



BRICKSTONE | FOUNDATION | HOME | MEADOWS

September 17, 2020

Dear St. John's Residents and Family Members,

You may be aware of the release yesterday of new guidelines by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) that go into effect today, which impact the number of days a skilled nursing facility is required to have passed without a positive case of COVID-19 in either a resident or staff member before outside in-person visitation can resume. While changes to the guidelines have been advocated for by many stakeholders, including our staff team here at St. John's, the release of these recent changes has regrettably left many of us, including our state advocacy association leadership and peers from member agencies, with too many unanswered questions.

There are currently many inquiry efforts in process to receive more comprehensive guidance from the NYSDOH to help support our families and staff members that we understand could be frustrated by the new concerns the guidelines have created. In a best effort attempt to provide some assistance in answering questions you may have, we have created a [Frequently Asked Questions Sheet](#) based on information we have at this time. However, you should note that some of these details may change as new guidance comes from NYSDOH based on the on-going advocacy.

We are also joining with our member agencies from our state advocacy association to encourage our staff members and families to contact New York State Governor Cuomo's Office at 1-518-474-8390 to explain the personal hardship they are facing due to the current approach to visitation as explained in the new guidelines.

Some specific talking points you may consider in speaking with the Governor's Office are recommended below:

- Due to your overly strict rules on visitation in nursing homes, I have not seen my loved one since ____.
- Now in order to visit, I must provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test result repeatedly.
- These repeated tests are not readily accessible to me and will be cost-prohibitive.
- Nursing home residents have endured months of isolation from the people they love most and are experiencing emotional distress.
- I urge you to reconsider this guidance and find a more balanced approach that considers not just the risks of COVID-19, but also the emotional isolation residents are feeling.

We are in this fight with you and remain equally concerned at the unending strain the current situation in nursing homes has placed on our residents, their families, and our staff members.

Thank you for your continued support of our St. John's team as we partner with you in the care of your loved one.

Sincerely,

President and CEO

Embrace Living

150 Highland Avenue | Rochester, New York | 14620-3099 | 585-760-1300

stjohnsliving.org