



## An Update from us on COVID-19

3/17/2021

Dear Evergreen Supporters,

In the times of COVID-19, the more things change, the more they do not stay the same. The evening of 3/12/2021 we received new CMS Visitation Guidance and on 3/15/2021 Johnson County Department of Health and Environment (JCDHE) issued additional guidance of their own following an update from the CDC. After discussing with our Regional Medical Director, we have decided to implement the CDC updates and open up for vaccinated individuals to leave the community for non-medical reasons without isolating upon return. We have submitted this plan to KDADS for approval and therefore it is subject to change. Below you will find the guidance JCDHE has provided.

Also, after some ongoing internal discussions, if a vaccinated resident does leave the facility for a non-medical reason, we do not recommend a 14 day quarantine upon return unless there is a known COVID-19 exposure. It is strongly preferred, however, that the resident remains within the facility where proper infection control measures can be maintained, and the expanded indoor visitation guidelines are implemented. It is important to remember that, while the vaccine is very effective, nothing is 100% and the risk of COVID-19 still exists. That being said, we understand the significant toll the pandemic has taken on the residents, and the vaccine has shown great effectiveness on preventing severe disease and limiting spread.

Some recommendations to go along with this:

- Test twice weekly for the next 14 days upon their return (Testing would not apply in cases of COVID-19 recovered patients during the 90 day period unless symptomatic with no alternative diagnosis).
- Increase monitoring (2-3 times per day) for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, including vital signs and pulse oximetry, upon their return.
- Educate the residents and families before going out for a community outing (see below). One suggestion, that I've seen from other states, is to have a quick sit-down meeting with the families and residents and go over the risks and safety precautions.

During this education, facilities should consider encouraging fully vaccinated residents to avoid high risk situations as much as possible when they go out in the community. These high-risk situations include but not limited to:

- Meeting unvaccinated individuals
- Joining large gatherings (e.g. going to a game)

- Mask-less exposures in community/public (e.g. dining in restaurants)
- Attending crowded gatherings (as maintaining physical distancing will be challenging in that scenario)
- General education on infection prevention and control measures including masking, hand hygiene and physical distancing should be provided to both residents and family members along with above mentioned guidance.

That being said, this guidance is subject to change at any time due to a variety of reasons including updated federal/state guidance or large increases in our community spread of COVID-19. I will be sure to keep everyone posted if that is the case.

We would like to remind everyone that not all residents or team members are vaccinated and per the new CMS guidance for families: Also, although a vaccinated person may not “feel” sick from COVID-19, they could be infected and/or spread the virus to others. For example, if a vaccinated resident contracts the virus from a staff member or visitor, that resident will likely be protected from the disease, but could put an unvaccinated resident or staff member at serious risk.

Also of significance, we are establishing additional designated spaces inside the community to hold visits which will allow for additional opportunities for all to visit. We will be transitioning to having the Receptionists schedule visits to expand when and the frequency for which visits can be held. The Life Coaches will notify you when you will transition to contacting the receptionist for scheduling.

Thank you for your continued patience and support. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or suggestions.

Sincerely,  
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