC area entrance.
-
6. Outdoor visitation will be facilitated when the weather permits.
 7. **Visitors will be confined to the ADC area, and all visitation will be supervised by LCC staff to ensure compliance with infection control measures.**
 8. Cleaning and disinfecting of visitation areas will be performed after each visit.
 9. **Visitors MUST WEAR A FACE MASK AT ALL TIMES** when on LCC's premises and must maintain physical distancing of six (6) feet and perform hand hygiene. Residents that are medically able to tolerate a face mask will be requested to don one, as well. For visitors that lack an acceptable face mask, LCC will have additional masks available, as well as alcohol based hand rub for your use.

Please note that all **newly admitted residents** to LCC must isolate for 14 days, so **they will be ineligible for visitation until the end of 14 days** from their date of admission.

For resident specific questions or questions regarding visitation, our Nurse Managers, Social Workers and Nursing administration are available to assist you. Please continue to contact Carolyn for an appointment for all virtual visits with our residents. Lutheran Care Center is a not-for-profit facility, and our updated COVID-19 resident and staff statistics are honestly and accurately disclosed here, so please monitor this website regularly for any and all changes.

We are looking forward to seeing our families and friends soon! In the meantime, please stay safe and be well.

Patricia Ludington, RN
Administrator