



September 11, 2020

Dear Residents, Families and Staff Members,

As Mercy Circle continues to enjoy its status as a CMS Phase Three community, we will reopen more common areas on our campus. Please look for a listing of current practices Mercy Circle follows to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 posted at the top of the page on our website that shares information related to the virus.

***New this coming week***

Starting on Monday, September 14, the dining room for independent living residents will offer a choice of 4pm and 5:30pm seating times. Residents will be seated two people per table. No reservations are required although seating is subject to availability.

Staff members will wear masks at all times and sanitize tables between each seating. Residents are required to wear masks until they are seated and when interacting with servers.

Residents still can opt to dine-in or carry-out their meals. The Bistro also provides carry-out services for breakfast and lunch as well as meals available to enjoy at tables outside.

As you know, skilled nursing care and memory care residents continue to partake in all three meals in their dining rooms, greatly modified to accommodate social distancing and to protect them from other virus-related mitigations.

***Next on our planning agenda***

We are completing plans for reopening the dining room for assisted living residents so they can enjoy three meals a day at two seatings for each mealtime.

With our current CMS status, we also are developing a plan to begin to reopen Mercy Circle for indoor visitations just in time for the change of seasons.

***Outdoor visitations plan remains the same***

Before visiting, everyone is responsible for knowing and agreeing to follow the requirements set by the Illinois Department of Public Health. With so many recent changes, Mercy Circle posted these guidelines in a one-page summary at the top of the page on our website with information related to COVID-19.

Please plan your outdoor visitations for *all residents* during 1-hour periods between 1pm and 4pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays in the Courtyard the Sisters of Mercy have reserved for our exclusive use. Residents and their guests should schedule visits so we can manage all safety requirements for social distancing. Please send your request to [LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org](mailto:LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org) or call Sandy Urbaniak at 773-253-3622.

***With gratitude***

Our thanks to Avis Clendenen and Barb Clarke for providing care that lifts residents' spirits—both body and soul.

***Activities***

We encourage everyone to take walks through our beautiful grounds and sit on the benches at the main entrance, on the patio or in the Courtyard. We also promote participation in activities for small groups in the activities rooms and those in the Illinois Room as well as programs broadcast on Channel 8.

Starting next week, please check your calendar for times and locations for our new weekly Word and Communion services offered throughout our community.

***Testing***

On September 8, Mercy Circle administered tests to 57 residents and all received negative results. This week, we also tested 109 staff members. As of this morning, 57 have received negative results and results are pending for 52 employees. We also received negative test outcomes for both residents and staff members whose results we reported as pending last Friday.

In compliance with current CMS guidelines based on the positivity rate of Cook County, Mercy Circle will continue weekly tests for all employees and assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing care residents.

We thank you for your patience while we develop ways to safely reopen more areas of Mercy Circle so you can enjoy our community life. Please call me at 773-253-3627 to discuss your questions and suggestions.

Sincerely,



Frances Lachowicz  
Executive Director