



April 30, 2021

Dear Residents, Families and Staff Members,

This week, the CDC eased or lifted several restrictions for businesses, schools, restaurants, entertainment venues and attractions so they can reopen or increase occupancy. Naming Restore Illinois Phase 4 “revitalization” conveys the perfect message.

Like all senior living communities, however, Mercy Circle must wait for specific guidelines from our State’s public health agency before changing our safety precautions related to COVID-19. We expect IDPH to inform us about doing so within the next two weeks.

We are very grateful to those who graciously comply with our best practices to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. While most of us may feel we have depleted our reservoir of patience, I hope our collective resilience fortifies our spirit of acceptance as we await more changes.

Experts, however, report too many new cases of the virus. On Wednesday, for instance, 3,394 Illinoisians tested positive. *Our good news:* We can reduce our testing schedule in May because everyone received a negative test result this week. As soon as the Chicago Department of Public Health confirms our new testing schedule, I will announce it.

Current ways to spend time together

All residents now can invite two guests into their home here from Tuesdays through Sundays between 10am and 7pm. Visitations are confirmed first-come, first served so we can manage the number of guests in our building at any one time.

Visitors, 12 years or older, who can be from 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 as well as themselves.

- Review *Visitor Guidelines* and *COVID-19 Precautions* on our website
- Contact LifeEnrichment@MercyCircle.org at least 48 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; when possible, in residences
- Enter and exit Mercy Circle through the front lobby only
- Check-in at the reception desk for a temperature check and second screening
- Proceed directly to the residence of the person they are visiting
- Avoid all common areas including Bistro, dining rooms, activities rooms and Chapel

All residents can leave our campus, but must take basic precautions regarding the virus. Assisted living and skilled nursing care residents must inform a nurse about their plans to leave campus and sign-out and sign-in with the Receptionist.

Starting in May, Mass for all residents in Mercy Chapel begins at 11am on Tuesday and Thursday (instead of Wednesday) and at 4pm on Saturday. We will reinstate our monthly birthday festivities. For a “dress rehearsal” this week, we gathered in the Illinois Room for a great party. So wonderful to be together again!

Please call me at 773-253-3627 to share your concerns and suggestions.

Very truly yours,

Frances Lachowicz
Executive Director