



**Helen Hayes Hospital Skilled Nursing Facility and Transitional Care Unit  
COVID-19 Visitation Safety Plan  
Effective November 21, 2022**

Helen Hayes Hospital's plan is to provide safe visitation during this pandemic for our residents while adhering to federal and state government requirements.

All residents and/or their representatives will be notified of the COVID-19 Visitation Safety Plan by their preferred method of communication (i.e. letter, email or telephone) and by posting to the Helen Hayes Hospital website.

**Testing for Visitors:**

All nursing homes licensed and regulated by the New York State Department of Health must verify that visitors have received a negative SARS-CoV-2 test result **one day prior to visitation for antigen tests and two days prior to visitation for NAAT (e.g. PCR) tests. All visitors may use either NAAT testing or antigen testing.** This means, for example, that a test for a Sunday visit should be conducted no earlier than Saturday if it's an antigen test or Friday if it's a PCR test. Any PCR or antigen test used must either have Emergency Use Authorization by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or be operating per the Laboratory Developed Test requirements by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. For visitors who visit for multiple days, including a visitor who comes every day, proof of negative testing is required as often as feasible, at a minimum every third day (meaning at a minimum testing is required on day one, day 4, day 7, and so on).

Visitation is permitted for all residents and must be conducted in a manner that adheres to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention and does not increase the risk to other residents.

Visitation is permitted, **while not recommended and highly discouraged**, for residents who are COVID-19 positive, residents with COVID-19 signs or symptoms, residents in a quarantine, isolation, or observation period or during an outbreak investigation. In these cases, visits will occur in the resident's room and visitors will be made aware of the potential risks of visiting and precautions necessary in order to visit the resident. The resident and visitors must wear well-fitting face masks (if tolerated) and physically distance during these visits, regardless of vaccination status. Alternative communication methods are available and encouraged in lieu of an in-person visit.

Recommended visiting hours are 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. every day.

Two visitors are permitted at a time. Visitors must be 12 years and older. Visitors under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Visitors must check out at the front desk before leaving to open up availability for the next visitors to register and visit.

Upon arrival at the Helen Hayes Hospital SNF or TCU, the visitors will be screened by a designated staff member before they will be allowed to visit with the resident. Screening consists of temperature checks and asking screening questions to assess for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and potential exposure to COVID-19.

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If any visitor fails any part of the screening process (temperature and/or screening questions), Safety will notify the Nursing Supervisor, who will advise the visitor that they must leave and may visit when they have resolved the reason for the failed screening. The Nursing Supervisor will notify the resident.

The facility's electronic visitor management program and a log will be used to document information about each visitor as part of the screening, and will include:

- First and last name of the visitor.
- Home street address of the visitor.
- Daytime and evening telephone number(s).
- Date and time of visit.
- Email address, if available; and
- A notation indicating the visitor cleared the screening (both temperature and questions).

Visitors will be provided with a COVID-19 Visitor Fact Sheet upon screening.

Once the visitors are cleared, they will be directed to the unit's entrance.

Alcohol-based hand rub, consisting of at least 60 percent (60%) alcohol, is readily available to residents, visitors, and their representatives and those individuals are able demonstrate to appropriate use.

Visitors must wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) as recommended by the DOH and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) throughout their visit.

The resident and the visitors must wear a face mask during their entire visit, if medically tolerated, and it must cover both the nose and mouth. Visitors must wear a face mask at all times throughout their time at the hospital.

The visitors must remain at least six (6) feet away to ensure proper social distancing.

Fully vaccinated residents may choose to have close contact (including touch) with their visitors. Unvaccinated residents may also choose to have physical touch based on their preferences and needs (i.e., support persons for people with disabilities and visitors participating in certain religious practices, including end-of-life situations). Unvaccinated residents and their visitors should be advised of the risks of physical contact prior to the visit.

Adequate staff will be present to assist with the transition of residents and cleaning and disinfecting of areas used for visitation after each visit using an EPA-approved disinfectant.

Visitation is contingent on compliance with these guidelines.

Visitors who are unable to adhere to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention will not be permitted to visit and will be asked to leave.

This Visitation Safety Plan is subject to change based on the current pandemic and regulations set forth by the DOH.