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**DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**  
DIVISION OF PUBLIC AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
*Helping people. It's who we are and what we do.*



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## Technical Bulletin

**Date:** May 17, 2021

**Topic:** Updated CMS and CDC Guidance for Visitation

**Contact:** Melissa Peek-Bullock, State Epidemiologist, Office of Public Health Investigations and Epidemiology

**To:** All Skilled Nursing Facilities and Congregate Living Facilities

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### **Background**

Nursing homes have been severely impacted by COVID-19, with outbreaks causing high rates of infection, morbidity, and mortality. The vulnerable nature of the nursing home population combined with the inherent risks of congregate living in a healthcare setting have required aggressive efforts to limit COVID-19 exposure and to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within nursing homes.

On April 27, 2021, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released updated guidance to assist skilled nursing facilities in safely implementing visitation amid the COVID-19 pandemic including the impact of COVID-19 vaccination. The Division of Public and Behavioral Health understands that nursing home residents derive value from the physical, emotional, and spiritual support they receive through visitation from family and friends. Thus, this document is supporting the resident's visitation following the appropriate infection prevention and control practices which are currently in place.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also released an update regarding "[When You've Been Fully Vaccinated: How to Protect Yourself and Others](#)." This update is directed at the general public and **not** Health Care Facilities, Skilled Nursing Facilities, Nursing Homes, or other Congregate Living Facilities, such as Assisted Living and Group Homes.

### **The following recommendations apply to skilled nursing facilities and congregate living facilities.**

- Skilled nursing facilities should follow the [CMS visitation recommendations](#) for nursing homes, update their visitation policies and plans and implement the required infection control practices to ensure residents and staff safety.
- Congregate living facilities should be updating their visitation policies/plans based on the Recommended Infection Prevention and Control Plan for Group Homes Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Response best practices document. The link to the best practices document can be found by clicking: [COVID-19 Infection Control Plan Guidance](#). This is to ensure that infection control best practices are implemented during facilities visitation activities in order to assure residents and staff safety.

Policies developed using the CMS visitation recommendations must be adhered to and provided to surveyors upon request. The Bureau of Healthcare Quality and Compliance is available to answer questions, however, submission of policies and plans for approval is not necessary. Surveyors will review visitation policies and plans while on site during inspections.

## **Additional Resources**

- [CDC: Considerations for Preventing Spread of COVID-19 in Assisted Living Facilities](#)

### **Questions:**

For updated guidance, please review the DPBH Technical Bulletin [website](#) and Nevada's COVID-19 response [website](#) regularly. Email [DPBHAI@health.nv.gov](mailto:DPBHAI@health.nv.gov) with questions.

If you have questions about your county's specific vaccine rollout plan, please email [COVIDVaxHelp@immunizenevada.org](mailto:COVIDVaxHelp@immunizenevada.org).

A statewide call center is also available to help answer your questions and guide you to a vaccination provider if you are eligible to receive the vaccine based on your county's plans. Please call 1-800-401-0946 for assistance with any COVID-19 vaccination or testing questions.



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