



INDOOR VISITATION ALLOWED IN NURSING HOMES: NATIONAL CMS & CDC GUIDANCE UPDATE*

CMS/CDC National Guidance

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [issued new guidance for nursing homes to expand visitation](#) on March 10, 2021 (updated April 27, 2021). This guidance “supersedes and replaces previously issued guidance and recommendations regarding visitation.”

Federal Requirements

“Facilities should [allow indoor visitation at all times](#) and for all residents regardless of vaccination status of resident, or visitor, unless certain limiting scenarios arise that would limit visitation” due to high risk of COVID-19 transmission.

ONLY Certain Limiting Scenarios

- **Unvaccinated residents**, if the COVID-19 positivity rate is greater than 10% **and** less than 70% of residents in the facility are fully vaccinated;
- **Residents with confirmed COVID-19 infection**, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, until they have met the [criteria to discontinue Transmission-Based Precautions](#); or
- **Residents in quarantine**, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, until they have met the criteria for release from [quarantine](#).

Compassionate Care Visits

“Allowed at all times, regardless of a resident’s vaccination status, the county’s COVID-19 positivity rate, or an outbreak.” These visits include:

- Visits for a resident whose health has sharply declined;
- Visits for a resident who is experiencing significant changes in circumstances, such as grieving a recent death of a loved one.

IF COVID-19 Outbreak

In the event of an outbreak (defined as one new case of COVID-19 among residents or staff), the facility should suspend visitation and implement facility-wide COVID-19 testing.

If testing reveals no additional cases in other areas/units of the facility:

- **Visitation can resume in those COVID-free areas/units**, but remains suspended in the affected area/unit until that area/unit meets the [criteria to discontinue outbreak testing](#) (no new cases among staff or residents for at least 14 days since the most recent positive test).

If the testing reveals one or more additional case in other areas/units:

- **All visitation for all residents** (vaccinated or unvaccinated) **should be suspended** until the facility meets the [criteria to discontinue outbreak testing](#) explained above.

*CMS QSO-20-39-NH Memo available here: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf>