

# COVID-19 Guidance for Dining and Activities in Assisted Living Settings

4/2/2021

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is providing guidance for dining and organized activities within assisted living-type settings in an effort to continue to reduce social isolation. Assisted living-type facilities include registered housing with services settings with an arranged home care provider. It is important for staff or administrators to follow this guidance to reduce the spread of COVID-19 between people in assisted living settings.

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## Core principles for preventing COVID-19

- Screening all who enter the setting for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and deny entry of those with signs or symptoms or those who have had close contact with someone who has COVID-19 infection in the past 14 days regardless of the visitor's vaccination status.
- Hand hygiene. An alcohol-based hand rub is best, unless hands are visibly soiled, and then soap and water is recommended.
- Wearing a well-fitting facemask that fully covers the mouth and nose.
- Keeping people 6 feet apart (social distancing).
- Educating visitors about basic steps to prevent COVID-19 infection and posting signs throughout the building to help them remember.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces in the facility often, and designated visitation areas after each visit.
- Having staff wear facemasks and other needed personal protective equipment.

There is ongoing research for COVID-19 vaccines, but based on current data, COVID-19 vaccines offer effective protection against COVID-19. Administrators or managers should follow [COVID-19 Guidance: Long-Term Care Indoor Visitation for Nursing Facilities and Assisted Living-type Settings \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/lcindoor.pdf\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/lcindoor.pdf) when:

- The 14-day county positivity rate is less than 10%.
- Vaccination rates among people in the assisted living setting are more than 70%.

## COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR DINING AND ACTIVITIES IN ASSISTED LIVING SETTINGS

- Residents who are unvaccinated, or do not disclose vaccination status, should not gather with anyone with an increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 without wearing a mask and following the core principles listed above. See CDC guidance regarding severe illness: [People with Certain Medication Conditions \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html).
- Residents who are fully vaccinated\* can gather indoors, to play cards or sit in the dining room, with residents living in another unit or household\*\* within the assisted living setting.
- Residents who are fully vaccinated\* can gather informally with one other unit or household\*\* of residents who are unvaccinated, or who do not disclose vaccination status, as long as everyone is following guidance to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- Residents who are fully vaccinated\* can sit closer than 6 feet apart during organized activities and dining in the assisted living setting. MDH recommends that each resident wears a mask when gathering closer than 6 feet (except when eating).

\*Fully vaccinated: Residents are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 two weeks after their second dose of a vaccine that requires two doses (like Pfizer or Moderna), or two weeks after they get a single dose of a vaccine that requires one dose (like Johnson & Johnson).

\*\*Household: Each apartment in the assisting living or independent living setting is considered a household.

The Office of Ombudsman for Long-term Care is available if advocacy services are needed. Contact them at 651-431-2555 or 800-657-3591.



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