



Mennonite Home Communities



Serve Together

07/22/2021

RE: Visitation Guidance for The Mennonite Home

Greetings family and friends,

Happy summer!

We hope each of you are finding opportunity to enjoy the season!

We receive many questions and scenarios for visitation and wanted to support you with additional information.

The Mennonite Home is mandated to follow the Center of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Center of Disease Control (CDC), and PA Department of Health (DOH) guidelines and regulations on visitation in long term care communities. The following Q&A has been developed to provide clarification to residents, families, and staff on our visitation policy and procedure.

The Mennonite Home is utilizing an individualized approach to determine how to support your desired visitation capabilities within the parameters established. The parameters continue to evolve and as they do the Mennonite Home will also update to support you.

Process steps:

We are using every opportunity to support visits.

Recommend scheduling – via Visitation Specialist (Marcia Hirneisen 717-390-4131) or sign up genius on our website: www.mennonitehome.org

If you have any questions for review it is recommended for you to call our Volunteer specialist. Most requests and needs are able to be accommodated!

Utilize the COVID 19 Screening process upon entry for all individuals



Mennonite Home Communities

Education – hand hygiene, utilizing a mask as needed, social distancing, and completing the COVID screening paperwork.

Residents with roommates - will need to continue to visit in neutral space. This takes coordination to allow proper space and privacy for all.

The following are some frequently asked questions for you to review

Q: Does the visitor and the resident have to wear a face covering during the visit?

A: Masks continue to be required to be worn at all times in the facility with the following exceptions:

The following guidance is applicable to both indoor and outdoor visitation:

If both the resident and the visitors are fully vaccinated, then face masks are not needed to be worn and close contact is permitted **when visiting in resident's room or the parlor.**

***Visitors must physically distance from other residents and staff and wear face covering when outside of resident's room/designated visitation area such as the parlor

If either the resident or visitors are not fully vaccinated, then face masks need to be worn by everyone.

However, if the resident is fully vaccinated, they can choose to have close contact as long as everyone wears face masks.

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-after-vaccination.html#anchor_1619116532180

Q: Why is MHC encouraging limiting my visit to one hour, twice per week and two visitors at a time for residents in our Skilled Nursing Facility?

A: Per CMS, "Facilities should consider how the number of visitors per resident at one time and the total number of visitors in the facility at one time (based on the size of the building and physical space) may affect the ability to maintain the core principles of infection prevention.

If necessary, facilities should consider scheduling visits for a specified length of time to help ensure all residents are able to receive visitors.

During indoor visitation, facilities should limit visitor movement in the facility. For example, visitors should not walk around different halls of the facility. Rather, they should go directly to the resident's room or designated visitation area."

Facility will continue to limit visits to accommodate guidelines and all requested visits.

Per CMS, "When conducting outdoor visitation, facilities should set the time duration for each visit and should have a process to limit the number and size of visits occurring simultaneously to support safe infection prevention actions....also limit the number of individuals visiting per resident at the same time as predicated on the size of outdoor space."



Mennonite Home Communities

With that being said, MHC will recommend limiting visitors to two individuals for a **ONE**-hour increment. This allows opportunity to consider all request for visitation. Individual circumstances may supersede this limitation if able to be accommodated with guidelines.

Q: What is the preferred method of visitation?

A: Per CMS and CDC, “Outdoor visitation is preferred, even when the resident is fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Outdoor visits generally pose a lower risk of transmission because of increased space and airflow; therefore, visits should be held outdoors whenever practicable.”

Q: Why do I have to visit in a designated area and cannot visit in my loved one’s semi-private room?

A: Per CMS, “Visits for residents who share a room should not be conducted in the resident’s room, if possible.” CMS and CDC encourage facilities to create designated visitation spaces for residents with roommates to decrease the risk of exposure to COVID-19. If both residents are bed bound, facility will attempt to make an in-room visit possible. If that occurs, then everyone in the room is to wear a face mask regardless of vaccination status.

Q: Why is there an age limit on visitation?

A: The age limit for visitation was discontinued beginning 6/21/2021. Children of any age can visit. Visitors need to be able to restrict children from leaving the designated visitation area. Children over 24 months are encouraged to wear a face mask.

Q: Can I eat a meal with my loved one?

A: If all parties are vaccinated and masks are not required to be worn when the visit is in the room, then a meal can be eaten together.

If just the resident is vaccinated and the visitors are not vaccinated, then the individual resident circumstances should be reviewed.

Q: Who do I contact to schedule visitation?

A: Visitation specialist can be reached at 717-390-4131 or via sign up genius at www.mennonitehome.org.

Q: Can I schedule more than 2 visits per week?

A: If you call the visitation specialist and review the intended visit details this may be accommodated based on coordination with other visits scheduled.

Q: Can out of state visitors have an exception on the 2 visit per week limit?

A: Effective 6/21/2021, visitors that live greater than 3 hours away and are not scheduled for regular weekly visits and are only visiting the area for limited time may be granted multiple visits following the parameters for safety.



Mennonite Home Communities

Q: Are visitors allowed to bring pets to the visit?

A. Pets (dogs/cats) must be **pre-approved** with our Volunteer Manager. Pet owner must review our Pet Visitation Policy, sign a pet waiver and provide a copy of the pet's current vaccination record 24-hours prior to visit. **Our pet policy is** available from the receptionists or by calling 717-390-7971.

Resources:

CMS: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf>
<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-21-14-icfiid-prtf-revised-06032021.pdf>

CDC: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-after-vaccination.html#anchor_1619116532180

Any questions please contact our Visitation Specialist listed above.

**Thank you,
Jennifer Eslinger, MHA, NHA
VP of Health Services
717-391-3620**