



April 16, 2021

Dear Residents, Families and Staff Members,

First and foremost, my staff and I thank our residents and families for being so gracious about recent unanticipated changes that interrupted our quest to reopen more places and programs for everyone in our community.

Even though restrictions temporarily disrupted some of our most treasured ways to spend time together, they are intended to ensure safety for everyone in our Mercy Circle family. The Chicago and Illinois Departments of Public Health are responding to myriad factors in a very dynamic situation.

***Good news: More freedom, all negative test results***

Starting Monday, April 19, assisted living residents no longer will be sequestered to their area. Next week, they can welcome guests for indoor visits, attend Mass in our Chapel, join activities throughout our building, schedule appointments with the salon, and walk around our campus to delight in spring's fresh growth.

All residents can invite two people from one household for one-hour visits between 1pm and 4pm on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. To reserve a designated time, ask for a different date, and plan compassionate care or virtual visits, please contact [LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org](mailto:LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org). And before coming to our campus, review *Visitor Guidelines* and *COVID-19 Precautions* on our website.

This week's tests confirmed there are no new cases of COVID-19 among all staff members and residents who live in our healthcare settings. For now, we continue our rigorous testing protocols. If a positive test result does occur, we may be required to again adjust daily life to mitigate the spread of the virus.

We believe prudence delivers long-term dividends, especially as the number of new cases of the virus now are as high as they were in January. On Thursday, IDPH announced 3,581 new and probable cases. Illinois' positivity rate—4.2 percent on Thursday—has doubled since March 12.

Please call me at 773-253-3627 to talk about your concerns, to answer your questions and to share your suggestions as we reopen our campus.

Today is a day to rejoice! Next week even more so.

Frances Lachowicz, Executive Director