

Hillside Manor Rehabilitation and Extended Care Center
Policy and Procedure: Visitation Guidelines Post Covid-19 Public Health Emergency

Administrative Policy and Procedure	Subject: Visitation Guidelines for Families/Healthcare Representatives	
Approved by:		
Effective: 6/28/2020	Revised: 7/13/2020	3/26/2021
	9/16/2020	4/16/2021
	2/24/2021	7/9/2021

POLICY

It is the of this facility to promote and support visitation for residents, families and resident representatives while ensuring safety and adherence to infection prevention strategies to minimize any potential spread of infection. This will be done in accordance with all State and Federal guidance for the prevention of COVID-19.

PURPOSE

To enhance resident quality of life by implementing visitation to combat psychological impacts of isolation from family and representatives.

NYSDOH CRITERIA (Revised 7/9/2021)

Nursing Homes may conduct visitation and activities under the following revised NYSDOH guidelines, which aligns with CMS and CDC guidance.

1. The facility is in full compliance with all state and Federal requirements, State Executive Orders and guidance, State reporting requirements including COVID-19 focus surveys, HERDS and staff testing surveys, and federally required submission of COVID-19 data to the NHSN.
2. The facility has protocols to separate residents into cohorts of positive, negative, and unknown as well as separate staff teams to deal with COVID-positive residents and non-positive residents.
3. The facility has completed the NY Forward Safety Plan and submitted a copy of the complete plan to covidnursinghomeinfo@health.ny.gov. The facility must retain a copy of the plan at the facility where it is accessible and immediately available upon request of the Department or local health department.
 - The plan must clearly articulate the space(s) to be used for visitation (outdoors and indoors) including the number of visitors and residents which could be safely socially distanced within the space
4. Adherence to written screening protocols for all staff during each shift, each resident daily, and all persons entering the facility or grounds of the facility, including visitors. Visitors may be asked for ID as needed. Visitors are encouraged to be tested within 2-3 days of visiting.
 - Facility will offer Antigen (Rapid) Covid test for visitors who are unable to get tested before visiting *if* county positivity rate between $\geq 5-10\%$, or per most recent DOH guidelines
5. The facility will conduct screening of all who enter the facility for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, including temperature checks, questions about and observation for signs or symptoms.
 - The facility will deny entry for those with signs/symptoms or close contact with someone with COVID-19 infection in the past 14 days.

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6. Documentation of screening will be maintained in an electronic format and available upon request of the NYSDOH.
7. Resident monitoring will include daily symptom checks, vital signs, and pulse oximetry.
8. A copy of the facility's formal visitation plan is posted to the facility's public website and may be broadcasted via email or social media to provide visitors with clear guidelines for visiting and to announce if and when visitation is paused due to regulatory reasons associated with COVID-19 infection.

PROCEDURE:

1. The facility will expand visitation and/or activities while following Federal and NYSDOH guidance.
2. Facility visitation can be conducted through a variety of means:
 - In resident rooms
 - Dedicated visitation spaces
 - Outdoors (weather permitting), preferred
3. In order to limit movement in the facility during visitation, the following guidelines will be followed:
 - When weather permits, visitation will take place in the designated outdoor area(s).
 - When weather does not permit, visitation will take place in the designated monitored indoor area(s).
 - In instances when the resident cannot leave his/her room due to medical/psychosocial reasons, visitation may take place in the resident's room.
 - Visitor(s) will go directly to the resident's room or designated area.
 - If a resident shares a room, the facility will attempt to facilitate in-room visitation while adhering to the core principles of infection prevention.
4. Visits will be made in advance and scheduled by the Visitation Coordinator(s)/Designee via phone or via the electronic portal.
 - Accommodations will be made for families who are unable to visit during normal visiting hours
5. If a resident is fully vaccinated, they may choose to have close contact (including touch) with an unvaccinated visitor while both are wearing a well-fitting face mask and performing hand hygiene before and after.
6. If both the resident and their visitor(s) are fully, vaccinated and the resident and visitor(s) are alone in the resident's room or designated visitation room, the resident and visitor(s) may choose to have close contact (including touch) without a mask or face covering.

OUTDOOR VISITATION

Outdoor visitation is preferred and can continue during an outbreak for residents who are not on transmission-based precautions or quarantine. Facilities will need to determine on a case-by-case basis whether an outbreak would affect outdoor visitation. For example, if the outbreak is larger or responding to the outbreak requires more attention by staff, then outdoor visitation may need to be on hold temporarily (*CMS DNH Triage 4/11/21).

INDOOR VISITATION

The facility will facilitate indoor visitation at all times and for all residents (regardless of vaccination status), **except for** a few circumstances when visitation should be limited due to a high risk of COVID-

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19 transmission. An exception for compassionate care visits should be permitted at all times. These scenarios include limiting indoor visitation for:

- Unvaccinated residents if the nursing home's COVID-19 county positivity rate is >10% AND less than 70% of residents are vaccinated
- Residents with confirmed COVID-19 infection, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated until they have met criteria to discontinue Transmission-Based Precautions or
- Residents in quarantine, whether they are vaccinated or unvaccinated until they have met criteria for release from quarantine

Indoor visitation can still occur when there is an outbreak, but there is evidence that transmission is contained to a single area /unit. The facility will initiate serial testing and resume visiting based on the following:

- a. If the first round of outbreak testing reveals no additional COVID-19 cases in other areas (e.g., units) of the facility, then visitation can resume for residents in areas/units with no COVID-19 cases. However, the facility should suspend visitation on the affected unit until the facility meets the criteria to discontinue outbreak testing. Example: if the first round of outbreak testing reveals two more COVID-19 cases in the same unit as the original case, but not in other units, visitation can resume for residents in areas/units with no COVID-19 cases.
 - b. If the first round of outbreak testing reveals one or more additional COVID-19 cases in other areas/units of the facility (e.g., new cases in two or more units), then facilities should suspend indoor visitation for all residents (vaccinated and unvaccinated), until the facility meets the criteria to discontinue outbreak testing in accordance with CMS guidance 42CFR 483.80(h) of testing all residents and staff every 3-7 days until there are no new positives for 14 days.
7. The facility will assign staff to assist with the transition of residents, monitoring of visitation, and cleaning and disinfecting areas used for visitation after each visit using an EPA-approved N-List disinfectant.
 8. The facility will post signage regarding facemask utilization and hand hygiene and uses applicable floor markings for social distancing.
 - A log will be kept for all visitors that includes:
 - First and last name of the visitor;
 - Physical (street) address of the visitor;
 - Daytime and evening telephone number;
 - Date and time of visit;
 - Email address, if available;
 9. Partially and unvaccinated residents and visitors will wear a facemask or face covering (must always cover both the nose and mouth when on the premises of the facility). Masks will be available on hand as needed.
 10. Visiting areas will have easily accessible alcohol-based hand rub for residents, visitors, and staff.
 11. Visitors who are younger than 16 years old must be accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.
 12. The facility will allow the number of visitors based on the ability to adhere to IC principles, including the ability to maintain 6 feet physical distancing between residents and visitors, as applicable.
 13. 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.
 - Facility will facilitate virtual and/or compassionate care visits as indicated

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14. The facility will provide and post a fact sheet outlining visitor expectations including appropriate hand hygiene and face coverings. The fact sheet will be provided upon initial screening to all visitors.
15. Residents will also be assisted to go outdoors with staff supervision weather permitting. The appropriate infection control and safety and social distancing requirements must be maintained.
16. The IDT Team will review the Visiting program and monitor for any needed adjustments and report to QA Committee as needed.
17. If any visitor fails to adhere to the protocol, he/she/they will be asked to leave and may not be permitted to visit in the future (NYSDOH 7/8/2021, pg. 2)

PERSONAL CAREGIVING VISITS *(refer to specific P&P)*

Personal Caregiving Visitor (PCV): a family member, close friend, or legal guardian of a resident designated by such resident, or such resident's lawful representative, to assist with personal caregiving or compassionate caregiving for the resident.

Personal Caregiving: care and support of a resident to benefit such resident's mental, physical, or social well-being.

COMPASSIONATE CARE VISITS *(refer to specific P&P)*

Compassionate Care Visits are permitted when visitation may not otherwise be permitted (in accordance with NYS Public Health Law), and facilities may waive requirement of a visitor presenting a negative COVID-19 test prior to commencement of such visit under the following circumstances:

- Newly admitted residents with difficulty adjusting to the facility environment and lack of in-person family support.
- Residents recently grieving the loss of a friend or loved one
- Residents who previously received in-person support and/or cueing from family for eating and drinking and are now experiencing dehydration and/or weight loss.
- Residents who are exhibiting signs/symptoms of emotional distress, including, but not limited to, seldom speaking or crying more frequently (when the resident had rarely cried in the past), refusing to participate in activities, staying in bed longer than usual, or exhibiting behavior considered abnormal for the individual.
- Residents who receive religious or spiritual support from clergy or another layperson.
- Residents who are experiencing declining health condition
- Residents who are at the end of their lives.

END OF LIFE VISITS

For any resident assessed to potentially be at the end-of-life, family/resident representative will be contacted by SW/Designee to allow visitation. Testing is not required for end-of-life visits. Family will be screened, provided with PPE and escorted to resident's room.

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REFERENCES:

- NYSDOH (9/15/2020). Health Advisory: Skilled Nursing Facility Visitation.
https://health.ny.gov/facilities/nursing/docs/2020-09-15_nursing_facility_visitation.pdf
- CMS (9/17/2020). Ref: QSO-20-39-NH. Nursing Home Visitation: Covid-19. [Nursing Home Visitation-COVID-19 \(mo.gov\)](https://www.cms.gov/Regulatory-and-Enforcement/Decision-Making-and-Policy/nursing-home-visitation-covid-19)
- NYSDOH (Rev 2/22/2021). Health Advisory: Skilled Nursing Facility Visitation.
https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/NH_Visitation_update_2-22-2021.pdf
- CMS (3/10/2021). Ref: QSO-20-39-NH. Nursing Home Visitation: Covid-19 (Revised). [QSO-20-39-NH Revised \(cms.gov\)](https://www.cms.gov/Regulatory-and-Enforcement/Decision-Making-and-Policy/nursing-home-visitation-covid-19-revised)
- NYSDOH (3/25/2021). Health Advisory: Skilled Nursing Facility Visitation.
https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/03/updated_nursing_home_visitation_guidance.pdf
- CDC (Updated 4/27/2021). Updated Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations in Response to Covid-19 Vaccination. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-after-vaccination.html>
- CMS (Rev 4/27/2021). QSO-20-39-NH: Nursing Home Visitation- Covid-19.
<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf>
- NYSDOH (6/1/2021). Personal Caregiving and Compassionate Caregiving Visitors in Nursing Homes and Adult Care Facilities.
https://regs.health.ny.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/emergency_regulations/Personal%20Caregiving%20and%20Compassionate%20Caregiving%20Visitors%20in%20Nursing%20Homes%20and%20Adult%20Care%20Facilities.pdf
- NYSDOH (7/8/2021). Health Advisory: Revised Skilled Nursing Facility Visitation.
https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/07/nh_visitation_guidance_-7-8-2021.pdf

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Visitation - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What guideline(s) dictate visitation?

- Visitation guidelines are based on guidance provided by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) and New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). Of significance, whenever the guidance by both agencies do not align, the facility will use the more stringent, usually that of NYSDOH.

How will I know when the facility is open for visitation?

- The facility will post updates on its website, www.hillsidemanorrehab.com, and on its Covid 19 daily recorded message hotline, telephone number, **718-557-1220**.
- You may contact the facility directly for visitation inquiries, call the facility main telephone number, 718-291-8200, and ask for the Director of Recreation, ext. 2279, who will assist in scheduling your visit.
- The facility will also notify you within 24 hours if there are any changes to visitation on our website and the daily recorded message hotline.

What is the procedure for scheduling a visit?

- Call 718-291-8200 to schedule a visit. Ask to speak to the Director of Recreation, ext. 2279.

How long do each visit last?

- Visitation time slots are in 30 minute increments in an effort to accommodate as many families/representatives as possible. You may be allowed additional visits based on availability. The facility will make every effort to accommodate your needs.

How many people can visit at a time?

- The current number of people that can visit per session is two (2). Any child age 16 and younger must be accompanied by an adult age 18 and older.

Where will visitation take place?

- Per CMS and NYSDOH, **outdoor visitation is the preferred method**
- Visits may also occur indoors in a supervised area (main lounge on the ground floor)
- In residents' rooms based on resident's individual needs and health status to meet their physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being. This must be discussed with and approved by Administration.

What do I need to do to prepare for a visit?

- Arrive at facility approximately 10 minutes before scheduled visit in order to check-in and complete Covid-19 health screening.
- Have the following required information ready (will be used for contact tracing as necessary):
 - First and last name of the visitor;
 - Physical (street) address of the visitor;
 - Daytime and evening telephone number;
 - Date and time of visit;
 - E-mail address, if available.

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What are the expectations of the visitor while visiting?

- Visitor will wear a mask or face covering that covers the nose and mouth for the entire duration of the visit (facility will provide mask if you do not have one).
- Visitor will wash hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after visit (easily accessible at facility).
- Visitor must maintain social distancing of at least 6ft (unless both resident and visitor(s) are fully vaccinated).
- If visiting in the resident's room, face mask or face covering required. Additionally, gowns may be required. Unit staff will provide education and guidance for use.

Are there any situations where a resident may not qualify for regular visitation?

- 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.
 - Facility will facilitate virtual and/or compassionate care visits as indicated.

What is the facility doing to promote safe visitation and protect my loved one from getting Covid-19?

- In accordance with CMS and NYSDOH guidelines, the facility will:
 - Enforce the core principles of Covid-19 infection prevention
 - Screening of all who enter the facility for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., temperature checks, questions or observations about signs or symptoms), and denial of entry of those with signs or symptoms.
 - Hand hygiene (use of alcohol-based hand rub is preferred).
 - Face covering or mask (covering mouth and nose).
 - Social distancing at least six feet between persons.
 - Instructional signage throughout the facility and proper visitor education on COVID-19 signs and symptoms, infection control precautions, other applicable facility practices. (e.g., use of face covering or mask, specified entries, exits and routes to designated areas, hand hygiene).
 - Cleaning and disinfecting high frequency touched surfaces in the facility often, and designated visitation areas after each visit.
 - Appropriate staff use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
 - Limit the movement of people in the building
 - For example, visitors should not walk around different halls of the facility. Rather, they should go directly to the designated visitation area or resident's room. Visits for residents who share a room may not be conducted in the resident's room, but rather, in a designated area.
 - Limit the number of visitors per resident at one time and limit the total number of visitors in the facility at one time (based on the size of the building and the physical space).
 - Schedule visits for a specified length of time to help ensure all residents are able to receive visitors.
 - Utilize county positivity rates to facilitate safe indoor visitation.
 - To the extent possible, assign staff to designated units in an effort to limit movement between units.

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How will I know when there are Covid positive cases in the facility?

- The facility will contact you via the Covid-19 daily recorded message hotline within 24 hours of a Covid-positive case, regardless of whether it is a resident or staff.
- The facility may post updates on its website.
- You may contact the facility directly for related inquiries, 718-291-8200.

How does a Covid-positive case affect visitation?

- When there is a Covid-positive case (staff or resident), the facility will suspend all indoor visitation and perform Covid-testing for all staff and residents, per requirement.
 - If there are no additional positive cases in other areas/units of the building, with the exception of unit/area of origin, then indoor visitation will resume.
- Outdoor visitation may continue to occur, weather permitting.
- The area/unit where the Covid-positive case was identified will be closed for 14 days
 - These residents may receive virtual and/or compassionate care visits as indicated.

What is compassionate care visitation?

- Personal caregiving provided in anticipation of the end of the resident's life or in the instance of significant mental, physical, or social decline or crisis.
- Compassionate caregiving is permitted at all times, regardless of restrictions on regular visitation, during a declared public health emergency.
 - Please contact facility to inform us of when you'd like to visit so that we can make all appropriate arrangements.
- Examples of compassionate care visits include:
 - Newly admitted residents with difficulty adjusting to the facility environment and lack of in-person family support.
 - Residents recently grieving the loss of a friend or loved one.
 - Residents who previously received in-person support and/or cueing from family for eating and drinking and are now experiencing dehydration and/or weight loss.
 - Residents who are exhibiting signs/symptoms of emotional distress, including, but not limited to, seldom speaking or crying more frequently (when the resident had rarely cried in the past), refusing to participate in activities, staying in bed longer than usual, or exhibiting behavior considered abnormal for the individual.
 - Residents who receive religious or spiritual support from clergy or another layperson.
 - Residents who are experiencing declining health condition.
 - Residents who are at the end of their lives.

Are visitors required to get a Covid-19 test before visiting?

- While it is not a requirement to get a Covid-19 test, we encourage all visitors to get a Covid-19 test in instances when the county positivity rate is medium to high (greater than 5%).
- Covid-19 test should be done within 72 hours of scheduled visit, if applicable.
 - The facility will offer Covid-19 testing if you were unable to get one in the community.

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Are visitors required to get a Covid-19 vaccine in order to visit?

- While it is not a requirement to get a Covid vaccine in order to visit your loved ones, we encourage you to get vaccinated in order to protect yourself and your loved ones from getting Covid-19 infection.

Are there any special accommodations for residents and families/representatives who are fully vaccinated (≥ 2 weeks following receipt of the 2nd dose in a 2-dose series, or ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of 1 dose of a single-dose vaccine)?

- If both the resident and the visitor(s) are fully vaccinated and the resident and visitor(s) are alone in the resident's room or designated visitation area, the resident and visitor(s) may choose to have close contact (including touch) without a mask or face covering.
- If the resident is fully vaccinated, they can choose to have physical contact with unvaccinated visitor providing both are wearing masks and perform hand hygiene before and after.

What happens if I don't follow the guidelines as set forth by CMS, DOH and the facility?

- Visitors who are unable to adhere to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention will not be permitted to visit or will be asked to leave.