

EATON COUNTY HEALTH & REHABILITATION SERVICE

POLICY & PROCEDURE

C-33 VISITATION DURING COVID 19 PANDEMIC

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eaton County Health & Rehabilitation Services (ECHRS) to follow CMS and CDC guidance regarding visitation in nursing homes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PROCEDURE

- a. The Infection Preventionist will monitor the status of COVID-19 through the CDC website, MDHHS and local/state health department and will keep leadership informed of current directives/recommendations and the need for restricting visitation.
- b. The Facility will communicate this visitation policy through multiple channels. Examples include signage, calls, letters, social media posts, emails, and recorded messages for receiving calls.
- c. Visits must occur in a manner that does not place other residents at risk (one example would be a shared room, this may pose a risk to the other resident). Visits can be conducted through different means based on a facility's structure and residents' needs, such as in resident rooms, dedicated visitation spaces, and outdoors. The facility will avoid large gatherings where large numbers of visitors are in the same space at the same time.
- d. CMS does not recommend visitation during an active outbreak or with residents who are on transmission-based precautions or quarantine, but visitation is still permitted if core principles of infection prevention are followed. Visitors must be made aware of the risks of visiting during an outbreak situation, and wear appropriate PPE regardless of vaccination status of the resident or visitor.
- e. CMS strongly encourages all visitors to become vaccinated and facilities should educate and encourage visitors to become vaccinated. Visitor testing and vaccination can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and facilities may ask about a visitors' vaccination status, however, visitors are not required to test or be vaccinated or show proof of vaccination.
- f. CMS states facilities must have a reasonable clinical or safety cause to restrict visitation and allows for the facility to consult with the local health department for guidance or direction on how to structure visitation to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Should this occur, the facility will immediately communicate this with residents and responsible parties.

ECHRS will permit visitors in the following manner:

All visits will be logged for tracking and source control purposes.

All visitors will be screened.

The facility may ask their vaccination status during high community transmission rates; however, visitors are not required to show proof of vaccination status or negative COVID test result. Visitors must be educated regarding the risks associated with visitation.

Visitors that have tested positive in the last 14 days and/or have symptoms of COVID will not be allowed to visit.

i. INDOOR VISITS

- a. Will occur in either a private, semi-private, or dedicated visitation space, depending on the resident/responsible party's preference.
- b. To maintain appropriate physical distancing requirements and adequate infection control practice, up to 4 people may visit a resident in a private room. For semi-private rooms, up to 3 people may visit a resident if the visit does not pose a risk or infringe upon the other resident's right. Visitors shall not enter the other resident room or use the shared bathroom.
- c. Children are permitted to visit, however are included in the total number of people allowed for social distancing purposes. Visitor must bring proper fitting PPE for each child.
- d. Visitors are encouraged, but not required, to contact the facility 24 hours in advance of the visit to advise of the date, time, and number of people attending to ensure appropriate physical distancing can be maintained, especially during periods when a high volume of visitors may be expected (e.g., holidays). Otherwise, the visitor may be asked to select a different date/time (staggered time slots) depending on the number of people in the building on any given day to ensure safety, maintain appropriate infection control practices, and appropriate physical distancing.
- e. The visitors shall wear a surgical mask and face shield upon entering the facility and keep on the entire time.
- f. If the visitor is visiting a resident in isolation, they will be educated on the risk of exposure and be required to pass a PPE competency to ensure they can properly don/doff the appropriate PPE and complete proper hand hygiene.
 - i. The visitors will be escorted to the resident room.
 - j. The visitors will always stay in the resident room, unless leaving to use the public restroom, and will not interact with the staff members.
 - k. Questions will be directed via phone call to the nurse's station, rather than in person at the nurse's station.

ii: OUTDOOR VISITS

- a. Visits will be allowed during normal visiting hours, and the facility will be requesting (but not requiring) visitors to provide the amount of time needed for the visit 24 hours prior in order to ensure resident is ready and staff are available to transport to/from visit.
- b. All visits will be coordinated through the activities department.
- c. If there are inclement weather conditions, the visitation can be rescheduled for as soon as possible, or moved indoors while adhering to infection control practices. The lowest temperature for visits is 45 degrees and the highest temperature for visits is 85 degrees heat index.
- d. Outside visits will be conducted in the interior courtyard allowing for multiple visits at one time in the area. Visitors must wear appropriate PPE and be escorted to the courtyard through the exterior door just before Pine Ridge.
- e. Resident and visitor may share a meal. Hand hygiene will be performed before and after the meal, and social distancing practices will be encouraged.
- f. Outdoor visitation will be allowed on any neighborhood regardless of isolation status.

- iii. END OF LIFE & COMPASSIONATE CARE VISITS
 - i. To maintain appropriate physical distancing requirements and adequate infection control practice, up to 4 people may visit a resident in a private room. For semi-private rooms, only 3 people may visit a resident and visitors shall not enter the other resident room or use the shared bathroom. Visitors may rotate out to ensure more visitation.
 - ii. Children are permitted to visit, however are included in the total number of people allowed for social distancing purposes. Visitor must bring proper fitting PPE.
 - iii. May visit in isolation as long the visitor is educated on the risk and is able to pass the PPE competency.
- iv. PETS AT VISITATION will be allowed.
 - i. Must show proof of vaccination.
 - ii. Maintain animal on a leash.
 - iii. Keep animal with the visitor the entire time of the visit.
 - iv. Immediately report any injuries that animal may have caused during visit (scratch, bite, etc.).

Anytime the resident has had a potential risk of exposure due to non-compliance with the social distancing practices, or guidelines set forth in this policy, they will be placed in observation for enhanced monitoring of COVID related symptoms.

Visitors violating this policy, or the rights of other residents will be asked to leave and may have future visits supervised if noncompliance continues.

Sources:

Nursing Home Visitation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). January 6, 2022.
<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/nursing-home-visitation-faq-1223.pdf>

Nursing Home Visitation – COVID-19 REVISED. November 12, 2021.
<https://www.cms.gov/medicareprovider-enrollment-and-certificationsurvey/certificationgeninfopolicy-and-memos-states-and/nursing-home-visitation-covid-19-revised>

Reviewed/Revised: Date: Dec 2020 by: JW/MR Date: Jan 2021 by: JW/MR Date: Feb 2021 by: JW/MR Date: Mar 2021 by: JW/MR Date: Apr 2021 by: JW/MR Date: May 2021 by: JW/MR/DKG Date: Nov 2021 by: JW/MR Date: Nov 2021 by: MR/MR Date: Dec 2021 by: MR/MR Date: Jan 2022 by: MR/MR
