



March 11, 2020

To All Residents and Family Members,

As you know, COVID-19 poses a health threat to our entire population, especially to the elderly and those with underlying conditions such as heart disease, lung disease and diabetes. Many residents who are entrusted to our care are in this “higher-risk” category.

Our main priority is to protect the health and safety of our residents. To this end, we constantly review the latest recommendations from our local and state health departments, Trinity Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Our goal is to provide the safest possible environment for our residents, families and staff.

Based on the latest available information, one important way to enhance residents’ health and safety is to reduce their exposure to potential disease carriers. The fewer people with whom our residents come in contact, the less likely they may be to contract COVID-19 or other infectious diseases. For this reason, **effective immediately, we are restricting visitors to our facility.**

**For the immediate future, ONLY visits from immediate family members, loved ones and clergy who meet the following criteria will be permitted for:**

- Visits to critically, acutely or terminally ill patients
- Visits in which a family caregiver has an established pattern of providing resident care

Following the recommended screening guidelines established by CMS, **all visitors will be screened before entering our facility.** No visitors will be permitted if they

- Show signs of respiratory infection including a fever, cough or sore throat
- Have been in contact with someone with or under investigation for the COVID-19
- Have traveled outside of the country to any restricted countries during the last 14 days

Additionally, in adherence to CDC guidelines, we are limiting gatherings; cancelling certain events and outings; and encouraging residents to stay on their apartments and in their respective dining rooms. Residents in assisted living and skilled nursing care can attend Mass via our closed-circuit television channel. Lastly, we are strongly advising all residents to practice proper cough etiquette and hand washing.

To stay in touch, we urge residents and family members to visit by phone or to use available video apps, such as Skype, WhatsApp, FaceTime and Messenger. We are happy to help facilitate such visits. If interested, please contact Mary Kate Moriarty at 773-253-3616 to assist with using one of these apps for a visit.

We will continue to monitor COVID-19 developments at the local and national level to ensure Mercy Circle has the most effective precautions in place. We are committed to keeping our residents and families apprised of any new policies regarding visitations.

We know family visits are important, and we hope to ease visitation restrictions as soon as it is safe to do so. In the meantime, we welcome your comments as well as any suggestions you may have for how we can enhance our care and services. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Please feel free to contact me if I can answer any questions or provide additional information or assistance. I can be reached at 773-253-3627.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frances Lachowicz".

Frances Lachowicz  
Executive Director



