

GUIDANCE MEMORANDUM

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Barbara Palmer
Director

State Office

4030 Esplanade Way
Suite 380
Tallahassee
Florida
32399-0950

(850) 488-4257

Fax:

(850) 922-6456

Toll Free:

(866) APD-CARES

(866-273-2273)

DATE: September 10, 2020

SUBJECT: APD-Licensed Facility Operators Visitation Expectations
Regarding Emergency Order 20-009

Since the issuance of the Florida Division of Emergency Management [Emergency Order 20-009](#) on September 1, 2020, the Agency has published [Questions and Answers](#) to address common questions. In an effort to respond to key areas of concern and questions, please carefully review the following guidance regarding visitation for long-term care residents:

It is critical that all APD-Licensed Facilities take these actions now:

Immediately implement procedures to enable Essential Caregivers and Compassionate Care visitors to visit your residents. Establishing your plan for Essential Caregivers and Compassionate Care visitors should be the priority.

It is important that the services of an Essential Caregiver be noted in the resident's ***Support Plan*** by the Waiver Support Coordinator, but this action should be handled expeditiously with a modification to the support plan outlining what essential function(s) the Essential Caregiver performs.

Essential Caregivers may be individuals who did not provide services prior to the pandemic. ***Group Homes and Foster Care Homes must allow a resident to designate up to two individual(s) of their choosing regardless of whether they have provided services in the past.*** The Order allows a person to be an Essential Caregiver to provide any activities of daily living or to provide ***emotional support.***

Essential Caregivers and Compassionate Care visitors may visit any facility regardless of whether the facility has had COVID cases in the last 14 days. The 14-day period since new case onset only restricts general visitation and does not limit Essential Caregivers and Compassionate Care visitors.

Essential Caregivers and Compassionate Care visitors are not required to maintain social distancing from the resident they visit but must wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at all times. Social distancing must be maintained from all **other** residents and staff.

Visitor testing may be required by the facility but only when paid for by the facility. **A facility may not require visitors be tested at their own expense nor may the facility use the test kits provided through APD's Curative contract for this purpose.**

The Order also clarifies that residents may leave the facility for health care services, or other activities, and wear a mask, if tolerated by the resident. **These residents are not required to be quarantined upon return to the group home** solely based on leaving for an appointment. However, all residents must be screened upon returning to the facility.

It is **critical that you communicate** with residents and families your facility status regarding general visitation and to collaborate with Essential Caregivers and Compassionate Care visitors to accommodate a visitation schedule that takes into account the potential need for weekend and evening visits.

APD is handling complaints regarding compliance with the Order, but in many cases, the issues involve a lack of communication with family members by the facility.

Please take these actions now to ensure the well-being of your residents, and compliance with the Order and other regulatory standards.