



July 1, 2020

Dear Laurel Family Member/Responsible Party:

We are certain that you were as excited as we were to hear Governor DeWine mention his plans for outdoor visitation later this month. We were thrilled that we may be permitted to start outdoor visitation! It has been a challenging time for our guests, their family members and our associates, but we stand by our commitment to move forward in the safest way we can for everyone involved. And, we thank you for being by our side as we faced this challenging time.

While we await the exact Executive Order that was mentioned, we have included excerpts from the Governor's press release (*in italics*) here for your reference:

NURSING HOME VISITATION:

Governor DeWine announced that beginning July 20, 2020, nursing homes are permitted to begin outdoor visitation as long as all safety standards are met.

When assessing their readiness to permit outdoor visitation, nursing homes should consider:

- o Case status in the surrounding community*
- o Case status in the nursing home*
- o Staffing levels*
- o Access to adequate testing for residents and staff*
- o Personal protective equipment supplies*
- o Local hospital capacity*

The decision to move forward with outdoor visitation considered requests from families and residents and the impact on the quality of life that a prolonged loss of connection can have on an individual. The plan was made in consultation with advocates and providers in the aging and development disabilities communities. Guidelines for visitation were jointly developed by the Academy for Senior Health Sciences, Leading Age Ohio, the Ohio Assisted Living Association, the Ohio Health Care Association, and the Ohio Medical Directors Association.

"We are confident that our approach provides each facility the flexibility needed to assess their readiness to safely facilitate outdoor visitation and to do so in a transparent way that keeps residents and families informed," said Governor DeWine. The order and related guidance will be made available at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

What's Next? When Can I Visit?

We are currently working on our preparations to provide a safe visitation process as we assess the Governor's considerations noted above. We expect to provide an update of our facility's visitation plans on or around July 17th. We plan to post our updates on the facility website in addition to communicating

via e-mail/US mail. While we all have learned the flexibility and patience that is required during the COVID-19 pandemic, we must also realistically acknowledge that everything is still subject to change. There are concerns with data spikes in cases around Ohio that could cause the Governor to recant his timeline or his permission to move forward with visitation. A facility's status could change from one day to the next causing a delay in outdoor visitation. Please understand that as we take these steps forward, to provide the safest opening for outdoor visitation, it will still require much patience and flexibility and working through it together.

How Can I Prepare for an Outdoor Visit?

Our utmost concern is for the health and safety of our guests and our associates. We understand that outdoor visitation could increase the likelihood of spread or transmission to our Laurel family and it is a real concern for us. When we begin outdoor visitation, there will be a process that must be followed, including a schedule of set hours, appointment times and limited number of visitors and visits (at least initially), all which will be outlined in our communication around July 17th.

We strongly encourage those planning to visit, once visitation is allowed, to be tested for COVID. We have all heard of people who test positive that have not shown or experienced any symptoms (that's called "asymptomatic"); it is so important for your own piece of mind as well as ours that you know your COVID status before visiting. As well, being in the consistent habit of using a face mask or similar face covering and exercising constant hand washing and sanitizing will put you in good health before and during your visits. More information and tips will be shared later this month to help you prepare.

Virtual Visits

We know that July 20th still feels like a long way away!! As a reminder, we have many ways to keep connected and have really upped our game with technology. We still have devices available to provide Skype calls, Zoom calls, phone calls/e-mails/texts, our "connect" email for email deliveries, mail service is back up for mail and package delivery and window visits (with windows closed). We remain committed to helping you visit virtually until you can visit socially distanced, but in person. Please contact any staff member to assist you with a virtual visit.

Gratitude

Finally, we want to share our immense gratitude toward the families of our guests. We can only imagine how difficult this is for you to have been physically separated from your loved one. We want to assure you we have strived to be your stand-in whenever needed, knowing we can never be a perfect substitute for the love and care you provide. We thank you for your commitment and support as we have journeyed through this together. We will continue to strive in exceeding your expectations.

Sincerely,

The Laurels Administrative Team