

# Frequently Asked Questions - COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Reviewed: 01/06/2023

Updates to questions are marked with \*\*\*, and changes to responses are in **bold** type.

Please consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC - [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)) and the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS - [www.cms.gov](http://www.cms.gov)) for current information on this evolving situation or additional questions beyond this document.

**CURRENT RESTRICTION STATUS:** At this time, visitors are permitted for all residents at all times. Any permitted visitors will be screened and subject to additional protocol, including confining visitation to the resident room only.

## COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) - GENERAL INFORMATION

- **\*\*\*When can I visit my loved one at the center?**

CMS issued a revised memo ([QSO-20-39-NH](#)) on September 23, 2022, outlining a revised approach to nursing home visitation. Visitors are permitted at all Villa centers for all residents at all times.

In the event a center experiences an outbreak (defined as one in-house COVID-19 transmission), the center will follow CMS guidance along with state and local health department guidance, which may differ from what is listed here.

All Visitors will be screened prior to admission and required to follow core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention including but not limited to wearing facemasks at all time while in the center, frequent hand hygiene, and social distancing of at least six (6) feet.

All Villa centers will follow their state health department guidelines, as well as CMS guidelines. Each center has a different layout requiring a site-specific approach to outdoor and indoor visits. Additionally, the safety of residents and staff will be considered in determining the centers potential for these visits.

As always, there is no restriction to phone calls and if you have already established a way to communicate with your loved one in the center using cell phones or the center phones, please continue to call and stay connected. Additionally, please visit [www.villahc.com](http://www.villahc.com) to schedule a Villa Video Visit.

- **What PPE (personal protective equipment) does the center have available to protect against COVID-19?**

Each center has a supply of the following types of PPE: gowns, face masks, N95 masks, face shields, gloves, and protective eyewear. The use of any PPE is dictated by the presence of COVID-19, the presence of signs and symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or required by federal or state mandate. As of 4/2/2020, CMS requires all long-term care personnel to wear a face mask while in the center. If COVID-19 is suspected in the center, "HCP [healthcare professionals] should use all recommended COVID-19 PPE for the care of all residents on affected units (or facility-wide if cases are widespread); this includes both symptomatic and asymptomatic residents," (CDC, Responding to Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Nursing Homes).



- **Will this center accept patients from hospitals with confirmed case(s) of COVID-19?**

Yes. All Villa centers will consider guidance from CMS, CDC, state, and local health departments in addition to staffing and personal protective equipment (PPE) levels before deciding to admit a resident regardless of the hospital from which they were discharged.

For any resident who is returning to the center after a hospital stay, the resident will be placed in an appropriate location based on their current condition and needs. Appropriate precautionary measures will be implemented based on their return evaluation, which may include temporary placement on a unit until they are monitored for 14 days and tested for COVID-19.

- **What measures does the center have in place to minimize the potential impact of the COVID-19?**

Based on the latest direction from the CDC, CMS, and the state Health Department, the center will update its staff, residents, visitors, vendors, and others regarding its current practice for any restriction to access the facility through this notice. Individuals are also encouraged to call the center to verify whether any current restrictions are in place in advance of traveling to the center.

The center is actively screening all visitors and admittees who enter. For any individuals permitted to enter, center staff will take and document the temperatures of all persons. Anyone with a fever will be denied access, and anyone who develops a fever at any time during their time in the center will be asked to leave. As of 4/2/2020, CMS requires everyone entering a long-term care facility to wear a face mask while in the center. Additionally, anyone who has had close contact in the last fourteen (14) days with an individual who has a current diagnosis of COVID-19 will be denied entry. (The CDC defines [close contact](#) and someone who was within six (6) feet of an infected person for at least fifteen (15) minutes or more over a twenty four (24) hour period.) We all wish to keep our residents, visitors and staff protected, and these measures are designed for that purpose.

All staff members who enter any Villa center are screened upon entry, and any staff member exhibiting a fever, or any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 are not permitted into the center.

Visitors, residents, and staff are expected to observe proper infection control protocol, including proper hand washing or the use of alcohol based hand sanitizers, covering their mouth when coughing or their nose when sneezing, maintaining safe distance from others (ideally keeping a separation of at least 6 feet), wearing a facemask at all times, and minimizing direct contact with others. Center staff is monitoring residents for any signs or symptoms consistent with the COVID-19 virus, including fever, cough and shortness of breath. According to the CDC, symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

- **Will residents and staff have access to the COVID-19 Vaccination?**

Yes! Each center has been coordinating vaccine distribution (primary doses and booster doses) through their pharmacy. Villa centers are working to communicate the facts around the vaccinations and the vaccination process to staff, residents, and resident representatives. You can also access additional information from the CDC regarding the importance of COVID-19 vaccinations for residents.

On December 28, 2021, CMS issued a mandatory COVID-19 vaccine requirement for all healthcare workers in 25 states, impacting all healthcare settings funded by Medicare and Medicaid. Beginning March 28, 2022, all Villa center employees must be vaccinated or have an approved vaccine exemption. (While COVID-19 vaccine booster doses are not required at this time, they are encouraged and available at all Villa centers.) Employees are encouraged to connect with their administrator and/or HR representative to discuss mandate in more detail.



- **How can I find out more about how many cases of COVID-19 are in the center?**

CMS requires every skilled nursing center to provide updates to the CDC. (Details of the CMS reporting requirement can be found starting on page 179 of the [CMS Final Rule](#).) In addition to providing notification to the CDC in accordance with CMS requirements, each Villa center also provides daily updates posted on its website for the benefit of its residents, their representatives and families, and staff. All parties may easily access this information by visiting the COVID-19 information section of Villa's website at [www.villahc.com/COVID](http://www.villahc.com/COVID). If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Villa center directly.

### **ENTRANCE TO CENTER/RESTRICTIONS**

- **For anyone entering a Villa center, what is required by the center for access?**

Upon entering, all individuals must immediately sign in at a kiosk located at the main entrance and answer all required screening questions. The screening questions are designed to verify that the individual does not currently have a fever or any history that would prevent the individual from entering. Individuals who clear the initial screen will be required to either wash their hands at entry or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer prior to access to resident areas and wear a face mask at all times while in the center. Individuals are expected to limit movement in the center to the resident's room or designated visitation area.

- **How will people enter and exit the center?**

All residents, staff, visitors, health professionals and vendors are required to enter at approved entrances only. Signs are posted on each door for guidance.

- **Has the center imposed any time restrictions on visitation to the center?**

Yes! Visitation hours may vary by center. Please contact the center directly for more information on visitation times.

- **Does this entrance screening apply to resident visitors only?**

No, any individual who enters the center must comply with this process. This includes all residents, visitors, center staff, medical professionals, vendors, and representatives of state and federal agencies.

- **What is your process for testing residents, staff, and others (contractors, consultants, volunteers) who are permitted to enter the center?**

In addition to the health screening questions required for entry to a Villa center, CMS has issued further directives for evaluating the health of individuals accessing a health care facility which include regular testing based on certain parameters. The parameters and frequency have been set forth by the Department of Health and Human Services. All Villa centers will follow their local and state health department guidelines, as well as CMS guidelines, related to testing, documenting, and reporting.

