



<b>Category</b>	General	<b>Policy No.</b>	133
<b>Subject</b>	In-Person Visitation Policy -FL		
<b>Effective</b>	May 8, 2023	<b>Revision Date</b>	
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Executive Director	<b>Approval</b>	SVP, VPQS, VPO

**PURPOSE:**

In-Person Visitation bill has been signed into law, creating Chapter 408.823, which is subject “In-person visitation.” This policy and these procedures are intended to assist the community with compliance with the regulations set forth in Chapter 408.823, Florida Statutes. A resident may designate a visitor who is a family member, friend, guardian, or other individual as an essential caregiver.

**POLICIES:**

The following are the procedures to be followed to identify Essential Caregivers for residents and the expectations. These procedures will be administered equally to all residents that request to have an essential caregiver, without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity and transgender status), age, national origin, disability, or veteran status.

Essential caregiver visitors provide emotional support to help a resident deal with a difficult transition or loss, upsetting event, making major medical decisions, needs cueing to eat and drink, stops speaking, or end-of-life. Essential caregiver visitors may be allowed entry into facilities on a limited basis for these specific purposes. The provider must allow at a minimum in-person visitation for at least 2 hours daily under these circumstances. Visitation will be between 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m., the Executive Director and/or designee may make exceptions to the length of the visitation on a case-by-case basis for end-of-life residents. These exceptions will be discussed and agreed` upon in writing by the facility’s designee and the resident’s responsible party.

**PROCEDURES:**

I. For designation and utilization of essential caregiver visitors.

1. The community will provide the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) with a copy of the community's visitor policy and procedure, with the initial licensure application, renewal application and/or change of ownership application.
2. The visitation policy and procedure for the community, including Essential Caregiver designation and visitation, shall be available on the homepage of the community's website.
3. Unless otherwise designated by the Executive Director, the Director of Wellness of the Community shall be responsible for infection prevention and control training.
4. The Executive Director will set a limit on the total number of visitors allowed in the facility at any given time based on the ability of staff to safely screen and monitor and the space to



accommodate general visitors and/or the essential caregiver visitors. When there are no known cases of COVID among residents currently residing in the Community, visitation will be generally unrestricted. However, in the event Residents currently residing in the Community are known to be infected with COVID, restrictions will be placed upon General Visitors to reduce the possible spread of COVID. Visitation by Essential Caregivers will always be allowed to occur as detailed herein. Efforts to continue General Visitation even when a COVID positive resident is residing in the community shall be made, and protocols shall be implemented at the discretion of the Executive Director along the lines of the following (when practical):

- a. Identify locations for visitation/care to occur planning for residents in shared spaces and facilities with minimal common space to identify maximum time availability.
  - b. Provide outdoor visitation spaces that are protected from weather elements, such as porches, courtyards, patios, or other covered areas that are protected from heat and sun, with cooling devices, if needed
  - c. Create indoor visitation spaces for residents in a room that is not accessible by other residents or in a resident's private room if the resident is bedbound and for health reasons cannot leave his or her room.
5. All residents and/or POA/Guardian if appropriate will be asked if they want to identify an Essential Caregiver.
  6. All new residents will be asked if they would like to identify an Essential Caregiver upon move-in.
  7. All residents will be allowed to update as requested the named Essential Caregiver of record within 2 business days of request.
  8. Residents are allowed in-person visitation in all the following circumstances, unless the resident, client, or patient objects:
    - a) End-of-life situations.
    - b) A resident, client, or patient who was living with family before being admitted to the provider's care is struggling with the change in environment and lack of in- person family support.
    - c) The resident, client, or patient is making one or more major medical decisions.
    - d) A resident, client, or patient is experiencing emotional distress or grieving the loss of a friend or family member who recently died.
    - e) A resident, client, or patient needs cueing or encouragement to eat or drink which was previously provided by a family member or caregiver.
    - f) A resident, client, or patient who used to talk and interact with others is seldom speaking.
  9. Maintain a visitor log for signing in and out.
  10. No more than three essential caregiver visitor may be designated per resident.
  11. Essential Caregiver visitor visits may still continue even if the specific resident to be visited is quarantined, tested positive for COVID, or showing symptoms of a communicable disease. Visits in these circumstances will likely require a higher level of PPE than standard surgical masks. The general visitation requirement that the facility has no new facility-onset cases of a communicable disease (for example COVID-19) is not applicable to visitation by essential caregiver visitors.
  12. The community is not required to provide for "facility-provided" COVID-19 testing if, and only if, it is based on the most recent CDC and FDA guidance. The cost of this testing cannot be passed on to the visitor.



13. Essential caregiver visitors must wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) per facility's Infection Control Policies. The PPE required must be consistent with the most recent CDC guidance for healthcare workers. At the community essential caregiver visitors shall wear the same PPE that staff wear to provide care or services to the resident.
14. General Visitors must wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) per the Community's Infection Control Policies at the time of their visit
15. Any changes to the essential caregiver visitor policies must be promptly communicated to affected residents and essential caregiver visitors.

II. To facilitate visits by General Visitors and Essential caregiver visitors upon a request from a resident or friend/family member:

1. The resident (or their representative) will read and sign the policy and procedures. The acknowledgement of the signature represents that the essential caregiver visitor will abide by the policies set forth in this document.
2. The Essential Caregiver visitor will sign an acknowledgement of their receipt and understanding of the visitation policies and procedures. The Essential Caregiver's signature represents that they have received the policies and procedures, they understand the policies and procedures, and they agree to abide by said policies and procedures.
3. The Essential Caregiver visitor will complete training on infection prevention and control including the use of PPE, use of masks, hand sanitation, and social distancing.
4. The Essential Caregiver visitor must immediately inform the facility if they develop symptoms consistent with a communicable disease within 24-hours of their last visit at the facility.
5. Essential Caregiver visits may take place in the resident's room or a designated area determined by the Executive Director at the time the visitation scheduled is developed and agreed upon.
6. General Visitor visits may take place in accordance with the infection control protocols at the time of the visit. Visits by General Visitors may be significantly limited when a resident residing in the Community is infected with COVID-19.

III. When an essential caregiver visitor is scheduled to visit, the facility will:

1. The Community designee will thoroughly screen the visitor per the Community's infection control policy and procedure and document the name of the individual, the date and time of entry, and the screening mechanism used, along with the screening employee's name and signature. Just as with staff entering the building, if the visitor fails the screening, the visitor CANNOT be allowed entry.
2. The Executive Director will ensure that the required consents, and training and policy acknowledgements are in place.
3. The Community designee will ensure that the Essential Caregiver visitor has appropriate PPE if applicable.
4. The Community designee will require the Essential Caregiver visitor to sign in and out on the visitor log.
5. The Community staff will monitor the Essential Caregiver visitor's adherence to policies and procedures.



6. If the Essential Caregiver visitor fails to follow the Community's infection prevention and control requirements, after attempts to mitigate concerns, the Executive Director shall restrict or revoke visitation.

7. In the event the Essential Caregiver visitor's status is revoked due to the individual not following the Community's policy and procedures, the resident may select a different Essential Caregiver visitor who will be granted visitation rights upon proper vetting and agreeing to policies and procedures.

#### IV. When a General Visitor is scheduled to visit, the Community will:

1. The Community designee will thoroughly screen the visitor per the Community's infection control policy and procedure and document the name of the individual, the date and time of entry, and the screening mechanism used, along with the screening employee's name and signature. Just as with staff entering the building, if the visitor fails the screening, the visitor CANNOT be allowed entry.

2. The Community designee will ensure that the General Visitor has appropriate PPE (if applicable).

3. The Community designee will require the General Visitor to sign in and out on the visitor log.

4. The Community designee will notify the General Visitor of any restrictions in place relating to visitation, or requirements relating to infection control, at that time of the visit.

5. The Community staff will monitor the General Visitor's adherence to policies and procedures.

6. If the General Visitor fails to follow the Community's infection prevention and control requirements, after attempts to mitigate concerns, the Executive Director shall restrict or revoke visitation.