



Department of Health

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

HOWARD A. ZUCKER, M.D., J.D.
Commissioner

LISA J. PINO, M.A., J.D.
Executive Deputy Commissioner

April 27, 2021

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update and Visitation Plan Update

Dear Resident / Representative:

We hope the Spring and Summer brings us some relief from the cold weather, and hopefully, the coronavirus.

At the current time we have no COVID-19 positive residents and no COVID-19 positive staff in the facility. We have two staff who tested positive over the past few weeks and are out of work recuperating. We continue to test residents and staff twice a week, to ensure that we keep the virus out, and prevent reinfection. Although we have been successful in keeping the virus out of the facility to a large extent, this has proven to be quite a challenge with the occasional vaccinated resident/staff testing positive for the coronavirus.

We have vaccinated a large number of residents and staff and will continue vaccinating staff and new residents to the facility going forward. The occasional positive resident/staff has meant that the facility has been in "outbreak testing" mode. To comply with both CDC and Department of Health (DOH) regulations, the facility has continued with outdoor visitation, which has the benefit of reducing virus transmission. Indoor visitation shall be initiated when the regulatory requirements for this type of visitation are met. The facility shall also continue with its virtual, outdoor, and compassionate care visitation programs as per CDC and DOH guidance.

As the weather improves, the Recreation Department staff shall be able to take residents out onto the porches and atrium courtyard to get some sun.

Please call ahead and schedule a virtual visit with the Recreation Department at (914) 788-6175 / 6056. The Pastoral Care Department is available at (914) 788-6180 to schedule outdoor, window and compassionate care visits. Outdoor and window visits take place Tuesdays from 10:00 am - 11:30 am and 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm, every other Wednesday from 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm, Thursdays from 10:00 am - 11:30 am and 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm and one Saturday a month from 10:00 am - 11:30 am.

The Nursing Supervisors are available to provide information about your loved one in the event you cannot reach unit staff. The Nursing Supervisors can be reached at (914) 987-9056 or (914) 987-9057

The attached Fact Sheet provides information regarding your visits to your loved ones.

Sincerely,

Nancy Baa-Danso

Nancy Baa-Danso, RN, BSN, MPH, LNHA
Administrator

NYS Veterans Home at Montrose
2090 Albany Post Road | Montrose, NY 10548
(914) 788-6000

New York State Veterans Home at Montrose

COVID-19 VISITOR FACT SHEET

The Veterans Home's mission and goal are always to keep residents, their loved ones, and the staff safe from infectious diseases, particularly COVID-19. It is important that guidelines are followed to ensure that the COVID-19 virus does not spread. Visitors, who are unable to adhere to the Home's requirements, will not be permitted to visit or will be asked to leave. At any time that the Home determines there would be a concern for you or your loved one's safety, the Home has the right to immediately intervene and stop the visit.

The Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness. People who are infected but do not show symptoms can spread the virus to others. It is possible that the virus may spread through the droplets and airborne particles that are formed when a person who has COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, talks, or breathes. Droplets can also land on surfaces and objects and be transferred by touch. A person may get COVID-19 by touching the surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes.

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The most common signs and symptoms consistent with COVID-19 are: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. **Please do not visit if you have any of these symptoms.**

This list does not include all possible symptoms, so please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or the New York State Department of Health (DOH) websites for the latest information:

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

DOH: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

Visits

All in-person visits (outdoor and compassionate) must be set up with the Pastoral Care Department. The Home will limit the number of total visitors in the Home at any given time based on the ability to safely monitor visits, so be prepared to come in at another time or leave if requested to give others the opportunity to have a visit.

Virtual visits (video chat / Skype, Google duo, Zoom, etc.) visits must be arranged through the Recreation Therapy Department. 72-hours' notice of a request is required.

Contact information for scheduling visits is as follows:

- Outside / Compassionate / Comfort Care / End of Life Visits:
The Pastoral Care Dept.....(914) 788-6180
- Virtual / Video Assisted Visits (Skype, Google duo, Zoom, WhatsApp) etc.:
The Recreation Department ... (914) 788-6175 / 6056

If there is a change in the schedule, including for impending inclement weather, we will attempt to contact visitors prior to the visit whenever possible.

Indoor Visitation

Indoor visitation will be allowed only when the facility has met the CDC and DOH regulation for indoor visitation. (exception – compassionate/comfort care and end-of-life visits). These scenarios include limiting indoor visitation for:

- Unvaccinated residents if the COVID-19 county positivity rate is >10% AND <70% of residents in the Home are fully vaccinated,
- Residents with confirmed COVID-19 infection, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, until they have met the criteria to discontinue Transmission-Based Precautions, OR
- Residents in quarantine, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, until they have met the criteria for release from quarantine.

Residents on Quarantine

Residents who are on transmission-based quarantine precautions for COVID-19 shall only receive visits that are virtual, or in-person for compassionate/comfort care and end-of-life situations, with adherence to transmission-based precautions. This restriction shall be lifted once transmission-based precautions are no longer required per CDC guidelines and other visits may be conducted as described in the Home's plan. Every effort will be made to accommodate alternative virtual visitations for residents who are ineligible to receive a visitor.

Indoor Visitation During an Outbreak

An outbreak exists when there is a new nursing home onset of COVID-19 (such as a new COVID-19 case among residents or staff). With the appropriate safeguards, visitation can still occur when there is an outbreak if the transmission of COVID-19 is contained to a single unit of the Home. When a new case of COVID-19 among residents or staff is identified, the Home will immediately begin outbreak testing and suspend all visitation (except for compassionate /comfort care and end-of-life visits), until at least one round of facility-wide testing is completed. If additional criteria are met, visitation may resume for non-affected units.

If subsequent rounds of outbreak testing identify one or more additional COVID-19 cases in other units, then visitation will be suspended for all residents (vaccinated and unvaccinated), until the Home meets the criteria to discontinue outbreak testing.

Outside Visitation

Visitation shall be offered in outdoor areas, weather permitting. We strongly encourage having visits outside. Outdoor visitation will take place under the overhang in the front of the building, or in the Atrium Courtyard.

Visit Priority

Visitation priority will be given to residents who have not had visitors and residents at end-of-life or critical compassionate care needs to ensure all residents have ample opportunity to visit with their loved ones.

Visitors include, but not limited to, family members, loved ones identified and approved by the resident and/or health care proxy, representatives from the long-term care ombudsman program (LTCOP), and resident advocacy organizations.

Other Resources

The Home will provide headphones and microphones, iPads, and/or computer tablets for use by residents to enable communication and to also allow for an adequate degree of privacy. These devices will be cleaned and disinfected between uses by assigned staff.

Testing

Visitor COVID-19 testing is strongly encouraged but not required.

Screening

- Visitor(s) will arrive at the Home and will be screened and (as requested) tested by a designated staff member before they will be allowed to visit with the resident.
- Screening consists of a temperature check and asking screening questions to assess signs and symptoms of and potential exposure to COVID-19 and questions regarding travel to other areas.
- Visitors tested and screened prior to resident access and visitation will be refused if they have a positive test, exhibit any COVID-19 symptoms, or do not pass the screening questions.
- If any visitor fails any part of the screening process (both temperature and questions), the facilitator shall notify the Infection Preventionist Nurse or designated nurse supervisor, who will advise the visitor against visiting and ask that they re-schedule their visit when they have resolved the reason for the failed screening. The assigned Social Work staff will also be notified who will let the resident know as well.
- Visitors will be required to provide demographic information about themselves such as full name, street address email address and telephone number. This is to assist with contact tracing in the event COVID-19 is identified following the visit.
- Once the visitor is cleared, Staff will ensure the visitor(s) have an appropriate face covering on and sanitize their hands prior to being directed to the designated visitation area. Staff will direct the visitor(s) to the assigned area.
- Please speak with the person facilitating the visit if you have any questions.

Visitor Guidelines

- Entry and exit to and from the Home is only through the main front entrance.
- Visitor movement will be limited while in the Home, including limiting visitors from walking around different halls of the Home. Visitors will be escorted directly to the designated visitation area. Visitors must remain in the designated area during the visit and leave at the end of the visit. Visitors are not allowed to deviate from their assigned visit location.
- Two visitors will be allowed to visit at any one time. More than two visitors at a time will be considered on a case-by-case basis and those visitations will be scheduled to allow for appropriate social distancing.

- Children under the age of 16 are welcome if they can wear and tolerate a mask at all times while at the Home during the entire length of the visit. They must be accompanied by an adult 18 years old and older and comply with all other recommendations.
- Visits shall be limited to 30 minutes to meet the needs of as many residents and families as possible.
- Food and beverages should not be consumed or shared during a visit and will be discouraged due to the need to remove a face mask to consume it.
- If the resident is fully vaccinated, they can choose to have close contact (including touch) with their visitor while wearing a well-fitting face mask and performing hand-hygiene before and after. Regardless, visitors should physically distance from other residents and staff.
- Pets are not permitted.
- Staff shall assist with visits as necessary.
- Adequate Personal Protective Equipment will be available for both visitors and residents. Any staff member can assist.
 - Visitor(s) must wear a face mask or face covering at all times while on the Home's property and during a visit.
 - Residents will be required to wear a face mask or face covering during the visit, as medically tolerated.
 - The Home may recommend that visitor(s) also wear eye protection / face shields as warranted. In these cases, the Home will provide a face shield as needed.
 - If a visitor is going into an area that has transmission-based precautions in place, they will be offered appropriate PPE to wear. If they refuse to be appropriately dressed for the visit they will not be allowed to visit.
- Both residents and visitors will be expected to use 60% alcohol-based products for hand sanitizing. This is available at the main entrance and throughout the Home. Please speak with any staff member if you are unable to locate hand sanitizer.
- Restrooms located near the front entrance will be available for use, but no other area may be entered besides the hallways to and from the resident's rooms and/or the visitation area and the front entrance.
- Noncompliance with any item on this fact sheet designated to keep the resident, their loved ones, and staff safe will result in termination of the visit.