

As the COVID-19 epidemic continues to create a great deal of uncertainty and unpredictability across the country, we remain cautious in developing and expanding upon our visitation and safety protocols here at SCARC. This is because the health and safety of the individuals we serve must always be of paramount importance.

At the same time, we recognize how critical it is to residents' emotional well-being that they be able to maintain family connections and friendships. We deeply empathize with the individuals we serve as well as their loved ones.

To maintain the best possible balance, many factors must be weighed. As with so many decisions related to the pandemic, there is no "absolute" best path, because every decision we make is fraught with both pros and cons. Ultimately, in all decisions, we must continue to err on the side of caution to protect our residents.

With all this mind, we are currently operating in Phase III of our COVID-19 Response Plan. Limited indoor visits are now permitted inside of our residences as well as outside our buildings. We must continue to insist that every individual and visitor adhere completely to the required precautions for each visit to ensure everyone's safety. The requirements are outlined here to help everyone better understand expectations:

#### Time and Place

1. All visits must be scheduled and approved at least 24 hours in advance.
2. No program-to-program visitation is currently allowed.
3. Each individual is allowed two visits per week, one during the week and one over the weekend.
4. A maximum of two visitors are allowed to attend each visit.
5. Only one visit per group home is being scheduled each weekday. Over the weekend, three visits per group home are being scheduled.
6. Each visit is limited to one hour and the specific location for the visit must be agreed upon in advance to ensure that social distancing guidelines can be met.
7. The chosen location will be sanitized before your arrival by our staff.

**Commented [LA(1):** Three visits per weekend day or per weekend total

#### Safety

1. Only immediate family and guardians may visit.
2. Please remain in your vehicle with your mask on to await further instruction once you arrive. You will be required to sign the DDD's visitor agreement and complete the screening process (including temperature check) prior to each visit.
3. We must insist that you come prepared with your own pen for form completion as well as your own face covering, which you must wear for the duration of each visit.
4. Visits may be observed from a respectful distance by staff members to ensure the safety of visitors and individuals.
5. Everyone must sanitize their hands and remain six feet apart for the duration of the visit.
6. Individuals must wear face masks and social distance as much as possible.

7. If an individual can't wear a mask, the visit can still take place if distance can be maintained. We will do everything we can to help the individual maintain safe distance, but if social distancing cannot be maintained, we will need to end the visit.
8. We strongly request that you refrain from bringing food and drink to your visit. Only food that is in a sealed package from the grocery store is allowed. The packaging must be disinfected by staff upon your arrival.
9. After each visit, we will ensure the individual sanitizes his or her hands again, showers, and puts on clean clothes. We will sanitize the area in which the visit took place.

#### **Response to COVID-19 and COVID-19 Symptoms**

1. Group home visits will be suspended in the event a resident or staff member of that particular group home develops COVID-19 symptoms and shall remain so until the individual has been tested.
2. If an individual or staff member tests positive, visits will remain suspended until 28 days have passed with all staff and residents of that group home being symptom-free. If negative, visits may immediately resume.
3. No person may enter the group home who has been exposed to an individual who is COVID-19 positive in the last 14 days.

#### **Understanding Our Approach**

While some measures may be more stringent than those you encounter elsewhere, every step we have taken is to ensure the safety and health of the individuals we serve. If an individual living at a SCARC group home were to become infected with COVID-19, containing the infection and preventing rapid spread could prove difficult, just as it is in other residential adult-care settings. While we have strong response protocols in place to deal with an active infection, we believe prevention is by far the most effective means of keeping our residents safe. Indeed, our measures are proving extremely effective thus far, and we are very happy to report that we continue to remain COVID-19-free at every one of our SCARC facilities.

We know that both our front-line staff and the families of the individuals we serve play a critical role in keeping everyone safe. We appreciate you and are immensely grateful to every one of you for your love for and commitment to the individuals we serve. Thank you for your continued support and understanding!