



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Washington Soldiers Home, 1301 Orting Kapowsin Hwy E • Orting, Washington 98360
Serving Those Who Served

February 25, 2022

Dear Soldiers Home Residents, Family and Representatives,

We're excited to share that both CMS and WA State Safe Start for Long Term Care have modified their visitation guidelines effective February 23, 2022. Below is a summary of the major changes, but you can read both pieces of guidance in full here: [CMS](#) and [WA State Safe Start for LTC](#).

What is staying the same?

- Visitors must sign in at the entrance to the facility and provide contact information.
- Visitors must be screened prior to entering the facility for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Any items of concern for illness or exposure found during screening will result in restriction from visitation.
- Visitors must attest to COVID-19 status if known.
- Visitation, except for compassionate care and Essential Support Persons, may be restricted or paused if there is an outbreak or other clinical issue. We will follow guidance from the local health jurisdiction when making these decisions.
- Residents and visitors must wear masks while in communal areas and while in a resident's room if a roommate is present.

What is changing?

- Visitors must sign a new Visitor Agreement (**attached**) which includes a statement regarding the risks of engaging in close contact with the resident while not wearing a mask.
- Visits no longer need to be scheduled in advance and multiple visitors can attend, including children, as long as physical distancing can be maintained. If we determine that we have too many visitors at a given time, making physical distancing impossible, we may have to restructure this visitation policy.
- Residents and visitors may dine together, either in the resident's room or in the dining area if physical distancing (6' apart) can be maintained between other residents. Visitors must wear masks when not eating or drinking.
- When visiting in a resident room when a roommate is not present, both the visitors and the resident may choose to remove masks. (We do strongly recommend that you leave them on though!) If a roommate is present, visitors must keep masks on.

We have seen the positive impacts that in person visits have on your loved ones, and hope that these new guidelines will have an even greater impact. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to call us at 360-839-4515.

VACCINE INFORMATION

As a part of our continued efforts to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus, we continue to offer vaccination boosters to staff and residents who wish to receive the vaccine booster. We encourage all residents, staff, and community members who are able and eligible to be vaccinated to consider getting vaccinated for COVID-19 and if vaccinated consider getting the booster.

In an effort to provide information as quickly and accurately as possible, we have developed a website to provide information to families and resident representatives, <https://www.dva.wa.gov/covid>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Pence', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert Pence, Administrator