



April 11, 2023

Dear Family Members/Responsible Parties:

I'm pleased to report with this COVID update that we've had no new resident cases for more than six (6) weeks. The DOH has issued further clarifications to visitation and screening as a follow-up to their 3/17 communication last month which ended the need for visitor testing. Now the DOH guidance closely aligns with both CMS and CDC guidelines and the end of the federal Covid-19 public health emergency on 5/11. The DOH is now allowing nursing homes to transition to passive screening for all visitors, and staff, and this change will be effective at Beechwood on April 12, 2023.

Recent CMS communications stress that Covid is an identifiable virus, just like influenza, and should be managed similarly. When the pandemic began over three (3) years ago we had very little information or knowledge about the Covid virus, and little resources. Today, we have a myriad of interventions available to prevent and/or control the spread of the Covid virus—testing, vaccines, a sufficient supply of PPE, antiviral treatment medications, infection control strategies, scientific & infectious disease data, research outcomes, environmental cleaning & disinfecting enhancements are all commonplace. In addition, the common expectation is that all persons within a community (such as Erie/Niagara Counties) act responsibly in regards to Covid (ie: understanding the signs and symptoms of the virus and staying home if you are sick) and this now allows health care facilities to adopt the same practices that have been in place for many months in all other aspects of our community. Therefore, I ask that you continue to prioritize practicing infection prevention & control standards as you enjoy the updated facility visitation guidelines outlined below and review a copy of the complete facility visitation plan that is attached and available at the reception desks. The transition to passive screening allows for the following:

- **Suggested Visitation hours Daily will be:** **10:00AM - 7:30PM**
- **Facility entrances will be unlocked Daily:**

Millersport:	8:00AM – 8:00PM
Stahl Road:	10:00AM – 5:30PM
- **Residents will be permitted Three (3) visitors at a time in their room** (Adults over 18 or minors accompanied by an adult)
- **You no longer have to complete a screening form when you visit but you are required to sign-in & sign-out at a facility entrance**
- Pay attention to the posted signage as well as the visitation guideline attachment
- These are the recommended actions to prevent Covid-19 transmission to others if you have any of the following:
 1. A Positive Covid-19 Test
 2. Symptoms of Covid-19:

Fever/Chills	Cough	New Loss Taste or Smell
Sore Throat	Headache	Muscle or Body Ache
Fatigue	Congestion/Runny Nose	Nausea or Vomiting
Diarrhea	Shortness of Breath/Difficulty Breathing	
 3. Close Contact with someone with Covid-19

Visitors who have a positive Covid-19 test or symptoms of Covid-19 should not visit per CMS/CDC guidance until they have completed the appropriate isolation (quarantine) period. Visitors who have had a close contact with someone with COVID-19 are strongly encouraged to defer visitation until completion of an appropriate isolation period and/or have a negative COVID test taken at home. Those with close contact should talk with facility staff to assist with determining appropriate visitation

The facility is responsible to insure visitors are properly educated. To that end, please remember if you feel sick or have any mild symptoms, please stay home to recover and don't risk passing the virus, or any illness, to your loved one and potentially other residents & staff. Further, please adhere to the infection prevention & control protocols while you visit—**wear your face mask** properly and at all times (as mandated by the DOH per the community transmission rate), **practice hand hygiene** and utilize the hand sanitizers that are available throughout the facility frequently, **socially & physically distance** from others, and avoid unnecessary contact with others beyond your family member, **adhere to any precautions** in place and ask the household staff for direction as needed. If you haven't already done so, please **consider getting the bivalent Covid booster** for your resident or yourself. The facility can provide for the residents either Pfizer or Moderna on Thursdays during our weekly vaccine clinic.

This is exciting news and allows nursing homes to open up more and mirror the rest of our community. I will continue to provide further updates to facility protocols as the DOH updates guidance. If you have any questions then, please call your social worker, Cathy Davis (RN Director of Nursing), or myself. Thanks again for all that you do to keep our residents safe. Happy Spring!

Best Wishes, Rich McCune
Administrator

BEECHWOOD HOMES COVID-19 VISITATION PLAN—April 12, 2023

Beechwood has multiple options for visitation while your loved one is a resident. It is important to know that we are required to follow NY State Department of Health (DOH) as well as Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines and protocols relative to the Covid-19 virus, infection prevention & control, and visitation. At times, these various state and federal agencies may have conflicting guidance, but we ultimately have to follow the DOH guidelines and/or whichever guideline is the most restrictive (ie: Face Mask as one example).

All visitors must adhere to the core principles of infection prevention and control at all times. The facility is responsible to insure visitors are properly educated in regards to infection control. To that end, please remember if you feel sick or have any mild symptoms, please stay home to recover. Don't risk passing the virus, or any illness, to your loved one, other residents, and staff by visiting. Further, please follow these universal infection prevention & control protocols while you visit

- **Source Control: Wear your face mask** properly and at all times (as mandated by the DOH per the community transmission rate)
- **Practice hand hygiene** and utilize the hand sanitizers that are available throughout the facility frequently
- **Socially & physically distance** from others, and avoid unnecessary contact with others beyond your family member
- **Adhere to any precautions** in place and ask the household staff for direction as needed
- **Consider getting the bivalent Covid booster** for your resident or yourself if you haven't done so (Residents can receive either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine on Thursdays during the facility's weekly vaccine clinic)
- **Environmental awareness/sanitation** please let staff know if you see anything needing attention

Guidelines can change based upon new information/knowledge, updated regulatory protocols, and/or the need to restart an infection control interventions based on the Covid transmission rate/outbreak in our community or facility. As an example, the need for visitor testing was suspended in March 2023, but the DOH indicated that they could reinstate again in the future if warranted. The DOH has clarified that facilities are no longer required to conduct active screening at entry for nursing home visitors. Facilities now must adhere to the CDC guidelines for **passive screening which require nursing homes to put in place:**

- All Visitors are informed of the core principles of infection prevention and control (as stated above) and follow them
- All Visitors are encouraged to remain up to date with the Covid-19 vaccine, including the bivalent booster dose
- Post visual signage at entrances and throughout the facility to alert Visitors to Infection Control practices
- Establish a practice to make everyone entering the facility aware of the recommended actions to prevent Covid-19 transmission to others if you have any of the following three criteria:
 1. A Positive Covid-19 Test
 2. Symptoms of Covid-19:

Fever/Chills	Cough	New Loss Taste or Smell
Sore Throat	Headache	Muscle or Body Ache
Fatigue	Congestion/Runny Nose	Nausea or Vomiting
Diarrhea	Shortness of Breath/Difficulty Breathing	
 3. Close Contact with someone with Covid-19

Visitors who have a positive Covid-19 test or symptoms of Covid-19 should not visit per CMS/CDC guidance until they have completed the appropriate isolation (quarantine) period. Visitors who have had a close contact with someone with COVID-19 are strongly encouraged to defer visitation until completion of an appropriate isolation period and/or have a negative COVID test taken at home. Those with close contact should talk with facility staff to assist with determining appropriate visitation

Upon admission all residents, regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status, are placed on transmission based precautions (TBP) until a baseline COVID-19 test is completed with a negative result. Follow-up testing may be required based on the new resident's clinical status, possible exposure, and the county transmission rate. The facility visitation guidelines are as follows:

Indoor Visitation

- **Suggested Visitation hours Daily will be:** 10:00AM - 7:30PM
- **Facility entrances will be unlocked Daily:**

Millersport:	8:00AM – 8:00PM
Stahl Road:	10:00AM – 5:30PM
- **Residents will be permitted Three (3) visitors at a time in their room** (Adults over 18 or minors accompanied by an adult)
- **You no longer have to complete a screening form when you visit but you are required to sign-in & sign-out at a facility entrance**
- Pay attention to the posted signage as well as the visitation guideline attachment

- Visitors must walk directly to/from the resident's room and should not attempt to enter any other resident rooms. **Indoor visits will be in the residents room or in the household common area as long as Activity programs are not in progress and/or there is space to socially/physically distance from other residents & families. If you take the resident out of their room please utilize a face mask and follow infection control guidelines as you transport in the hallways/common spaces**
- **Visitors in a shared room must stay on their resident's side of the room and maintain distancing from the roommate, if visit cannot take place outside the shared room**
- Per CMS/DOH, a gathering of more than three (3) visitors at a time is considered a large gathering due to physical room constraints. A resident is permitted to have such a visit but the prospective visitors must contact the social worker in advance so that an appropriate location can be reserved to properly and safely accommodate the visit. We will be able to utilize the atrium, auditorium, main conference room for these types of visits. We will do our best to accommodate last minute requests but please understand that we may not always be able to do so since space may have been reserved in advance

Outdoor Visitation

- If a family member of a resident that is not on quarantine or TBP precautions wants to visit outdoors then after you sign in at the reception desk, you can pick up your resident in their room and then wearing a mask transport outdoors via the Millersport or Stahl road entrances during the posted hours. Before exiting the building, you are required to your resident as out of the facility, and then you will sign them back in once you return. This is the same process used for out on pass.
- You can also utilize the interior facility courtyards (Cummings, Hansen/Holzman, and Wesley) for an outdoor visit without the need to sign out. **However, this visit can only be for no more than three (3) family members at a time**
- **During all outdoor visits please maintain appropriate social distancing from any other resident/family and utilize a face mask whenever transporting through the facility and if nearby other residents/families**

Pet Visitation

In order to initiate, you must pick up the **Pet Visitation** guidelines from the receptionist. Should you have any questions then please contact Holly Lange, Activities Director, directly at 716-810-7101 or via email at hlange@beechwoodcare.org

Compassionate Care Visitation

- Compassionate caregiving visitation, for those residents nearing end of life, is permitted for three (3) designated visitors at a time per visit duration
 - Suggested Daily Hours: 8:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m.

Window Visits

Are permissible during daylight hours and allow for visitation at the resident's window—only if all visitors wear masks, can the window be open. NOTE: Visitors are not permitted to enter the resident's room by climbing through the window.