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### **NYSDOH Announcement of Resumption of Limited Visitation and activities in Nursing Homes**

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NYSHFA|NYSCAL has had numerous discussions with the Department of Health and the Governor's Office regarding the 28-day policy for nursing home visitation and has lobbied extensively to have it changed. We are excited to announce that the Nursing Home visitation policy has now been changed and visitation in the nursing home can resume if there are **no new confirmed staff or resident cases for 14-days.**

Nursing Homes will be required to adhere to the conditions and criteria in the [attached Health Advisory](#) in order to resume visitation. Highlights of the revised guidance from NYSDOH for skilled nursing facility visitation beginning September 17<sup>th</sup> include:

- Absence of any new nursing home onset of COVID-19 in the nursing home as reported to the Department on the daily HERDS survey and as reported weekly to the NHSN for a period of no less than **fourteen (14) days.**
- Visitation should be limited to outdoor areas. For residents who are bed bound continue to use alternative methods of visitation such as through videoconferencing through skype or facetime as much as possible. Limited visitation may be permitted but should adhere to the same requirements for other visitors as much as possible. Visitors should go to the patient room and not any other areas in the facility.
- Visitors, including long-term care ombudsman, are screened for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to resident access. Additionally, **the visitor must present a verified negative test result within the last week (7 days) and visitation must be refused if the individual(s) fails to present such negative test result, exhibits any COVID-19 symptoms, or does not pass screening questions.**
- Small group activities will be permissible when space allows for appropriate social distancing. No more than 10 residents and staff will be permitted to engage in such activities at any one time.

Additionally, **all non-essential personnel as outlined below are subject to the same infection control requirements as staff**, including but not limited to testing for COVID-19 with the same frequency as for staff; screening, wearing a mask, performing hand hygiene, maintaining social distancing.

- Allow for students enrolled in programs to become licensed, registered or certified health care professional provided the nursing home environment is appropriate to the student's education, training and experience.

- **Resumption of existing construction projects**, and specifically, those projects directly impacting the lives of nursing home residents that were previously approved by the Department with submission of and approval by the Department of a revised mitigation/prevention plan outlining at a minimum, testing, screening, PPE use, distance from residents, etc. **Note:** Nursing homes should also continue to refrain sending residents to non-medically necessary trips outside the nursing home until further notice. Lastly, please be reminded that communal dining remains suspended at this time. **Under no circumstance, will the Department allow for such resumption of a renovation or construction project(s) in or adjacent to a functioning and occupied dedicated COVID unit.**

Finally, nursing homes should continue to refrain sending residents to non-medically necessary trips outside the nursing home until further notice. Lastly, communal dining remains suspended at this time.

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