



August 3, 2021

Dear Residents, Families and Staff Members,

Since my most recent letter on June 22, our community has been blessed to have no new cases of COVID-19. That remains the case today.

Plan for 100 percent compliance

Because 85 percent of our staff members already wholeheartedly agreed to be vaccinated, our Leadership Team thinks their compliance gives us an advantage in mitigating the spread of the virus. With 100 percent of residents fully vaccinated we truly are a community where we know how to protect ourselves and each other.

On July 12, Anita Ajayi, RN and Susan Tirpak informed employees, who have yet to be vaccinated, they now are required to do so before Tuesday, September 21, or request an exemption no later than Friday, August 20. Since then, five employees have received their first dose of a vaccine and two have filed for medical exemptions. In addition, all new hires must be fully inoculated before they start working here.

We are “this/close” to complying with this new requirement by Trinity Health Senior Communities, our management company, that not only all employees honor our core value of safety but also all third-party providers and vendors provide proof they are fully vaccinated.

Practices address current circumstances

The timing of this mandate provides our residents and staff with an extra line of protection as the Delta variant is surging across the country and now dominating new cases in Cook County, which has been declared a “substantial transmission area.” The Illinois and Chicago Departments of Public Health have published new guidelines initiated by the CDC to help us contain the spread of COVID-19, especially its Delta variant which is highly transmissible.

Here is how we are applying these guidelines to our Mercy Circle community

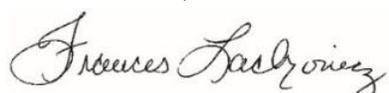
- All residents and staff members are urged to wear a mask when they are away from our campus.
- All staff members, third-party providers and vendors will continue to wear a mask when they are in our building.
 - Unvaccinated staff members receive rapid tests for COVID-19 twice a month to detect any cases, especially someone who is asymptomatic.

- All residents are required to wear masks when they are in common areas of our community including in
 - Their dining room where residents may remove their mask once seated.
 - Activity and meeting rooms while attending an event or participating in an activity.
 - The Chapel where everyone must wear a mask during Mass on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays because the threat of this newest variant is very transmissible when singing and reciting according to IDPH.
- New residents, who are unvaccinated when they are admitted, are tested. If they are unvaccinated
 - They will quarantine for 14 days and be tested monthly.
 - Mercy Circle will arrange for them to be vaccinated if they agree to do so.
- All visitors must arrive on our campus wearing a mask before they enter our building and must continue to wear a mask in all common areas. In addition, they
 - Are required to register with our receptionist to complete a health screening questionnaire and temperature check as well as complete an information form for contact tracing if and when it is necessary.
 - Should proceed directly to a resident's home and not stop to visit others in common areas.
 - May remove their mask inside a resident's home if both are fully vaccinated.
 - Can plan visits with as many as four people at any one time.
 - Should review current *Visitor Guidelines* posted on our website.

When the weather is pleasant, we encourage residents and guests to spend time together on the patio adjacent to the assisted living wing and on the benches near our main entrance.

Mercy Circle continues to follow all infection control and prevention measures it has put in place to mitigate the spread of the virus. Please call me at 773-253-3627 to share your suggestions as we enter a new phase of balancing daily life in our community with ensuring the safety of everyone we cherish.

Best wishes,



Frances Lachowicz
Executive Director