



April 23, 2021

Dear Residents, Families and Staff Members,

I am very pleased to report that both the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Illinois Department of Public Health issued new guidance about indoor visitations. Now residents can welcome visitors into their apartment or suite. These private visits replace those previously hosted in the Wisconsin Room.

While we work toward completely reopening Mercy Circle, this decision falls into the “new normal” category with some restrictions to mitigate the threat of COVID-19.

Starting Wednesday, April 28, all residents can invite two guests into their home here from Tuesdays through Sundays between 10am and 7pm. Visitations will be confirmed first-come, first served. Our new protocols, designed to meet infection control and prevention standards for COVID-19, include managing the number of guests in our building at any one time.

Visitors, 12 years or older who can live in different households, are required to follow these practices. Although visitors need not be vaccinated, it is preferred they are to protect residents and staff members.

- Review *Visitor Guidelines* and *COVID-19 Precautions* on our website
- Contact LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org at least 24 hours in advance to schedule a visit and to answer prescreening questions
- Wear their own face mask, covering both nose and mouth, before entering Mercy Circle; sanitize their hands before and after visiting with a resident
- Observe six-foot social distancing in all common areas and, when possible, in residences
- Enter and exit Mercy Circle through the front lobby only
- Check-in at the reception desk for a no-contact temperature check and second screening for symptoms
- Proceed directly to the residence of the person they are visiting
- Stay out of all common areas including the Bistro and all dining rooms, all activities rooms and the Chapel

A second important change in CMS and IDPH guidance is that residents now can leave our campus for visits with family and friends—with the caveat everyone still takes basic precautions to minimize transmitting COVID-19. When residents return to Mercy Circle, under normal circumstances they are not required to be quarantined.

All negative test results

This week, 97 employees and 59 residents in our healthcare settings tested negative for COVID-19. Still, we continue our rigorous testing protocols. If a positive test result does occur, we may be required to again adjust daily life for some residents.

Please call me at 773-253-3627 to share your concerns, to answer your questions and to suggest more ways to enjoy life at Mercy Circle.

Enjoy spending time with those you love,

Frances Lachowicz
Executive Director