

February 19, 2021

Dear Resident Families and Friends,

Each day The Baptist Home leadership team advocates on behalf of resident's rights for family visits to be restored. We are actively keeping abreast of developments related to state and federal reopening guidelines. The question on everyone's mind is, "Now that residents and staff have been vaccinated, when will visitation be restored?"

To answer that question, Evan Shulman, Director of the Division of Nursing Homes, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) shared the following response earlier this week:

It is the question of the hour and we are hearing it a lot. The answer is – not yet, not now - but we want to do it as soon as we possibly can because we understand the concerns. Here's why we aren't revising the guidance yet:

1. It's too early – we need to get everyone a second dose and wait two weeks after that, and we aren't there yet.
2. We don't yet know if vaccines prevent transmission. We do know that it prevents people from getting sick, but it is possible that a person who has been vaccinated can transmit the virus to others.
3. It is too early to know if the vaccines protect against the variants. Therefore, we can't change visitation guidance yet, but we will as soon as we can.

If you are like me, this response seems overly open ended. Our team has been in communication with the governor and other state officials asking for greater clarity as to when Missouri will restore visitation rights. During a February 17, 2021, leadership update, the governor suggested the state is at least two weeks away from any changes. Until that time, it will be necessary for each campus to follow the current guidelines. Once the guidance is changed, be assured that we will communicate the updated information to residents, family contacts and through our website at <https://thebaptisthome.org/covid-response/>.

Some Good News!

The good news is that COVID-19 cases are dropping in Missouri, and each campus of The Baptist Home is COVID-free. The positivity rates in Missouri are now one of the lowest in the nation, meaning many counties are moving from Red and Orange status to Yellow and Green, which allows additional visitation opportunities.

In accordance with current guidance from health officials, we can allow limited visitation and resident Leave of Absences (LOA) under the following stipulations:

1. If the county is Green or Yellow (less than 10 new cases per day, per 100,000 over a 7-day average) **in-room visits are possible with an appointment.** As of this writing, Iron County (Arcadia Valley) and Christian County (Ozark) are Yellow. Because Livingston County (Chillicothe) is Orange (but dropping), we will be verifying with health officials next week as to the status of the county. We will let you know as soon as we can as to when in-room visits can be scheduled. The guidelines for in-room visits are as follows:

- a. Visits are by appointment only. Please call at least 24 hours in advance, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. for an appointment. We are limited to the number of visitors we can have in the building at one time. This number varies by campus, and space is limited, so please understand that appointments will be made on a first come, first serve basis. Due to staffing requirements, most visits must be scheduled Monday-Friday, however, some accommodations can be made for weekend visits.
 - b. All visitors must check-in in the designated area and be screened. Screening includes:
 - i. Temperature checks
 - ii. Face masks will be required
 - iii. A questionnaire about symptoms and potential exposure must be completed
 - iv. Observations of any signs and symptoms
 - c. Visits are limited to two persons, for one hour.
 - i. Proper hand hygiene (washing and sanitizing) before and after each visit.
 - ii. You will be escorted to and from your loved one's room.
 - iii. Visitation area will be appropriately sanitized between each visit.
2. Fully vaccinated residents or those who have had COVID-19 within the past 90 days may enjoy a home visit or Leave of Absence (LOA) and return without being quarantined. However, upon return, residents will be:
- a. Tested for COVID-19. Three tests will be done upon return (Day 1, Day 8 and Day 10). Additional testing may be done if signs or symptoms are present or if a resident or their family reports possible exposure to COVID-19 while outside the Home.
 - b. Screened and monitored for signs and symptoms for 14 days. If the resident or family member reports possible exposure to COVID-19 while outside the nursing home, or shows signs or symptoms of COVID-19, the resident will be placed on transmission-based precautions (quarantine) for 14 days.
 - c. Visits home may be as long as desired; however, due to limited COVID-testing resources, Leave of Absences (LOAs) are limited to one every 30 days.

As community cases fall, we anticipate more visitation opportunities will be possible. To schedule a short-term home visit (LOA) or in-room visit, please contact one of the following:

- Ozark Campus: April Snyder, Administrative Assistant, (417)581-2101
- Chillicothe Campus: Lisa Mosley, Assistant Administrator, (660)646-6219
- Arcadia Valley, Tiffany Sletten, Administrative Assistant, (573)546-7429

Together in His service,



Dr. Rodney Harrison
President