

Governor Phil Murphy

Outdoor Visitation with Long-Term Care Residents Can Begin Sunday, June 21

06/19/2020

NJ Health Department Directive to Facilities Outlines Guidelines

TRENTON – Residents of long-term care facilities will be able to have outdoor visits with loved ones in designated outdoor space starting Sunday, June 21—Father’s Day— under a directive (https://nj.gov/health/legal/covid19/6-19-20_ExecutiveDirectiveNo20-017_StandardsProtocolsVisitorsFacilityStaff.pdf) to long-term care facilities issued today by the state Department of Health.

The Health Department has received input and worked collaboratively with long-term care providers on developing this directive to accommodate visitors.

Prior to transporting a long-term care resident to a designated outdoor space, visitors must be screened for COVID-19 symptoms – including a temperature check – and facilities must follow safety and infection prevention and control measures in order to allow visitation.

“Being apart from our loved ones has been one of the most difficult challenges throughout the pandemic—especially for long-term care residents and their families. This directive outlines the measures that must be in place to reduce risk to this vulnerable population while allowing visits outdoors,” **said Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli**. “Virtual communication could never replace gathering face to face gatherings with loved ones. We hope these outdoor visitations bring joy and comfort to residents as well as their loved ones—while also protecting them.”

The directive applies to: dementia care homes, long-term care facilities, pediatric transitional care homes, assisted living residences and programs, and comprehensive personal care homes.

Only two visitors will be permitted at a time and must stay six feet apart from the resident. Visitors and residents are required to wear face coverings, and a staff member—wearing a surgical mask—must remain with the resident during the visit. A resident who is suspected or confirmed to be infected with COVID-19 or quarantined for an exposure cannot have visitors. A resident who has tested positive can have visitors after they have met the criteria to discontinue isolation.

Facilities must submit an attestation at least 24 hours before they begin outdoor visitation confirming that they have implemented the directive’s requirements, and have a location designated for visitation, sufficient staff and personal protective equipment, and a method to schedule appointments. Facilities can start scheduling appointments today, but visitation cannot begin until Sunday.

Facilities are required to communicate the visitor policy to residents, families, staff and others, and must



receive informed consent in writing from the resident and visitor that they will comply with the facility's policies during the visit. As part of the consent form, visitor must agree to notify the facility if they test positive for COVID or have symptoms within 14 days of visiting.

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