



CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Revised Nursing Home Visitation Guidance

MAYVILLE, N.Y.--New nursing home visitation guidance for New York State facilities went into effect on February 26. The new visitation guidelines are based on CMS and CDC recommendations and depend on the nursing home facility being free of COVID-19 cases for 14 days and the facility not currently conducting outbreak testing.

The County's COVID-19 positivity rate will determine nursing home visitation guidelines. Facilities will use COVID-19 county positivity rates found on the CMS COVID-19 Nursing Home Data site:
<https://data.cms.gov/stories/s/COVID-19-%20Nursing-Home-Data/bkwz-xpvg>

Low: County Positivity Rate <5%

- Visitors are strongly encouraged to get tested before visiting family members in a nursing home, OR
- The facility may conduct rapid testing on visitors before they may enter the facility

Medium: County Positivity Rate 5-10%

- Visitors must bring proof of a negative COVID-19 test (either PCR or rapid) within 72 hours of their visit to the nursing home, OR
- The facility may conduct rapid testing on visitors before they may enter the facility, OR
- Eligible visitors can bring proof of having completed the COVID-19 vaccination series, with the second vaccine dose given at least 14 days before the visit.

High: County Positivity Rate >10%

- Only nursing home residents who are in end-of-life care situations can have visitors.

In addition to the guidelines, visitors should be prepared to go directly to the resident's room or visitation area, as well as to limit the number of visitors the resident sees at once. The number of visitors to the nursing home must not exceed 20% of the resident census.

Below are possible situations where a nursing home may offer exceptions to the guidance:

- Newly admitted residents with difficulty adjusting to the facility environment and lack of in-person family support;
- Residents recently grieving the loss of a friend or loved one;

- Residents who previously received in-person support for nutritional needs and are now experiencing dehydration and/or weight loss;
- Residents who exhibit signs and symptoms of emotional distress including changes in affect and behavior; or
- Residents who receive religious or spiritual support from clergy or another layperson.

If planning a visit to your loved one, check with nursing home administration to determine their visitation process.

Christine Schuyler, Chautauqua County Public Health Director, reminds visitors to adhere to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention, “We must continue to wear a mask, wash our hands often, and social distance. And, please, when you are eligible, get vaccinated.”

For up-to-date COVID-19 information about testing, vaccination, and general COVID-19 information, please visit our website at <https://chqgov.com/public-health/novel-coronavirus-covid-19>

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