

HOLIDAY VISITATION, PREPARATION, AND MANAGEMENT

11.3.22 English

Holiday celebrations bring joy, community, and connection to those living in congregate settings. In-person activities and gatherings, so essential for our well-being, are also opportunities to spread illness. Reduce the risk of spreading respiratory germs by ensuring proactive measures and improved infection prevention practices are in place.



Virtual celebration is especially valuable when there is an active outbreak in a facility or if [community transmission](#) of COVID-19 or influenza is high.

Vaccination

Review all resident and staff vaccination status. Support residents and staff to maintain up-to-date COVID-19 and influenza vaccination.



Community Participation in Facility

Consider rescheduling community activities when an active outbreak (resident-to-resident transmission) is present in the building. In-person activities such as trick-or-treating, faith-based events, holiday caroling, or group holiday celebrations can be provided more safely using the following measures. Minimize the risk for disease transmission by:

- Notifying and educating family, friends, visitors and community organizations planning events about required infection control practices *prior* to arrival. Education should include:
 - Do not visit if symptoms of COVID-19 or other respiratory illness are present.
 - Masking policy and the importance of wearing a well-fitting mask at all times.
 - Screen for symptoms prior to events. If possible perform in-person screening.
 - Perform hand hygiene on entry to facility and before all contact with residents
 - Limit visitation to resident room.
- Consider using outdoor spaces for events, especially singing and caroling.
- Provide large, well ventilated spaces for group events and celebrations.
- Open windows to increase fresh air.
- Place air purifiers such as high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters in indoor spaces where groups congregate.
- Regularly clean and disinfect high touch surfaces
- When conducting community events, consider using smaller groups for activities to reduce the number of personal contacts. If possible assign residents to small groups so that they have the same contacts during the holiday season.
 - For family dining events, use private dining areas and stagger meal seatings.
 - Those in community dining areas should remain masked until the meal is served. Replace masks at the completion of dining.
 - Support social distancing in all community spaces.

- Consider placing alcohol-based hand sanitizer on dining tables with signs for visual reminders.

Resident Events Outside of the Facility

- Be aware of disease transmission in the community you are visiting. Community transmission levels can be checked at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>
- Avoid visiting households where an ill or exposed household member is present.
- Provide residents with well-fitting masks and educate them to ensure that they know how to wear them properly.
- Educate residents and family members to:
 - Mask while out of the facility. Encourage residents to ask others if they would be willing to wear a mask while they are with them.
 - Perform hand hygiene before touching mask, before eating, and after toileting
 - Maintain social distancing and avoid congested indoor gatherings such as large parties, crowded shopping areas, theaters, faith-based events, etc.

Recommendations for Staff

Encourage staff to follow infection control measures outside of work to reduce the risk of bringing COVID-19 or other respiratory viruses into the facility. Encourage the following:

- Self-monitor for symptoms prior to coming to work and stay home if ill.
- While travelling, wear a mask, distance as able, avoid touching high touch surfaces, practice frequent hand hygiene.
- Be aware of the local community transmission levels in the area of travel.
- Avoid visiting households where an ill or exposed household member is present.
- Encourage additional precautions if attending holiday gatherings, especially when Community Transmission Levels are substantial or high. Additional precautions include:
 - Masking
 - Distancing
 - Avoid visiting households where an ill or exposed household member is present
 - Prioritize outdoor events over indoor crowds

