Dear Residential Care Facility Administrators and Staff,

We have compiled the following information and links to support your residents and staff during the upcoming holidays that unfortunately align with increased community spread and risk of COVID transmission in San Francisco.

Please review and take steps to reduce your risk as much as possible. Please reach out to the SF Dept of Public Health’s Senior Hub team with any questions or concerns.

SeniorSites@sfdph.org; 628-217-6358 (coverage Monday-Saturday)

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Safety Considerations for Visitation and Outings for RCFE, ARF, & RCFCI Residents
November 20, 2020

Sheltering in place is very important to lower risk of COVID-19 for people in high-risk groups, such as older adults and those with chronic medical conditions (see www.sfcdcp.org/vulnerable). At the same time, isolation is also a serious issue for older adults, and meaningful connections to family and friends are important to mental, emotional, and physical health.

OUTDOOR VISITATION
In San Francisco, outdoor visits are allowed but indoor visits remain prohibited. (Indoor visits had been approved but have been put on hold due to the current Covid-19 surge.)

Facility Prerequisites for Outdoor Visits:
- A facility must not have any new COVID-19 cases for 14 days in either residents or staff, AND must not currently be in the surveillance period for an active outbreak OR facility has been cleared by SFDPH to restart visitation before the end of surveillance.
- Visitations is not permitted for residents or visitors with symptoms, in quarantine or COVID+ and in isolation.

Please use safety guidelines and discretion to reduce risk for residents when considering visitation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conducting Outdoor Visits Safely (prerequisites above must be met)</th>
<th>Detailed Guidance Documents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• All visitors must wear face coverings. Residents must wear face coverings (as tolerated) While not required, providing surgical masks to visitors will decrease risk compared to cloth masks.</td>
<td>SFDPH Visitation, Dining, Activities Guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Visitors should be distanced at least 6 feet apart from resident(s).</td>
<td>SFDPH Health Order C19-09b – September 4, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Visitors may not walk through the facility.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Masks and physical distancing can make it hard to hear but talking loudly can increase the spread of COVID-19 – advise visitors to use phones to talk to residents during visits. For residents who cannot manage a phone, it can be placed on their lap or nearby table in speaker mode.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Safety Considerations for Visitation & Outings
• Sharing items between Visitors and residents, including gifts, flowers, reading materials, games, food, drinks, or utensils, during any visit is not allowed. A Residential Facility may adopt a protocol for allowing Visitors or others to send or deliver items or gifts to residents through Residential Facility staff so long as the protocol addresses how to ensure resident safety and minimize the risk of disease transmission through surface contact. Such a protocol may not allow Visitors to hand such items directly to a resident during a visit.

• Keep visits brief to lower risk for everyone and to allow others to visit their loved ones. Encourage families to limit the number of individuals (no more than 3 households) and duration (2 hours or less) of gatherings to reduce the risk of transmission.

**Strategies to enable more outdoor or video visits might include:** use or wind barriers, lap blankets and/or outdoor heat lamps, taking advantage of warm days, helping residents dress warmly, investing in more tablets or computers and training residents to use video chat and conferencing, setting up video conference rooms where staff make the connections for the residents with proper sanitation of the room and devices between residents.

**OUTINGS**
Shelter in place is still in effect for San Francisco and non-essential resident movement is discouraged. To the maximum extent possible, each residential facility must discourage non-essential resident movement onto, out of, and within residential facility premises where feasible. ([SFDPH Health Order C19.09b](https://sfphhs.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/SFDPH-Health-Order-C19.09b-San-Francisco-Department-of-Public-Health.pdf), September 4, 2020)

NOTE: On November 19, 2020, the national Centers for Disease Control (CDC) advised Americans not to travel or celebrate Thanksgiving with people they do not live with. For facility residents, this means the safest place to observe the holiday will be in the facility. ([CDC Thanksgiving page](https://www.cdc.gov/celebrateholidays/thanksgiving.html) and [Holiday Guidance](https://www.cdc.gov/celebrateholidays/holiday-guidance.html).)

CDSS has issued PIN 20-42 Guidance for Celebrations and Gatherings.

Facilities that have residents leaving for outings, please consider the safety guidelines outlined below. **Please use discretion to reduce risk for residents when considering outings.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residents Leaving Facility for an Outing (e.g. medical appointments, dialysis, emergency room, or visiting friends, family, etc.)</th>
<th>Guidance Document</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Residents should wear face coverings while outside, in route to/from, and during their outing, unless actively eating or drinking.</td>
<td><a href="https://sfphhs.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/SFDPH-Visitation-Dining-Activities-Guidance-10-28-20.pdf">SFDPH Visitation, Dining, Activities Guidance – September 6, 2020</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outdoor outings are safer than indoor events.</td>
<td><a href="https://www.cdc.gov/celebrateholidays/holiday-guidance.html">Safer Holiday Celebrations During the COVID-19 Pandemic</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Other people at outing should always wear face coverings.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hand sanitizer or hand washing stations should be available during outing.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• At least 6 feet of physical distance should always be maintained between resident and others.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Residents should limit exposure to people from different households.

Residents should not share food or utensils.

Singing is a high-risk activity. The resident should try to avoid being around people who are singing.

Car travel is safest if few others are in the car and the windows are open.

**Residents Returning from an Outing** (e.g. medical appointments, dialysis, emergency room, or visiting friends, family, etc.)

- Staff should conduct symptom and temperature screening of returning resident and closely monitor them for 14 days.

- Returning resident does NOT need to be quarantined if the answers to the following questions are “yes”:
  - Was resident able to physically distance from others?
  - Was the resident able to wear a face covering at all times?
  - Did resident leave for a medical appointment?
- If they did not wear a mask or physically distance, they should be asked to avoid contact with others in the facility for 14 days.

- Staff should ask if resident has been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.
  - If yes, resident should be quarantined for 14 days and closely monitored for symptoms.

- Returning resident does NOT need to provide a negative COVID-19 test.

- Outings greater than 24 hours are considered Travel. They are higher risk and require a 14-day quarantine.

If you have any concerns about a resident’s outing, especially if the outing was to a community with substantial or widespread Covid-19 transmission, the resident should be quarantined for 14 days or until you have received guidance from SFDPH. *(CDSS Info Call: Preparing for Safe Holiday Season, November 18, 2020.)*

**IDEAS FOR BETTER HOLIDAYS IN YOUR FACILITY**

**Community:** Prepare a special meal and offer multiple seatings (with residents in groups of 6 as per the SFDPH Visitation, Dining, Activities Guidance – September 6, 2020) for lunch and dinner so all residents who want to eat in the dining room have the opportunity to do so. (Note: if some groups no longer have 6 residents, they may be combined to form social groups of 6, as long as those residents have not traveled or been on outings.)

**Connection:** Designate staff to serve as tech support for residents so they can videoconference with family or friends. Provide a device to those who don’t have one and sanitize it between residents.

**Gifts:** Encourage families to drop off special foods, gifts, or holiday decorations for their loved ones.
Events: Provide opportunities for residents to attend socially distanced activities, with holiday movies or concerts played on a communal screen. Residents should be masked and in small groups.

Outdoor Visits: Use as many of the cold weather visit recommendations above as you can to ensure safe visits during the holidays.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Guidance</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><em>Do residents have to have a negative test upon return from a same-day outing?</em></td>
<td>No, residents do no need to have a negative test to return to facility.</td>
<td><strong>SFDPH Health Order – September 4, 2020</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Can residents have visitors inside since it’s too cold outside?</em></td>
<td>Indoor visitation guidance is on pause until further notice. See above for ways to make outdoor visits more comfortable.</td>
<td><strong>SFDPH Tips for Visitors to Residential Facilities</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| *What should I do if a resident leaves the facility for an outing and I don’t know where they have been?* | Ask the resident or the people they visited for more information.  
If you are unsure, err on side of caution for the wellbeing of other residents and staff. 
You may choose to quarantine and/or test the resident as close as possible to day 14 or sooner if the resident begins showing COVID-19 symptoms, if you believe there is a high-risk of exposure or if you cannot determine if safety precautions were taken. 
To avoid this outcome, advise residents and families about your safety requirements BEFORE the outing.  
Outings greater than 24 hours are considered travel and are higher risk. They require a 14-day quarantine. | **CDSS: Preparing For A Safe Holiday Season – November 18, 2020** (slide #14)                                                               |
| *Can residents go out to the store, etc.? How do I know if they are safe to come back?* | SFDPH: Non-essential resident movement is discouraged.  
If you are providing van transportation, ensure that everyone is wearing a face covering, keep windows open, and space passengers apart. Consider having residents travel in the same groups, do not mix groups (cohorting). | **SFDPH Health Order C19-07c – Updated November 3, 2020**                                    |

*SFDPH Health Order – September 4, 2020*
I&G what’s new


Additional Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions About In-person Visits, Communal Dining and Resident Activities for Adult and Senior Residential Care Facilities in San Francisco (9/6/20)

Elder and Residential Care Facilities

- CDSS: Guidance for Celebrations and Outings (PIN 20-42 11/20/20)
- CDSS: Preparing For A Safe Holiday Season – 11/18/20
- Guidance About In-person Visits, Communal Dining and Resident Activities (SFDPH, Updated 9/6/2020)  [Chinese]  [Spanish]  [Tagalog]  [Russian]
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Residential Care Facilities for Adults and Seniors (Updated SFDPH, 9/6/2020)  [Chinese]  [Spanish]  [Tagalog]  [Russian]
- Tips for Visitors to Residential Facilities (SFDPH, 9/6/2020)  [Chinese]  [Spanish]  [Tagalog]  [Russian]
- Guidance for Adult Elder and Residential Care Facilities Licensed by CA Department of Social Services (CDSS)
- Cleaning & Disinfection for Community Facilities (CDC, 4/1/2020)
- Interim Guidance: Cleaning and Disinfection for Non-Healthcare Businesses and Workplaces (SFDPH, 4/10/2020)  [Chinese]  [Spanish]  [Tagalog]