



Important Update re: COVID-19

from Gil Fonger, President & CEO

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IDPH UPDATES TO VISITATION AND ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

Late in the day last Friday, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) released many changes to Visitation and Activity guidelines for Long-Term Care Facilities, based on recommendations from the CDC. These changes are great news and we are pleased to be sharing them with you all. (Keep in mind, these changes are based on current positivity rates in our state and counties and could be altered at any time.)

Key Points:

- Indoor visitation is allowed by appointment for all residents regardless of vaccination status under most circumstances
- Compassionate Care visit are always allowed
- Vaccinated residents can be out of the facility (even overnight for home visits) and do not need to quarantine upon return

General Visitation Guidelines:

- Visits are allowed BY APPOINTMENT at all Marklund facilities either as Outdoors (most preferred option), indoors within dedicated visitation areas, or in private rooms under special circumstances.
- To keep residents and staff as safe and healthy as possible, the maximum number of visitors per resident at one time is 4 and they must all be living within the same household.
- Visits will be scheduled to specific lengths of time in order to ensure all residents are able to receive visitors. The total number of visitors in each facility will be limited by each facility's administrator.
- Visitors must adhere to all Infection Prevention protocols, including being screened upon arrival, wearing appropriate PPE, limiting movement within the facility—proceeding directly to visitation area or restroom only—maintaining social distancing.
- However, fully vaccinated residents can choose to have close contact (including touch) as long as the visitor is wearing a face mask and the resident has assistance performing hand hygiene before and after.
- Visits will be restricted if there is a confirmed case of the COVID-19 virus.
- Compassionate Care visits are permitted at all times.

Resident Activities/Outings/Dining/Beauty Salon

All residents (vaccinated or unvaccinated) may be able to take part in outings as long as infection precautions are taken prior to and afterward.

- **Beginning this Friday, March 26, vaccinated residents may go on overnight home visits and not need to quarantine upon return.**
- All residents may be taken outside on walks by family members during visits.
- Residents who take part in offsite outings with staff must be screened prior to the outing and have assistance using hand sanitizer. The number of residents allowed on a specific outing is limited by the ability to have a 6-foot separation.
- Outdoor activities and outings are encouraged, avoiding large events such as festivals, parades, etc.
- All transport vehicles must be disinfected after each outing.
- Unvaccinated residents will be observed/monitored for development of symptoms during 14 days following outing.

PPE Note for Direct Care Staff

All staff are still required to wear face masks when on Marklund property or on outings with residents.

IDPH guidelines do require unvaccinated staff to quarantine after exposure. Current guidelines recommend wearing eye protection (goggles or face shields) based on positivity rates regardless of vaccination status. However, at our current low levels of county-wide community transmission, vaccinated staff are no longer required to wear face shields except for when caring for residents in isolation or on quarantine.

Based on all of this new guidance, the IDPH Long-Term Care Facility Reopening Plan no longer includes a “phase” structure. If need be, based on growing positivity rates, the state will impose Tiered Mitigation requirements. In the meantime, we are very pleased to have moved to this current status allowing families to be together on a much more regular basis.

Please feel free to reach out to the administrators for more specifics on these new guidelines.

We will be happy to see many of you back on site!

Happy Monday!

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