

Monday, March 15, 2021

Dear Friends,

We were pleasantly surprised when we heard the news — we are taking another step towards opening our doors — wider and wider!

CMS has announced these welcome changes to the Visitation Guidelines. While we move forward, we are cautiously excited recognizing this big step and at the same time, continue to provide a safe home for our Residents.

Please follow this link to the announcement:

[CMS Updates Nursing Home Guidance with Revised Visitation Recommendations | CMS](#)

As we take this big step forward, we are reminded that the core principals of Covid-19 prevention continue:

- Covid screening when entering and leaving the home
- Social distancing – maintaining 6 feet distance from others
- Face masks at all times
- Frequent hand sanitizing.
- CMS continues to encourage all to be vaccinated in order to stop the spread of Covid.

Visitors at this time will no longer be required to disclose Covid testing or Immunization status. But we all need to remain vigilant if someone experiences Covid symptoms and Immunizations is strongly recommended.

CMS does remind us that outdoor visitation is preferred even when the Resident and visitor are fully vaccinated against Covid-19, since outdoor visits pose a lower risk of transmissions due to increased space and air flow.

An area of concern remains that 6 feet social distancing will automatically limit the number of persons in a Resident's room at any given time due to space limitations. We will need to be creative still in different situations!

At this time, we will return to our pre-Covid practices: there is no requirement to schedule a visit since you are welcome to come anytime during our regular visiting hours. We do ask that if you plan on taking one of the Residents out for any reason, you contact the Sister responsible on that unit to give her the information needed when a Resident goes out.

We are looking forward to seeing you once again in the halls of St. Augustine!

God bless you!

Mother Francis and the Little Sisters of the Poor