

## Touchstone Guidance: Visitation Expansion Guideline

### Background

In accordance with guidance from CDC, DSHS, and TX HHSC Title 40, Texas Administrative Code Chapter 19, Subchapter CC-COVID-19 Emergency Rule (Emergency Rule) TX HHSC LTC Regulation has developed requirements for Expansion Reopening of Visitation rules effective September 24, 2020 within long term care communities. To allow visitation, a community must have specific policies in place and must submit the LTCR Form 2194 to HHSC local Program Manager to review, approve, authorize, and designate the community before allowing the limited indoor and outdoor reopening visitation type visits, except for Essential Caregiver, closed window, and end-of-life visits. If an executive order or other direction is issued by the Governor of Texas, the President of the United States, or other applicable authority, that is more restrictive than this rule or any minimum standard relating to a nursing facility, the community will comply with the executive order or other direction.

### Definition of Terms

- **Closed window visit:** A personal visit between a visitor and a resident during which the resident and visitor are separated by a closed window and the visitor does not enter the building.
- **End-of-life visit:** A personal visit between a visitor and a resident who is actively dying.
- **Essential caregiver visit:** A personal visit between a resident and a designated essential caregiver.
- **Open window visit:** A personal visit between a visitor and a resident during which the resident and personal visitor are separated by an open window.
- **Outdoor visit:** A personal visit between a resident and one or more personal visitors that occurs in-person in a dedicated outdoor space.
- **Vehicle parade:** A personal visit between a resident and one or more personal visitors, during which the resident remains outdoors on the nursing facility campus, and a visitor drives past in a vehicle.
- **Plexiglass indoor visit:** A personal visit between a resident and one or more personal visitors, during which the resident and the visitor are both inside the community but within a booth separated by a plexiglass barrier and the resident remains on one side of the barrier and the visitor remains on the opposite side of the barrier.
- **Salon services visit:** A personal visit between a resident and a salon services visitor.
- **Salon services visitor:** A barber, beautician, or cosmetologist providing hair care or personal grooming services to a resident.
- **Essential caregiver:** A family member or other outside caregiver, including a friend, volunteer, private personal caregiver or court appointed guardian, who is at least 18 years old and has been designated by the resident or legal representative to provide regular care and support to a resident.
- **Persons providing critical assistance:** Providers of essential services, family members or friends of residents at the end of life and two designated essential caregivers.
- **Persons with legal authority to enter:** Law enforcement officers, representatives of the long-term care ombudsman's office, and government personnel performing their official duties.
- **Providers of essential services:** Contract doctors, contract nurses, hospice workers, and individuals operating under the authority of a local intellectual and developmental disability authority (LIDDA) or a local mental health authority (LMHA), whose services are necessary to ensure resident health and safety.

## Visitor Screening Process

- All visitors are screened prior to entry outside of the community or just within the entry door, not near resident care areas, except personal visitors participating in a vehicle parade or a closed window visit
- Visitor screenings must be documented on the Visitor & Essential Caregiver Screening Sign in/Sign out Log and each visitor must complete the Screening Checklist Form (Located on InTouch, COVID-19 folder, Sub-folder 'B', Visitor Folder) and kept at the entrance to the community. The log must contain:
  - Name of each person screened
  - Name of resident being visited
  - Date and time of arrival, screening, and departure
  - Documentation of the screening, and the results of the screening check
  - The screening log and checklist may contain protected health information and must be protected in accordance with applicable state and federal law
- Visitors who have any of the following screening criteria must leave the community and reschedule the visit:
  - Fever, defined as a temperature of 100.4 Fahrenheit and above
  - Signs or symptoms of COVID-19, including chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, GI Upset: nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea, or any other signs and symptoms as outlined by CDC.
  - Contact in the last 14 days with someone who has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, is under investigation for COVID-19, or is ill with a respiratory illness, unless the visitor is seeking entry to provide critical assistance
  - Has a positive COVID-19 test result from a test performed in the last 10 days
- Essential Caregiver Additional Screening Requirements:
  - Must have a negative COVID-19 test result from a test performed no more than 14 days before the first essential caregiver visit. *Note: Covid-19 tests will not be provided by the community. However, there may be an exception allowed by the administrator, in the administrator's sole discretion, for unusual extenuating circumstances only.*
  - Must have a negative COVID-19 test result from a test performed no more than 14 days before subsequent essential caregiver visits documented on log.
  - Confirmation of training before each visit
  - Confirmation of signed statement of understanding and agreement for follow policy, procedures, and other requirements as instructed in the community training
  - Community approved facemask
  - Attestation of the identity of the Essential Caregiver

## Essential Caregiver Visits

### Essential Caregiver Visit Requirements

- Must be at least 18 years old
- There may be up to two permanently designated essential caregiver visitors per resident. If the resident wants to change a designated essential caregiver, they must submit in writing a change request for records to be updated and to assure training and other requirements are completed.
- Only one essential caregiver at a time may visit a resident
- Must attend a training session on COVID-19 signs and symptoms, personal protective equipment, hand hygiene, cough and sneeze etiquette and other community specific guidelines or requirements the Essential Caregiver must abide by during the visit.

- At completion of training each Essential Caregiver is required to sign documentation that they have received required training and understand requirements of visits and will abide by them.
- Must sign a written agreement upon entry stating they understand and agree to the community requirements for visitation.
- Must sign an agreement to leave the community at the appointed time unless otherwise approved by the community
- Must self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- May not participate in visits if the designated essential caregiver has signs and symptoms of COVID-19, active COVID-19 infection, or other communicable diseases; and not participate in visits if the resident has an active COVID-19 infection.
- Must only use designated entrances and exits as directed by the community
- Must pass the screening process
- Must sign in on the Visitor & Essential Caregiver Sign-In/Sign-Out Log via community designated screener
- Must wear an approved facemask, based on COVID status within the community, and any other appropriate PPE as directed by community while in the nursing community
- Must wear essential caregiver badge or wristband
- Hand hygiene will be performed by Essential Caregiver by using community provided hand washing station or hand sanitizer before and after the visit.
- Each visit is limited to two hours, but is subject to adjustment by the community, based on ability to accommodate and to ensure all residents have equal opportunity for Essential Caregiver Visits.
- May only visit in the area designated by the community
- The visit may occur outdoors, in the resident's bedroom, or in another community designated area that limits visitor movement through the community and interaction with other residents.
- Should a resident have a roommate it is preferred that the visit takes place other than in the room with the roommate that is designated by the community and limits visitor movement throughout the community and interaction with other residents. A roommate is not and will not be required to leave the room. If a roommate remains in the room during an Essential Caregiver visit, social distancing must be maintained. The Essential Caregiver will not provide care or support to a roommate. Right to privacy and compliance with HIPAA will be required for a roommate that remains in the room during the visit. Should the roommate need treatment that requires provider during the visit, the Essential Caregiver will be asked to step outside the room during this treatment. The Essential Caregiver must remain next to resident's doorway and must maintain a social distance of at least six feet from other residents and community team members.
- Essential caregiver is escorted to the designated area of visit by team members.
- Resident will complete hand hygiene before the visit.

### Essential Caregiver--Community Requirements

- The community will provide education and skill checks to the essential caregiver prior to initiating the visit on the following:
  - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Usage, Donning/Doffing and Disposal
  - Hand Hygiene
  - Cough and Sneeze Etiquette
- Team members must escort the essential caregiver from the community entrance to the designated visitation area at the start of each visit and escort to the exit when visit is complete.

- The community must also:
  - Inform the essential caregiver visitor of applicable policies, procedures, and requirements
  - Provide an approved facemask and other appropriate PPE.
  - Maintain documentation of the essential caregiver visitor's agreement to follow the applicable policies, procedures and requirements including the agreement to leave the community at the appointed time.
  - Maintain documentation of the essential caregiver visitor's training.
  - Maintain documentation of the date of last COVID-19 test as reported by the essential caregiver.
  - Document the identity of each essential caregiver in the resident's records and verify the identity of the essential caregiver by creating an essential caregiver visitor name badge or wristband.
  - Maintain a record of each essential caregiver visit, including
    - the date and time of the arrival and departure of the essential caregiver visitor
    - the name of the essential caregiver visitor
    - the name of the resident being visited
    - attestation that the identity of the essential caregiver visitor was confirmed
    - prevent visitation by the essential caregiver if the resident has an active COVID-19 infection
    - screening was complete and the results
- The community may cancel the essential caregiver visit if the essential caregiver fails to comply with the communities' guidance regarding essential caregiver visits.

### **Essential Caregiver Visitation Process**

- Must stay in the designated visitation area and shall not leave the area unescorted by team members.
- Must leave PPE in place for the entirety of the visit.
- Essential caregiver visitors do not have to maintain physical distancing between themselves and the resident they are visiting but must maintain physical distancing between themselves and all other residents and team members.
- The resident must wear a facemask or face covering over both the mouth and nose, if tolerated (noted by physician in medical record if not tolerated), throughout the visit.
- Community team members may intermittently observe Essential Caregiver Visits to ensure that rules and policies are followed, but not to the extent of impeding privacy.

### **Essential Caregiver Ending Visitation and Exiting Community Process**

- Both resident and essential caregiver will complete hand hygiene at the conclusion of the visit.
- EC escorted from visit location to exit by team member at the designated time.
- EC badge collected.
- PPE disposal per IPC practice
- EC will sign out on log via designated team member.
- Essential caregiver should self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 after leaving the community and advised if they experience any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 they should notify the community immediately and seek medical attention from their personal physician.
- Visitation area will be disinfected per protocol

### **Salon Visitation**

Community may allow a salon services visitor to enter the community to provide services to a resident only if

- the salon services visitor passes the screening
- the salon services visitor agrees to comply with the most current version of the Minimum Standard Health Protocols – Checklist for Cosmetology Salons/Hair Salons located on InTouch, COVID-19 Folder, Folder "O" re-opening.

- The following requirements apply to salon services visits:
  - Resident receiving services must be COVID-19 negative.
  - Each visit is limited to two hours, unless the community determines that it can only accommodate a visit for a shorter duration or that it can accommodate a longer duration and adjusts the duration of the visit accordingly.
  - Salon services visitors do not have to maintain physical distancing between themselves and each resident they are visiting but must maintain physical distancing between themselves and all other residents and team members.
  - The resident must wear a facemask or face covering over both the mouth and nose, if tolerated (noted by physician in medical record if not tolerated), throughout the visit

### **Salon Visitor Screening Process**

- All salon visitors are screened prior to entry outside of the community or just within the entry door, not near resident care areas.
- Must have a negative COVID-19 test result from a test performed no more than 14 days before initial visit and must have a negative COVID-19 test result from a test performed no more than 14 days before subsequent visits in accordance with community testing strategy
- Screener will validate test results and document on the log.
- A copy of the test results will be maintained on file.
- Signed acknowledgement confirming receipt of training and handouts with statement of understanding and agreement for follow policy, procedures, and other requirements as instructed in the community training.
- Community approved facemask provided by the salon visitor.
- Validation of the name/identity of the Salon Visitor and the identity of resident visited.
- Salon Visitor screenings must be documented on the Essential Caregiver and Salon Visitor Screening Sign in/Sign out Log. Each visitor must complete the Screening Checklist Form (Located on InTouch, COVID-19 folder, Sub-folder 'B', Visitor Folder) and kept at the entrance to the community.
- The log must contain the following:
  - Name of each person screened
  - Name of resident being visited
  - Date and time of arrival, screening, and departure
  - Documentation of the screening, and the results of the screening check
  - Proof of recent COVID test result within the last 14 days
  - The screening log and checklist may contain protected health information and must be protected in accordance with applicable state and federal law
- Salon Visitors who have any of the following screening criteria must leave the community and reschedule the visit:
  - Fever, defined as a temperature of 100.4 Fahrenheit and above.
  - Signs or symptoms of COVID-19, including chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, GI Upset: nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea, or any other signs and symptoms as outlined by CDC.
  - Contact in the last 14 days with someone who has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, is under investigation for COVID-19, or is ill with a respiratory illness.
  - Has a positive COVID-19 test result from a test performed in the last 10 days.
  - International travel within the last 14 days requires additional review.

### **Salon Visits--Community Requirements for Salon Services**

- Community must develop and enforce salon services policies and procedures that provide:
  - A testing strategy

- Written agreement that the salon services visitor understands and agrees to follow the applicable policies, procedures, and requirements
- Training each salon services visitor on proper PPE usage and infection control measures, hand hygiene, and cough and sneeze etiquette.
- Salon services visitor must wear an approved facemask and any other appropriate PPE recommended by community policy while in the building.
- Expectations regarding using only designated entrances and exits as directed.
- Limiting visitation to the area designated by the facility
- Team Members must escort the salon services visitor from the community entrance to the designated visitation area at the start of each visit and must escort the salon services visitor from the designated visitation area to the community exit at the end of each visit
- Inform the salon services visitor of applicable policies, procedures and requirements.
- Approve the salon visitor's facemask.
- Maintain documentation of the salon services visitor's agreement to follow the applicable policies, procedures, and requirements.
- Maintain documentation of the salon services visitor's training.
- Maintain documentation of the date of last COVID-19 test as reported by the salon services visitor.
- Document the identity of each salon services visitor in the community's records and verify the identity of the salon services visitor by [creating a salon services visitor badge/wristband](#)
- Maintain a record of each salon services visit, including the following:
  - the date and time of the arrival and departure of the salon services visitor
  - the name of the salon services visitor
  - the name of the resident being visitor
  - attestation that the identity of the salon services visitor was confirmed
- Prevent visitation by the salon services visitor if the resident has an active COVID-19 infection.

### **Salon Services Visitor Requirements**

- Must pass the screening process.
- Must receive training on COVID-19 signs and symptoms, personal protective equipment, hand hygiene, cough and sneeze etiquette and other community specific guidelines or requirements the Salon Visitor must abide by during the visit.
- Upon completion of training each Salon Visitor is required to sign documentation that they have received required training and understand requirements of visits and will abide by them.
- Must sign a written agreement upon entry stating they understand and agree to the community requirements for salon visits.
- Must sign an agreement to leave the community at the appointed time unless otherwise approved by the community.
- Must self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 after leaving the community and advise if they experience any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 they should notify the community immediately and seek medical attention from their personal physician.
- May not participate in visits if the salon visitor has signs and symptoms of COVID-19, active COVID-19 infection, or other communicable diseases and not participate in visits if the resident has an active COVID-19 infection.
- Must only use designated entrances and exits as directed by the community.
- Must sign in on the Visitor & Essential Caregiver Sign-In/Sign-Out Log via community designated screener.
- The community may cancel the salon services visit if the salon services visitor fails to comply with the community's policy regarding salon services visits or applicable requirements.

### **Salon Services Visitor Process**

- May occur outdoors, in the resident's bedroom, or in another area designated by the community that limits visitor movement through the facility and interaction with other residents.
- Must stay in the designated visitation area and shall not leave the area unescorted by team members.

- Both resident and salon service resident must complete hand hygiene prior to beginning of visit.
- Must leave PPE in place for the entirety of the visit.
- Salon visitors do not have to maintain physical distancing between themselves and the resident they are visiting but must maintain physical distancing between themselves and all other residents and team members.
- The resident must wear a facemask or face covering over both the mouth and nose, if tolerated (noted by physician in medical record if not tolerated), throughout the visit
- Community team members may intermittently observe Salon Visits to ensure that rules and policies are followed.

### **Salon Visitation and Exiting Community Process**

- Both resident and salon visitor will complete hand hygiene at the conclusion of the visit.
- Salon escorted from location to exit by team member at the designated time.
- Salon badge/wristband collected and noted on the log.
- PPE disposal per IPC practice.
- Salon Visitor will sign out on log via designated team member.
- Salon visitor should self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 after leaving the community and if they experience any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 they should notify the community immediately and seek medical attention from their personal physician.
- Salon or visitation area will be disinfected per protocol.

### **Visitation Permitted Without Approval From HHSC**

A community that does not meet the criteria for expansion of reopening visitation designation must permit:

- closed window visits
- end-of-life visits
- persons providing critical assistance, including essential caregiver visits

*These visits may also occur in communities that have been approved for expansion visits.*

- If the community submitted form 2194 and was not approved for visitation, the community must complete the following:
  - Develop and implement a plan to meet the visitation designation criteria as defined in this section
  - Submit the plan to the Regional Director in the LTRC Region where the community is located within 5 days of submitting the form or of receiving notification from HHSC that the nursing community was not approved for visitation designation.

### **Community HHSC Approved for Visits Requirements**

- Must allow outdoor visits, vehicle parades, open window visits, and plexiglass indoor visits involving residents and personal visitors, unless an executive order or other direction is issued by the Governor of Texas, the President of the United States, or other applicable authority, that is more restrictive than this rule or any minimum standard relating to a nursing community, the community must comply with the executive order or other direction.
- Open window visits and plexiglass indoor visits are allowed only if the community is in a county with COVID-19 positivity rate 10 percent or less per federal direction.
- Outdoor visits, vehicle parades, open window visits, and plexiglass indoor visits require HHSC approval and designation as a visitation facility per PL 20-38 requirements.
- Closed window visits and end-of-life visits are permitted for residents who are COVID-19 negative, COVID-19 positive, or unknown COVID-19 status as can be accommodated by the community.
- Essential caregiver visits are permitted for residents who are COVID-19 negative or unknown COVID status and do not require HHSC approval.
  - Essential caregiver visits and end-of-life visits can take place in the resident's room or other

community designated area separated from other residents and physical distancing is not required for the resident they are visiting, but they must maintain physical distancing between all other residents and team members.

- The following limits apply to all visitation allowed under approved visitation:
  - Visits must be scheduled in advance and are by appointment only.
  - Visitation appointments must be scheduled to allow time for cleaning and sanitization of the visitation area between visits.
  - Outdoor visits, vehicle parades, open window visits, and plexiglass indoor visits are permitted as can be accommodated by the community only for residents who are COVID-19 negative.
  - Physical contact between residents and visitors is prohibited, except for essential caregiver or end-of-life visits.
  - Visits are permitted only where adequate space is available that meets criteria and when adequate team members are available to monitor visits.
  - The community must limit the movement of the visitor through the community to ensure interaction with other residents is minimized.
  - The visitor must wear a facemask or face covering over both the mouth and nose throughout the visit, except visitors participating in a vehicle parade or closed window visit.
  - The resident must wear a facemask or face covering over both the mouth and nose, if tolerated (noted by physician in medical record if not tolerated), throughout the visit.
  - The community must ensure physical distancing of at least six feet is always maintained between visitors and residents and limit the number of visitors and residents in the visitation area as needed to ensure physical distancing is maintained between themselves and all other residents, team members, and other visitors.
- The community must limit the number of visitors per resident per week, and the length of time per visit, to ensure equal access by all residents to visitors.
  - Cleaning and disinfecting of the visitation area, furniture, and all other items must be performed, per CDC guidance, before and after each visit.
  - The community must ensure a comfortable and safe outdoor visiting area for outdoor visits, open window visits, and vehicle parades considering outside air temperatures and ventilation.
  - For outdoor visits, the community must designate an outdoor area for visitation that is separated from residents and limits the ability of the visitor to interact with residents.
  - Community must provide hand washing stations, or hand sanitizer, to the visitor and resident before and after visits, except visitors participating in a vehicle parade or closed window visit.
  - The visitor and the resident must practice hand hygiene before and after the visit, except visitors participating in a vehicle parade or closed window visits.

### **Approved Indoor Visit Requirements**

- Community has designated a separate area(s), units, wings, halls, or building designated as COVID-19 negative area.
- Designated COVID-19 negative area has separate dedicated team members working exclusively in the designated area, separate from COVID 19 positive or unknown COVID 19 status resident's areas, units, wings, halls, or buildings of the community and does not change from day to day.
- There have been no confirmed COVID-19 cases for at least 14 consecutive days in team members working in the designated area, unit, wing, hall, or building which accommodates residents who are COVID-19 negative.
- There have been no community-acquired COVID-19 confirmed cases for at least 14 consecutive days in residents in the COVID-19 negative area, unit, wing, hall, or building.
- If there is a positive COVID-19 case in the designated COVID-19 negative area, indoor visits cease, until HHSC LTCR verifies all team members and residents have recovered, adequate staffing is available, community is in compliance with infection control requirements and emergency rules and the designated area goes 14 days without a confirmed COVID 19 positive case.



### **Additional Requirements for Vehicle Parades**

- Visitors must remain in their vehicles throughout the parade.
- The community must ensure physical distancing of at least six feet is maintained between residents throughout the parade.
- The community must ensure residents are not closer than 10 feet to the vehicles for safety reasons.
- The resident must wear a facemask or face covering over both the mouth and nose if tolerated (noted by physician in medical record if not tolerated), throughout the visit.

### **Plexiglass Indoor Visits**

- The plexiglass booth must be installed in an area of the community where it does not impede a means of egress, does not impede or interfere with any fire safety equipment or system, and does not offer access to the rest of the community or contact between the visitors and other residents.
- The plexiglass visitation booth must be reviewed and approved by RVPO and Senior Director of Environment of Care and Construction.
- Prior to using the booth, the community **must submit a photo of plexiglass visitation booth** and its location in the community to the Life Safety Code Program Manager in the LTCR Region in which the community is located and must receive approval from HHSC.
- The entire visit must be supervised by a community team member.
- The resident must wear a facemask or face covering over both the mouth and nose, if tolerated (noted by physician in medical record if not tolerated), throughout the visit.
- The visitor must wear a facemask or face covering over both the mouth and nose throughout the visit.
- The community shall limit the number of visitors and residents in the visiting area as necessary.