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State of Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Health
Health Standards Section

TO: All Licensed Healthcare Facilities

FROM: Cecile Castello, RN
Deputy Assistant Secretary, Health Standards Section

DATE: March 13, 2020

SUBJECT: Update on Visitor Restriction in Licensed Louisiana Healthcare Facilities

Please see the attached memo with revised guidance on visitation to all licensed Louisiana Healthcare Facilities. Please adhere closely to this guidance.

I also ask that you contact me with any questions you may have regarding this revised guidance. My office telephone number is 225-342-4997 or you may email me your questions at cecile.castello@la.gov

Respectfully,

Cecile Castello BSN, RN
Deputy Assistant Secretary, Health Standards Section

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Louisiana Department of Health

HEALTHCARE FACILITY NOTICE
NOTICE #2020-COVID19-ALL-002

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TO: All Licensed Health Care Facilities in Louisiana

FROM: LDH Office of Public Health
Jimmy Guidry, State Health Officer

RE: Visitor Restriction Update

DATE: March 13, 2020

This Healthcare Facility Notice will supersede and replace the notice issued March 12, 2020; further, please note that this Notice (Notice 2020-COVID19-ALL-002) will provide further information on Visitor Restriction requirements and provisions.

The State of Louisiana, Department of Health ("LDH"), is committed to taking critical steps to ensure public health and safety; to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in healthcare facilities, the State of Louisiana, Department of Health, is **DIRECTING AND REQUIRING** that all licensed healthcare facilities in Louisiana that receive visitors, adhere to the following provisions, restrictions, and limitations, **EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**:

A. VISITOR RESTRICTION

A.1. Any licensed healthcare facility in Louisiana that receives visitors shall **IMMEDIATELY PROHIBIT** all non-essential visitors for thirty (30) days; this 30 day mandatory prohibition of visitors shall commence on March 12, 2020, and shall end on April 10, 2020, unless otherwise extended by written notice from the Department.

(a) Visitors deemed essential, vital, or necessary to the patient's/client's/resident's care and well-being, as determined by the individual healthcare facility (after consultation with healthcare personnel and any family/responsible party, as determined appropriate and applicable by the facility), may be allowed into the facility pursuant to policies/procedures adopted by the healthcare facility, provided:

(i) That such visitor does not meet the definition of Restricted Person [see definition in Paragraph A.3 below].

(ii) If such visitor meets the definition of Limited Person [see definition in Paragraph A.4 below], that the visitor wear a regular surgical mask at all times during entry into the facility, and that such visitor immediately leaves the facility should the visitor show any signs or symptoms of a respiratory illness.

A.2. However, this prohibition on non-essential visitors is subject to the following exception:

(a) A Visitor who does not meet the definition of a Restricted Person [see definition in Paragraph A.3 below] may be allowed to enter the facility as a non-essential visitor, subject to the facility's approval, in situations involving a resident/client/patient who is on end-of-life care.

(b) A Visitor who meets the definition of Limited Person [see definition in Paragraph A.4 below] may be allowed to enter the facility as a non-essential visitor, subject to the facility's approval, in situations involving a resident/client/patient who is on end-of-life care, provided that the visitor wears a regular surgical mask at all times during entry into the facility, and provided that such visitor immediately leaves the facility should the visitor experience or show any signs or symptoms of a respiratory illness.

A.3. A Restricted Person is defined as a person who meets any one or more of the following criteria:

(a) Has signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat (as assessed by the facility);[1]

(b) In the last 14 days, has had contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, or is under investigation for COVID-19, or has been or is currently ill with respiratory illness;[2]

[1] The facility shall institute a screening process for this; such screening process shall include a temperature check.

(c) Has been on international travel within the last 14 days to countries with sustained community transmission. For updated information on affected countries, please see: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html .

A.4 A Limited Person is defined as a person who meets all of the following criteria:

(a) Is residing in a community where community-based spread of COVID-19 is occurring[3]; and

(b) Has not tested presumptively positive or positive for COVID-19; and

(c) Has no signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat (as assessed by the facility).

A.5. A facility shall immediately implement a policy and procedure to offer alternative means of communication for residents/clients/patients and their families and friends. Alternative means of communication may include virtual visitations and communications (telephone access, Skype, Face Time, other video-communications, etc.). Facility should consider assigning staff as primary contact for families for inbound calls, and should consider conducting regular outbound calls to keep families up to date.

A.6. A Facility shall immediately notify responsible parties and family members of prohibitions on visitation and the alternative means of communication for residents/clients.

A.7. State or federal personnel/officials and their agents (including, but not limited to, licensing/certification surveyors, public health inspectors/officials, compliance officials), case managers, law enforcement, and personnel/officials with the ombudsman's office are NOT considered visitors, and should be allowed access to the facilities. Such officials and personnel are encouraged to seek to alternative ways to complete their work that would not include face-to-face visitation, when possible. Such officials and personnel are subject to the

[2] If the visitor has been approved through the facility's initial screening process for the first item, then the facility may rely on a reasonable/credible statement from the visitor that he/she has not had contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, is not under investigation for COVID-19, and has not been on international travel within the last 14 days to countries. If a facility is concerned that a visitor, patient, or employee may be a COVID-19 patient under investigation, the facility may contact the Louisiana Infectious Disease Epidemiology (IDEpi) Hotline at 1 (800) 256-2748.

[3] Please contact the LDH Hotline at 1 (855) 523-2652 or the IDEpi Hotline at 1 (800) 256-2748 for questions concerning communities where community-based spread of COVID-19 is occurring.

facility's screening process to ensure that no such person has signs or symptoms of a respiratory illness.

A.8 The Department will issue an FAQ on visitor issues in the upcoming days.

B. ELECTIVE PROCEDURES

B.1 The Department recommends that all facilities consider limiting and restricting all elective or voluntary medical procedures in their facilities, for thirty (30) days from the date of this Notice.

End of Memo