



## Department of Health

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### **New York State Veterans Home at Oxford**

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## **COVID-19 VISITATION SAFETY PLAN**

The Veterans Home's plan is to provide safe visitation during a pandemic for our residents while adhering to federal and state government requirements and recommendations. Regardless of how visits are conducted, there are certain core principles and best practices that reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission and are part of this plan. These core principles must be followed all times. Additionally, visitation will be person-centered, and consider the residents' physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being, and support their quality of life.

The Home is in full compliance with all state and federal requirements. The requirements include, but are not limited to, state Executive Orders, guidance, reporting requirements including COVID-19 focus surveys, HERDS and staff testing surveys, and the federally required submission of COVID-19 data to the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN).

This Visitation Plan is posted to the Home's website and broadcasted via Listserv email or letter to residents and their representatives, as per their preferred communication method, to provide visitors with clear guidelines for visiting and to announce if and when visitation is paused due to an increase in the number of residents and/or staff with a confirmed positive COVID-19 diagnosis or other factors established by the Home and as directed by county, state, or federal requirements.

#### **The Visitation Plan will be implemented by the following:**

1. An interdisciplinary advisory group, including staff, members of the Infection Prevention and Control Committee, Resident Council representatives and members of the Board of Visitors, has been established to provide support and advice in creating, implementing and overseeing the Home's Visitation Plan.
2. All residents and/or their representatives will be notified of the Visitation Plan by their preferred method of communication, either letter and/or email listserv, and by posting to the Home's website.
3. Visitation will be allowed once these guidelines and requirements are met, including
  - a. The Home has completed the NY Forward Safety Plan.

- b. There is no new onset of COVID-19 among staff or residents as reported to the Department of Health on the daily COVID-19 NYS Health Electronic Response Data System (HERDS) report, staff testing surveys, and as reported to the NHSN for a period of no less than fourteen (14) days.
  - c. The Home has a testing plan in place and the capability to test all residents upon identification of any individual with symptoms consistent with COVID-19. If a resident or staff member tests positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the Home has the capacity to continue re-testing every 3-7 days of all nursing home residents and staff until there have been 14 days of no positive tests.
  - d. The Home has an executed and operationalized arrangement with laboratories to process SARS-CoV-2 virus tests.
  - e. Adherence to written screening protocols for all staff during each shift, each resident daily, and all persons entering the Home or grounds of such nursing home, including visitors.
  - f. The number of visitors to the Home shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the resident census at any time and only two visitors will be allowed per resident at any one time, and they will be separated by the room divider to allow for an adequate degree of privacy.
  - g. Visitors under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.
- 4. Current COVID-19 positive residents, residents with COVID-19 signs or symptoms, and residents in a 14-day quarantine or observation period are not eligible for visits.
  - 5. Visitation will be limited to outdoor areas, weather permitting and under certain circumstances it will occur in the Auditorium, which is a well-ventilated space with MERV air filtering, and sanitizing ultraviolet light.
  - 6. Pets will not be allowed.
  - 7. The Home will also provide headphones and microphones, iPads, and/or computer tablets for use by residents and visitors to enable communication and to also allow for an adequate degree of privacy. These devices will be disinfected between uses by assigned staff.

8. Other inside visits are allowed for end-of-life or compelling compassionate care reasons, as determined by the Administrator or designee. Inside visits may be subject to change without notice.
9. Residents, who are bed bound, will continue to be offered use of alternative methods of visitation, such as through videoconferencing as much as possible. Limited visitation may be permitted but will adhere to the same requirements for other visitors as much as possible. Visitors should go to the patient room and not any other areas in the facility.
10. Individuals will need to schedule a visit with the Social Work Department at least 24 hours in advance. The visit will be assigned during the resident's designated day and available times.
11. Staff will manage visitation periods to allow everyone an opportunity to see their visitors. Visitors may expect to be visiting for 30 minutes during the early phases of visitation, and longer periods once the process is further underway.
12. After everyone on a Neighborhood has been able to have at least one set of visitors, the Home will attempt to accommodate longer visit times, especially for visitors traveling great distances or for various critical care reasons.
13. The Home will allot visits from 9-11am and 1pm-4pm during the designated days, Monday-Friday, excluding holidays, and additional times will be made available during the weekends on a case-by-case basis. Days and times are subject to change and affected visitors and residents will be notified as soon as possible when there is a change in schedule.
14. Each Neighborhood will have a designated day for visitation, with exceptions allowed for special requests (such as end-of-life/compassionate care).
15. The location of visits will be at each Neighborhood's designated location:
  - Monday: Apple - under the awning outside the main entrance area
  - Tuesday: Maple - under the awning outside the main entrance area
  - Wednesday: Pine - Pine's large Courtyard
  - Thursday: Oak - under the awning outside the main entrance area
  - Friday: Hawthorn - under the awning outside the main entrance area

The assigned days may change and/or additional times, such as weekends, may be added based on the needs of the residents and staff availability.

16. Changes will be sent out by letter and/or email to residents and their representatives, based on their preferred communication method, and posted on the Home's website.

17. Visitor(s), including long-term care ombudsman and resident advocacy program representatives, will arrive at the Home and will be screened by a designated staff member before they will be allowed to visit with the resident. Screening consists of temperature checks and asking screening questions to assess signs and symptoms of and potential exposure to COVID-19 and includes questions regarding international travel or travel to other states designated under the Governor's travel advisory.

A log will be kept by staff to document information about each visitor as part of the screening, and will include:

- First and last name of the visitor.
- Physical (street) address of the visitor.
- Daytime and evening telephone number(s).
- Date and time of visit.
- Email address, if available; and
- A notation indicating the individual cleared the screening (both temperature and questions) and has provided proof of a verified negative COVID-19 test result. The notation will not include any individual temperatures or other individual specific information.

18. Additionally, the visitor must present a verified negative COVID-19 test result within the last week (7 days) and visitation must be refused if the individual(s) fails to present such negative test result.

19. If any visitor fails any part of the screening process (both temperature and questions) or is unable to show proof of a negative test result, Security will notify the Infection Control Nurse or designated nurse, who will advise the visitor that they must leave and may 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.

20. Once the visitor is cleared, they will be directed by Security to the designated area.

- a. The visitor must remain at least 6 feet away from the resident to ensure proper social distancing. Both the resident and the visitor will be required to wear a mask.
- b. Once all visitors have arrived, the resident will be brought out to the area by staff to begin the visit. Visits will only be 30 minutes, during this time a designated staff member will be present to monitor the visit.

21. The visitors will be asked to remain in the designated area during the visit and leave at the end of the visit. If a visitor passes their screen, bathrooms at the entrance will

be made available for use but no other area may be entered besides the hallway to and from the bathrooms to the front entrance, and the hallway immediately outside the Auditorium.

22. Close contact such as hand holding, hugging, or kissing are prohibited to ensure there is no spread of the COVID-19 virus. If at any time these requirements are not followed, the visitation will end.
23. Adequate Personal Protective Equipment will be available at the front entrance and the visiting areas to ensure residents wear a facemask or face covering which covers both the nose and mouth during visitation, if medically tolerated.
24. Visitors must wear a face mask or face covering, which always cover both the nose and mouth, while on the Home's property and during a visit.
25. Visitors must maintain social distancing (minimum of 6 feet apart).
26. Alcohol-based hand rub, consisting of at least 60 percent (60%) alcohol, will be readily available to residents, visitors, and representatives of the long-term care ombudsman visiting residents and those individuals able demonstrate to appropriate use.
27. Cleaning of the visitation area will be done by assigned staff before and after each visit using approved cleaners. Cleaning and disinfecting high frequency touched surfaces in the Home will be completed often by assigned staff.
28. Visitors who are unable to adhere to the Home's requirements, which are considered the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention, will not be permitted to visit or will be asked to leave.
29. All visitors will be provided with a COVID-19 Visitor Fact Sheet, that includes education on COVID-19 signs and symptoms, infection control precautions, other applicable practices (e.g., use of face covering or mask, specified entries, exits and routes to designated areas, hand hygiene, and outlining visitor expectations such as appropriate hand hygiene and use of face coverings).

The fact sheet will be provided upon initial screening to all visitors by Security.

## New York State Veterans Home at Oxford

# 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. It is important that guidelines are followed to ensure 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.

Any new case of COVID-19 among staff or residents will result in the immediate cancellation of all visits until further notice.

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>

### **Visitation Schedule**

Visit days and times are subject to change. The location of the visits is under the awning by the Main Entrance, except Pine Neighborhood visits will be held in their main courtyard.

Monday – Apple

Tuesday – Maple

Wednesday - Pine

Thursday - Oak

Friday - Hawthorn

If there is a change in the schedule, we will attempt to contact visitors prior to the visit whenever possible. We recommend that visitors call and check the day of their visit to confirm that visiting will be allowed.

Entry and exit to and from the Home is only through the main front entrance. Visitors must remain in the designated area during the visit and leave at the end of the visit.

Current COVID-19 positive residents, residents with COVID-19 signs or symptoms, and residents in a quarantine, isolation or observation period are not eligible for visits.

Contact information for scheduling visits is as follows:

- On-Site Visits: The Social Work Department ...**(607) 843 - 3218**
- Virtual / Video Assisted Visits: The Recreation Department ...**(607) 843 - 3177**

### **Screening**

- Visitors must be screened (both temperature and questions) to ensure they meet the criteria for visitations.
- Visitors must present a verified negative COVID-19 test result within the last week (7 days).
- Visitors will be required to provide demographic information about themselves such as full name, street address and telephone number. This is to assist with contact tracing in the event COVID-19 is identified following the visit.
- If a visitor passes their screen, restrooms located near the front entrance are available for use but no other area may be entered besides the hallway to and from the restrooms to the front entrance, and the hallway immediately outside the Auditorium if it is being used for the visit.
- All visitors must remain in the designated area for visits.
- Please speak with Security if you have any questions.

### **Visitation Guidelines**

- All visits will be limited to 2 visitors per visit. The Social Worker will confirm the amount of time allowed for each visit.
- The number of visitors and residents which can be safely socially distanced within the spaces will be no more than two residents and their visitors at any one time.
- Both resident and visitors will be expected to wear a face mask during the entire visit. The face mask must cover the nose and mouth at all times. Cloth masks are not acceptable for use at this time. The Home will provide a mask. Masks are available at the main entrance of the Home and at the visitation area. Please speak with any staff member if you are unable to locate a mask.
- Both resident and visitor will be expected to adhere to social distancing which is a minimum of 6 feet apart from one another. There is a designated spot for both you and your loved one. Both parties must remain in their designated area and are not permitted to leave the designated "area".
- Any physical contact, such as hand holding, hugging or kissing is not permitted at this time. If this is not adhered to, the visit will end immediately to ensure the safety for everyone. Further visits may be suspended.
- Both residents and visitors will be expected to use 60% alcohol-based products for hand sanitizing. This is available at the main entrance of the Home and at the visitation area. Please speak with any staff member if you are unable to locate hand sanitizer.
- The visit will be supervised for everyone's safety.