

Facebook Covid-19 Update #8

July 3, 2020

BallouLife Communities is now testing the staff weekly for Covid-19 per Rhode Island Department of Health guidelines. This will be done on Thursdays and Fridays. The results of the June 26, 2020 testing was negative for all residents and for all staff. The staff member that had previously tested positive still remains out of the facility and will be tested next week, as will the two co-workers that were in contact with her. They have also remained out of work. Each week the test results will be updated in this briefing and if there is a positive test result, you will be notified within 24 hours. None of the residents are showing any signs and symptoms of Covid-19.

Our Visitation Plan for reopening, as mentioned in last week's memo had been sent to the state for approval. We are still awaiting the furniture and room divider to set-up the visitation center. However, having said that, the state has decided and will be announcing Wednesday, July 8, 2020 that all nursing homes will be open for visitation that day. We will be contacting you to set-up appointments. PLEASE do not just show up, as you will be turned away. This is not "open" visitation; this is scheduled visitation. The visits will be for 30 minutes only. You will be screened at the door, as we had previously done at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic until the facility was closed to visits.

Our visitation, as mentioned in the plan had been for 3 visits in the morning, 4 in the afternoon and 2 in the evenings. As we do not have staffing to accommodate all of these visits at this time, a soft opening will take place. We will have 2 visits in the morning and 2 visits in the afternoon. We are in the process of hiring a person to supervise these visits along with a current staff member, who will share the duties. As time goes on, the number of visits per day will increase and the evening visits will be added in for those who work during the day. The visits will take place weekly, Monday through Friday (no weekends). A copy of the original plan will be mailed, but again please understand that this plan was written with having all of the furniture and staff in place. We hope to eventually achieve this goal in the near future.

Please understand that there can be no contact, and face masks are required. Hand hygiene will be performed upon entry and again upon exiting the facility. Family members will be escorted to the seating area; a table with a plexi-glass divider will be in place. Once you are situated, your family member will be brought in for the visit. NO refreshments. NO public restrooms. You may still bring care packages, but these must be left with staff to remain in quarantine for 48 hours, as we are currently doing. Visits will be supervised; this is not to impose upon your privacy, but for safety of all concerned. Once the visit is ended, the resident will be taken back to his or her room and then the family members will leave. Please be courteous to the next family and respectfully end your visit in the 30 minute timeframe, as the area must be cleaned prior to the next family visiting.

The POA is the family member that the facility will be contacting and is the gatekeeper for other family members to visit. We will do as they ask and accommodate as allowed. I know that we have some large families; you must come together to provide a unified front for the visits to take place. We will start contacting families for scheduled visits on Monday, July 6, 2020.

I must add this caveat: Visitation presents a risk of transmitting a communicable disease (not just Covid-19) to a resident, and that SARS-CoV2 (Covid-19) virus can be transmitted by asymptomatic individuals. If a new case of Covid-19 is identified in the facility, we will go back to the highest level of vigilance and mitigation with respect to visitation. This means, there will be no visits allowed for a minimum of 14 days from the new-onset case with no new cases occurring. This timeframe may be extended or amended, as required.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth A. Daly, RN, Infection Preventionist