**COVID-19: VISITATION UPDATE – SAMPLE STATEMENT AND TALKING POINTS**

***Updated: March 17, 2021***

**GENERAL STATEMENT**

We value the important role of family and friends in the lives of our residents. They are an irreplaceable part of our care teams, and we are thrilled to welcome them back into our community. State and federal regulators have issued guidance on how we can safely open to more visitors and continue to protect the health of our residents and staff. In addition to increasing the number of people who can come into our settings with fewer restrictions, the new guidance allows residents who are fully vaccinated to come and go without the need to quarantine upon return. We are working swiftly to interpret and confirm details, revise policies, educate staff, and prepare to welcome loved ones with fewer restrictions in place.

**SAMPLE TALKING POINTS**

**New guidance now provides more opportunities for fully vaccinated LTC residents to have in-person visits with loved ones in our settings and in the community.**

* We value the important role of family and friends in the lives of our residents. They are an irreplaceable part of our care teams.
* In addition to opening our doors to more visitors with fewer restrictions, the new guidance allows residents who are fully vaccinated to come and go without the need to quarantine upon return.

**We believe the risk of COVID-19 transmission in our setting can be safely and appropriately balanced with visiting from families and friends.**

* We are taking all the necessary and required measures to protect our residents and staff while we provide a safe opportunity for socialization and visitation.
* We will follow state and federal guidance for visitation, which includes following the core infection control protocols that have helped us effectively respond to COVID-19 and rapidly respond to changing conditions, including screening of all visitors for signs & symptoms of COVID, hand hygiene, face coverings, and social distancing.
* We are working swiftly to interpret and confirm details, revise policies, educate staff, and prepare to welcome loved ones with fewer restrictions in place. We need time to ensure we have the procedures and protocols in place to best protect everyone who lives, work and visits our setting.
* Please note, while visitation is greatly expanded under the federal and state changes, there are a few distinct exceptions tied to unvaccinated residents and residents with confirmed COVID-19 infections—so these policies will not look exactly the same for every single resident in every circumstance. The guidance allows for easing visitation restrictions, but also advises us on when visitation should once again be restricted based on vaccination status of our residents and virus transmission in our setting and the broader community.
* Easing visitation restrictions does comes with risks that we will do our best to mitigate. We will continue our diligent infection control practices to ensure the safety of our staff and residents. Please note that that all visitors will be held to the same standards and expectations of those who live and work here.

**Residents will have access to in-person visits, within our building and in the community.**

* The continued risk of COVID-19 transmission in long-term settings and the need for visits with families and friends can be safely and appropriately balanced.
* Our goal in this next phase of our visitation policy is to protect our residents and staff as we create more opportunities for in-person connection.
* We are taking all the necessary, required measures to protect our residents and staff and we are following the guidance provided by state and federal regulators.
* Please be patient as we roll out this next phase in opening visitation. As the virus is still being transmitted throughout our state, we may need to change visitation options based on overall status of COVID-19 in our community.

**Safety is a shared responsibility.**

* We continue to all have a role in protecting our community and each other from this virus.
* All visitors must comply with our screening protocols and other infection control measures when they visit with their loved one.
* You are a partner in helping protect our residents and staff from this virus. We ask that you understand the requirements and procedures we have put in place are based on state and federal guidance. We invite you to work with us, as partners in caregiving, to abide by them.