

SD COMMUNITY VISITATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Policy

The South Dakota Edgewood Assisted Living communities are committed to providing a safe environment to allow visitation with residents during a health emergency. Each resident in our assisted living community has a right to receive visitors of the resident's own choosing, at the time of the resident's own choosing, provided the visitation does not impose upon the rights of another resident.

According to the updated CMS guidance, facilities should always allow responsible visitation for all residents, regardless of vaccination status of the resident, or visitor. It is required that assisted living communities provide access to any resident by family, friends, and individuals providing health, social, legal, or other services to the resident unless certain scenarios arise that would limit visitation.

Each assisted living community will post a visitation policy and procedure on their website and in a conspicuous place within the community,

Each community, prior to signing our admission agreement, will provide a copy of our visitation policies and procedure to the resident and or resident representative. We will provide annually thereafter, an electronic copy of the visitation policy and procedure to our residents and the resident's designated family members. Printed copies will be made available upon request.

Procedure

- Upon entry to the community, a visitor must provide and properly wear a face covering or mask. A face mask will be worn during the entire visit. If the resident and visitor are vaccinated and the visit is occurring in the resident's room, then the mask may be removed. A mask will need to be worn while entering and exiting the community.
- Visitors will take their own temperature using the community thermometer and fill out the provided screening form.
- Visitors will use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer provided by the community before visitation.
- Visitors must stay in the resident's unit or designated facility location. Visitors are not allowed to wander to other areas of the community.
- Visitors with children under 12 years of age must be present during the visit and must be able to manage them. Children must be able to wear a face mask during the entire visitation.
- Visitation is not allowed if a potential visitor has any of the following symptoms (i.e. cough, runny nose, sore throat, fever, diarrhea, shortness of breath).
- Visitors may provide food and beverage to the resident consistent with dietary considerations. Food may be consumed by a visitor and resident during their visit if both parties are fully vaccinated.
- Visitors should physically distance from other residents and staff in the facility. Visitors should go directly to the resident's room or designated visitation area

- Outdoor visitations should occur only on days when there are no weather warnings that would put either visitors or residents at risk. Furthermore, visitation spaces must provide adequate protection from weather elements (i.e. shaded from the sun). Residents can have a beverage during outside visitations during warm weather. The facility may cancel or move visits indoors due to adverse weather at their sole discretion.
- Outdoor or indoor visitation spaces must allow appropriate social distancing of at least 6 feet between visitors and the resident. Masks may be removed outside if both resident and visitor have been fully vaccinated.
- Instructional signage will be provided throughout the community regarding education on COVID19 signs and symptoms, infection control precautions, and other applicable facility practices (i.e. use of face covering or mask, specified entries, exits and routes to designated areas, hand hygiene).
- Cleaning and disinfecting of high frequency touched surfaces will occur often throughout the community and in designated visitation areas after each visit.
- Each community will determine how many visitations and visitors they can accommodate safely during the scheduled visits according to their licensed facility size.
- Staff will continue to use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and will monitor visitors for appropriate use of face coverings and or masks during visits.
- Visits for residents who share a room should not be conducted in the resident's room, if possible. For situations where there is a roommate and the health status of the resident prevents leaving the room, we will attempt to enable in-room visitation while adhering to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention.

Close Contact During Visitation

If the resident is fully vaccinated, they can choose to have close contact (including touch) with their visitor in accordance with the CDC's Updated Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations in Response to COVID-19 Vaccination. Visits should be conducted using social distancing; however, if during a compassionate care visit, a visitor and facility identify a way to allow for personal contact, it should only be done following appropriate infection prevention guidelines, and for a limited amount of time. Also, as noted above, if the resident is fully vaccinated, they can choose to have close contact (including touch) with their visitor while wearing a well-fitting face mask and performing hand-hygiene before and after.

Compassionate Care Visitation

Compassionate care visits will always be allowed, regardless of a resident's vaccination status, the county's COVID-19 positivity rate, or an outbreak. Compassionate care visits include visits for a resident whose health has sharply declined or is experiencing a significant change in circumstances. Communication with a community representative is advised regarding these visits.

While end-of-life situations have been used as examples of compassionate care situations, the term "compassionate care situations" does not exclusively refer to end-of-life situations. Examples of other types of compassionate care situations include, but are not limited to:

- A resident, who was living with their family before recently being admitted to a community, is struggling with the change in environment and lack of physical family support.

- A resident who is grieving after a friend or family member recently passed away.
- A resident who needs cueing and encouragement with eating or drinking, previously provided by family and/or caregiver(s), is experiencing weight loss or dehydration.
- A resident, who used to talk and interact with others, is experiencing emotional distress, seldom speaking, or crying more frequently (when the resident had rarely cried in the past).

Allowing a visit in these situations would be consistent with the intent of, “compassionate care situations.” Also, in addition to family members, compassionate care visits can be conducted by any individual that can meet the resident’s needs, such as clergy or lay persons offering religious and spiritual support. The above list is not an exhaustive list as there may be other compassionate care situations not included that can be discussed with a community representative.

Limitation and/or Restriction of Visitation

Visitation policies and procedures may be limited or restricted during a health emergency or outbreak within the community.

Criteria for restriction:

- Unvaccinated residents, if the COVID-19 county positivity rate is greater than 10 percent and less than 70 percent of residents in the facility are fully vaccinated,
- Residents with confirmed COVID-19 infection, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, until they have met the criteria to discontinue transmission-based precautions, or
- Residents in quarantine, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, until they have met criteria for release from quarantine
- For any other reason determined by CMS and/or the SD DOH

During a public health emergency, communities will post a copy of the most recent guidance from the SD DOH pertaining to visitation restrictions/limitations and the conditions under which they may be reduced or removed.

The community will inform each resident and a designated family member. We will provide an electronic or, if requested, a printed copy of the notice regarding the limitations and restrictions. We will include the reason and rationale for such, and the period that the limitations and restrictions are to remain in effect. The community will also post the information on its website. Visitors will be notified about the potential exposure in the community with appropriate signage regarding current outbreaks and adhere to the core principles of infection prevention, including effective hand hygiene and use of face-coverings.

Any limitations and restrictions instituted by the community will be reviewed at least every thirty days. The community will provide notice of the review to residents and a designated family member. We encourage the submission of written and oral comments and will give due consideration to the submissions. If after the required review the community determines that the limitations or restrictions are to be continued, the community shall post notice of the continuation on the community’s website and in a conspicuous place within the facility.

The notice will include:

- (1) The citation of the federal or state law being implemented; or
- (2) A link to evidence-based research indicating that the continuation is clinically necessary for the health and safety of the residents.

A printed copy of the applicable laws or evidence-based research will be provided upon request.

Failure to Comply

Our policies and procedures are consistent with CDC and SD DOH guidance for long-term care communities and should always be adhered to. Failure to comply with our policies may result in limitation and or denial of visitation.