

COVID-19: Visitation Restriction Guidance for Residential Care Facilities in Minnesota

CURRENT AS OF MARCH 31, 2020

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) recognizes the heightened concern regarding the spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and how it may impact you and your loved ones. Stopping the spread and making sure residents are cared for in a safe and healthy environment is a top priority in Minnesota.

Current federal and state government guidelines provide direction to restrict visitors and volunteers who want to visit the facility. This includes family and friends. This restriction is in effect until further notice in order to help stop the spread of COVID-19. You will notice facilities posting signs in entryways to notify visitors/families, and actively screening individuals, including essential staff, who need to enter the building.

The guidelines do make an exception for compassionate care reasons, such as end-of-life situations, which will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Visitors and essential health care providers should be actively screened prior to any visit. Essential health care workers include, but are not limited to, facility staff, therapists, home health, hospice providers, dialysis staff, physicians, necessary lab/X-ray staff, clergy, mobility drivers for transport to essential appointments, local public health, the ombudsman, state agency survey staff, and Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) staff. Any essential health care provider exhibiting acute respiratory symptoms will be prohibited from entering the building.

We understand connecting with your loved ones is incredibly important. There is a variety of other ways to consider communicating including telephone, email, text, video chat or social media. Facilities across Minnesota are working on ways to best facilitate these methods of communication.

Residents have the right to place a camera in their room per state law. Representatives of a resident who want to help a resident install an electronic monitoring device should be allowed access to their loved ones' rooms consistent with the following three conditions:

1. They must pass the screening requirements established by the facility.
2. They must agree to limit their building access to their loved one's living unit/room.
3. They must comply with the Minnesota electronic monitoring law this includes obtaining proper consent.

As an additional effort to eliminate risk, families should not take their loved ones out of the building for any non-essential outings. Essential outings could include such things as chemotherapy, dialysis, emergency medical appointments, or to pick up prescriptions from pharmacy, if the facility does not have other arrangements. Residents who must regularly leave the facility for medically necessary purposes should wear a facemask whenever they leave their room, including for procedures outside of the facility.

COVID-19: VISITATION RESTRICTION GUIDANCE FOR RESIDENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS OF RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES IN MINNESOTA

For family members and loved ones:

- Residents still have the right to access the Ombudsman Office for Long-Term Care program. Residents, family members, and others may call the ombudsmen's office at 651-431-2555 or toll free 1-800-657-3591, or email MBA.OOLTC@state.mn.us.
- It is important to follow information from trusted sources. For up-to-date advice and guidance from MDH and the CDC, visit:
 - [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html)
 - [Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in Retirement Communities and Independent Living Facilities \(Interim Guidance\) \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/prevent-spread-in-long-term-care-facilities.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/prevent-spread-in-long-term-care-facilities.html)
 - [Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in Retirement Communities and Independent Living Facilities \(Interim Guidance\) \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/retirement/guidance-retirement-response.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/retirement/guidance-retirement-response.html)
- Residents, family members, members of the community should file reports or complaints with MDH and DHS through the Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center (MAARC) reporting system toll-free by calling 844-880-1574.

Should you have any questions, please contact your family member's residential care center.

Minnesota Department of Health
Program name
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www.health.state.mn.us

3/31/20

To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-431-2553.