



Department of Health

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

JAMES V. McDONALD, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

JOHANNE E. MORNE, M.S.
Acting Executive Deputy Commissioner

Dear Visitor,

As part of our efforts to keep everyone safe, we expect everyone (visitors, residents, and staff) to follow the Core Principles of COVID-19 Infection Prevention. These include:

1. Visitation is allowed for all residents.
2. The Home encourages visitors to postpone their visit if they have a current positive COVID-19 test, COVID-19 symptoms, or meet quarantine criteria.
3. When determined by the Home's Infection Prevention and Control Committee (such as when COVID-19 Community Levels are high or as required by regulation), masks must be worn (and residents encouraged to wear a mask), with these additional guidelines:
 - A. All visitors over the age of 2, and able to medically tolerate, must wear a mask.
 - B. Visitors must wear a mask unless in the resident room with the resident's permission or while eating / drinking in a common area with the resident. If eating / drinking in a common area, visitors must be at least 6 feet from other residents and put a mask back on after eating / drinking.
4. Face masks will be provided by the Home.
5. Visitors must adhere to the signage throughout the Home which will include information about COVID-19 signs and symptoms, infection control precautions, and guidance on the use of face masks and other infection control related information.
6. Other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as a face shield, may also be worn. These will be provided by Security, at the entrances to each neighborhood or by requesting them from staff. If additional PPE is required, visitors will be notified upon entry and provided with the proper PPE.
7. High touch surfaces continue to be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
8. Cohorting (setting up a separate dedicated care area) of residents, who test positive with COVID-19, is not required but may occur as determined by the Home's Infection Prevention and Control Committee.
9. Physical distancing of at least six feet between people whenever possible.
10. Everyone should maintain proper hand hygiene (alcohol-based hand sanitizers are generally acceptable).

Residents currently on transmission-based precautions (TBP) or quarantine can still receive visitors. Due to the risk of transmission, visitors of residents on TBP must follow the signs on the resident room doors, and:

1. Be aware that there exists the potential risk of being exposed during the visit,
2. The resident on TBP or quarantine should wear a well-fitting face mask (if tolerated),
3. The Home may also require use of other PPE for the visit, and
4. Resident and visitors must wear all required PPE when staff are in the resident's room.

Visitation Process

1. When a visitor comes into the Home to visit, check in at the Security Desk.
2. COVID-19 self-testing is available. Requirements for testing will depend upon current guidance.
3. Anyone, who has a current positive COVID-19 test, symptoms of COVID-19, or meets criteria for COVID quarantine, is asked to postpone the visit and may be refused their visit based on the Home's current Infection Prevention and Control practices.
4. Visitors are asked to go directly to the resident's room or the designated visitation area, and not walk around the hallways or different common areas of the Home.
5. Visitors are allowed to participate with the resident in the Home's Recreational (Activities) programs when the Home is not in outbreak status.
6. Visitors are asked to maintain at least 6 feet physical distancing between other residents and other visitors whenever possible.
7. If the resident (or representative) and the visitor are aware of the risks and adhere to the core principles of infection prevention:
 - A. They may choose not to wear a face mask and to have physical contact while in the resident's room.
8. Visitors may eat with a resident (in the resident's room or an assigned common area).
9. Upon ending a visit, visitors are asked to please walk directly to the lobby exit and not visit with staff and other residents.

Visitation During an Outbreak Investigation

An outbreak investigation begins when a single new nursing home onset of COVID-19 occurs – meaning a new facility-acquired case of COVID-19 among residents or staff. Visitors will be informed via the Home's website and/or posted signs. While it is safer not to enter the Home during an outbreak investigation, visitors are permitted but must adhere to the Core Principles of Infection Prevention. If visitors choose and are allowed to visit during an outbreak investigation, visitors may be required to wear a face mask (and face shield, if

required) during visits, regardless of vaccination status and visits will take place in the resident's room or other designated location as per guidelines.

Outdoor Visitation

Weather permitting, outdoor visitation will be available for individuals preferring to be outside. If the resident (or representative) and the visitor are aware of the risks and adhere to the Core Principles of Infection Prevention, one or both may choose not to wear a face mask and to have physical contact, while remaining at least 6 feet from others, whenever possible.

Vaccination and Booster Status

If unvaccinated or have not received a booster, we strongly recommend reconsideration. Unvaccinated persons are at the greatest risk and most COVID-19 hospitalizations and death happen among those who are unvaccinated.

Testing

Testing is optional. The Security Department will issue a rapid swab kit that can be completed in the lobby at the designated testing area.

Risks

There are still risks associated with visitation and COVID-19. However, these risks are reduced by adhering to the Core Principles of COVID-19 Infection Prevention. Since visitors, resident, or their representative are aware of the risks associated with visitation, and the visit occurs in a manner that does not place other residents at risk (e.g., in the resident's room, assigned location or in common areas outside the Home), the resident will be allowed to receive visitors as he/she chooses.

Residents may deny or withdraw consent for a visit at any time.

We appreciate everyone working together with us for the residents' safety and everyone here at the New York State Veterans Home at Oxford.

Sincerely,

Kurt D. Apthorpe

Kurt D. Apthorpe, MBA, CNHA, FACHCA

Administrator

NYS Veterans Home at Oxford

4207 State Highway 220

Oxford, NY 13830

(607) 843-3101