



Core Principles of COVID-19 Infection Prevention

- Visitors who have a positive viral test for COVID-19, symptoms of COVID-19, or currently meet the criteria for quarantine, should not enter the facility. Facilities should screen all who enter for these visitation exclusions.
- Hand hygiene (use of alcohol-based hand rub is preferred)
- Face covering or mask (covering mouth and nose) and physical distancing at least six feet between people, in accordance with CDC guidance
- Instructional signage throughout the facility and proper visitor education on COVID-19 signs and symptoms, infection control precautions, other applicable facility practices (e.g., use of face covering or mask, specified entries, exits and routes to designated areas, hand hygiene)
- Cleaning and disinfecting high-frequency touched surfaces in the facility often, and designated visitation areas after each visit
- Appropriate staff use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Effective cohorting of residents (e.g., separate areas dedicated to COVID-19 care)
- Resident and staff testing conducted as required at 42 CFR § 483.80(h) (see QSO20-38-NH)

These core principles are consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for nursing homes and should be adhered to at all times. Visitors who are unable to adhere to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention should not be permitted to visit or should be asked to leave.

Risks of Visiting

(Source: CDC)

- Older adults living in congregate settings are at high risk of being affected by respiratory and other pathogens, such as SARS-CoV-2.
- A strong infection prevention and control (IPC) program is critical to protect both residents and healthcare personnel (HCP).
- Even as nursing homes resume normal practices, they must sustain core IPC practices and **remain vigilant for SARS-CoV-2 infection among residents and HCP in order to prevent spread and protect residents and HCP** from severe infections, hospitalizations, and death.
- Visiting a long-term care facility includes the potential risk of being exposed to viruses including COVID-19, especially during times of outbreak.