



## **Nursing Home Visitation Quick Reference**

On September 17, CMS released [updated guidance](#) on visitation in nursing homes to immediately allow for expanded options to include outdoor and indoor in-person visitation. The new guidance replaces any previous visitation guidance released by CMS. We also note that the guidance may conflict with existing state guidance or mandates. CMS is working with states on these issues and nursing home providers should be prepared to act according to federal guidance from CMS. We have developed this quick reference to help navigate renewed visitation in your communities. For more a more thorough overview of the guidance, find our analysis [here](#). Note: Nursing homes that limit visitors without a reasonable clinical and safety cause may be cited under F563 Right to Receive / Deny Visitors.

### **General Visitation Guidance**

- Outdoor visitation is preferred.
- Adhere to the Core Principles of Infection Prevention (below) at all times.
- Visitors must also adhere to the Core Principles.
- Visitors must be screened, wear a face mask / cloth face covering, practice hand hygiene, and social distance. Find tips for screening [here](#).
- Residents on transmission-based precautions due to COVID-19 should not receive in-person visits. Guidance for discontinuation of transmission-based precautions can be found [here](#).
- Visitor testing is not required, but is strongly encouraged, especially in counties with medium and high positivity rates. Find data on county positivity rates [here](#).
- Nursing homes may also consider: scheduling visits, limiting the number of visitors in the nursing home at a given time, limiting the number of visitors to an individual resident at a given time, and limiting length of visits.

### **Outdoor Visitation**

- Visitors must be screened, wear cloth face coverings / face masks, practice hand hygiene, and maintain social distancing throughout the visit.
- Visits can take place in courtyards, patios, parking lots, and other outdoor spaces.
- Consider other factors such as weather, temperature, air quality, and residents' health status relative to outdoor visitation.
- Outdoor visitation may be cancelled due to a COVID-19 outbreak at the nursing home.

## **Indoor Visitation**

- Visitors must be screened, wear cloth face coverings / face masks, practice hand hygiene, and maintain social distancing throughout the visit.
- Indoor visitation is restricted if the nursing home has had a new case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days, or if they are currently conducting outbreak testing.
- Indoor visitation is restricted in counties with a high positivity rates. Find data on county positivity rates [here](#).
- Visitation should take place in private resident rooms or in designated visiting spaces only. No visitation in shared resident rooms.
- Limit visitor movement in the nursing home. Designate routes for visitors to go directly to and from resident rooms or visitation spaces.

## **Core Principles of COVID-19 Infection Prevention**

- Screening of all who enter the facility for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., temperature checks, questions or observations about signs or symptoms), and denial of entry of those with signs or symptoms
- Hand hygiene (use of alcohol-based hand rub is preferred)
- Face covering or mask (covering mouth and nose)
- Social distancing at least six feet between persons
- Instructional signage throughout the facility and proper visitor education on COVID19 signs and symptoms, infection control precautions, other applicable facility practices (e.g., use of face covering or mask, specified entries, exits and routes to designated areas, hand hygiene)
- Cleaning and disinfecting high frequency touched surfaces in the facility often, and designated visitation areas after each visit
- Appropriate staff use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Effective cohorting of residents (e.g., separate areas dedicated COVID-19 care)
- Resident and staff testing conducted as required at 42 CFR 483.80(h) (see QSO-20- 38-NH)