

Dear Families and Residents:

As you may know, on October 1<sup>st</sup>, the Arizona Department of Health Services released revised COVID-19 Guidance for Visitation at Congregate Settings for Vulnerable Adults and Children (the “Guidance”). The Guidance introduced the concept of a designated essential visitor. Residents may designate one or two family member(s) or caretaker(s) to serve as a designated essential visitor.

**What is a designated essential visitor?**

- A designated essential visit is defined as a personal visit between a resident and an designated essential visitor.
- Designated essential visitors must be 18 years of age or older.
- Designated essential visitors are only permitted for residents who are COVID-19 negative or unknown.
- Up to two designated essential visitors can be designated per resident, but each visit is limited to one designated essential visitor at a time.
- Residents may change the designated essential visitor only if the individual is no longer able to visits, such as due to health concerns, moving out of state, etc.

**What training is required to be an designated essential visitor?**

- Prior to their first visit, designated essential visitors must watch the community’s training video that provides training and information on proper personal protective equipment (PPE) usage and infection control measures, hand hygiene, and cough and sneeze etiquette.
- The training video may be found on the Surpass website (<https://surpassliving.com/essential-caregiver-training/>) under the Family Learning Center tab.
- Designated essential visitors will be required to acknowledge they were provided training.

**What is required of a designated essential visitor prior to visiting a resident?**

- Designated essential visitor visits must be scheduled in advance.
- **Please note that designated essential visitor visits are limited to six total per day and each visit is limited to thirty minutes. Visits are currently planned between the hours of 10:00 am to 11:30 am and 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm, Monday through Saturday. We plan to gradually add more time options as we become more efficient with the process.**
- Designated essential visitors must leave the community at the required appointment times unless approved by the community.
- Designated Essential Visitors must provide documentation of a negative COVID test (PCR or antigen) based on the level of community spread of COVID as follows:
  - Minimal (Percent Positivity <5%): Once a month
  - Moderate (5% - 10%): Once a week
  - Substantial (>10%): Twice a week
  - Please use the following website to determine the level of community spread:  
<https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-disease-epidemiology/index.php#novel-coronavirus-community>

- Designated essential visitors must be screened for COVID-19 signs, symptoms, and exposure before entering the community at each visit.
- A designated essential visitor visit is not allowed if the visitor has signs or symptoms of COVID-19, an active COVID-19 infection, or other communicable diseases, or if the resident has an active COVID-19 infection.

**What is required of a designated essential visitor during a visit?**

- Designated essential visitors must check in at the concierge desk and present a valid form of picture identification.
- Prior to the initial visit, designated essential visitors will also be required to acknowledge that they agree to avoid attending large visitations in between testing and visitation.
- Prior to each visit, designated essential visitors will be required to sign an acknowledgement that training was received from the community and they agree to follow the community's COVID-19 policies.
- Only one designated essential visitor at a time may visit a resident.
- Community staff will escort the designated essential visitor from the entrance to the designated visitation area at the start of each visit, and escort from the visitation area to the exit at the end of each visit.
- Both the designated essential visitor and resident must sanitize their hands before and after the visit.
- Both the resident (if tolerated) and designated essential visitor must wear a facemask or cloth face covering over both the mouth and nose throughout the visit.
  - Failure to adhere to proper PPE protocol will result in the community asking the designated essential visitor to leave the premises.
- Designated essential visitor visits may occur in designated outdoor areas, in the resident's bedroom for no more than 15 minutes, or in another designated area within the community.
- Designated essential visitors must maintain physical distancing between themselves and all residents and staff.

Please contact your Executive Director should you have any questions regarding the designated essential visitor rules. We truly appreciate your continued patience with us. We are in this together.

Best regards,

Laura Schutt  
Assistant Executive Director