



## COVID-19 ESSENTIAL CAREGIVER DESIGNATION: SAMPLE STATEMENT & MESSAGES

*Updated: July 10, 2020*

### GENERAL STATEMENT

The safety and health of our residents and staff has guided our work throughout the pandemic. We feel the impact of social isolation on our residents' wellbeing and are thankful the Minnesota Department of Health has moved to allow Essential Caregivers in long-term care settings as one option to provide personal care and meaningful connection between residents and their loved ones. **This guidance represents the next interim step in encouraging safe and responsible visitation during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are currently reviewing the guidance developed by MDH; we will have draft policies in place by July 25 per guidance from MDH.** We will keep all residents and caregivers informed as we determine how to implement this program safely in our setting.

### Reduce social isolation.

- One of the most unfortunate and saddest parts of this global health pandemic is the barriers we had to place per state and federal guidelines on families and friends in order to protect our residents, who are among the most vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus, and our staff.
- We recognize the impact that social isolation can have on our residents' health and well-being and are doing our best to take the appropriate steps based on federal and state guidelines to safely expand opportunities for engagement and connection.
- The Essential Caregiver guidance is the appropriate next step in reconnecting long-term care residents with their personal caregivers, while continuing to prioritize safe care for all. It carefully balances the need to prevent COVID-19 in congregate settings with the strong desire for personalized care and meaningful social connections.
- While this is a welcomed step forward, we are looking forward to the day we can open our doors once again to families, visitors and volunteers. We continue to take actionable steps and make plans for that day.
- Please know that we will also continue to help you connect with your loved one through alternative means such as outdoor visits, window visits, telephone, video chat, email or social media.

### Protect people. Provide access.

- The risk of COVID-19 transmission in long-term settings and the need for visits with families and friends can be safely and appropriately balanced.
- Please be patient as we implement the Essential Caregiver guidance. As the virus is still being transmitted throughout our state, we may need to change options based on a resident's status of COVID-19 and the overall status of COVID-19 in our setting.

- Our goal as we begin to allow Essential Caregivers into our setting is to protect our residents and staff as we create opportunities for more personal care and meaningful connection for our residents.
- We are taking all the necessary, required measures to protect our residents and staff while we provide a safe space for all in our setting. We are following the [guidance provided by the Minnesota Department of Health](#) on requirements of the Essential Caregiver guidance, which includes screening, PPE, infection control and staffing.
- You are a partner in helping protect our community from this virus. We ask that you understand the requirements and procedures we put in place based on state and federal guidance and work with us as partners in caregiving to abide by them.