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Ron DeSantis
Governor

State Limitations on Visitation Lifted for APD-Licensed and APD-Operated Facilities

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Limitations in the DEM Emergency Order 20-011 related to visitation are lifted effective March 22, 2021. APD-licensed and APD-operated facilities must follow revised federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) visitation guidelines and core principles of infection prevention. Facilities must follow state and federal recommendations and industry best practices for visitation, infection prevention, and the screening and triage of everyone entering a facility for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

The Emergency Order provided important protections for residents who are most at-risk for serious complications from COVID-19 infections. Limiting visitation has helped keep residents safe but restricting access to families and friends has taken a toll on those living in facilities. Moving forward, all facilities should strive to alleviate the stress caused by the separation of residents from their loved ones.

Under Governor Ron DeSantis' leadership, Florida's vaccination efforts with state-operated facilities and APD-licensed facilities have provided a tremendous reduction in COVID-19 cases for staff and residents.

This month, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and CMS published updated standards and guidelines recognizing the impact of vaccinations in the fight against COVID-19. By continuing to follow these standards and guidelines, residents will have more opportunities to safely connect with their families and loved ones.

CMS Visitation Guidance: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf> .

CDC Infection Control Resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>.

Group Home Guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/group-homes.html>.

To clarify expectations for honoring resident rights, if a resident has been absent from the facility for 24 hours or more, and upon return does not pass screening criteria, the resident should be quarantined or isolated based on their circumstances consistent with state and federal guidance. However, if the resident passes screening criteria, the facility may not unnecessarily restrict the resident by requiring quarantine or isolation.

For updates about COVID-19 vaccine administration and distribution, please visit <https://FloridaHealthCOVID19.gov>. Additionally, APD provides COVID-19 and vaccine information on its website at apdcares.org.