



To: Administrators

Nursing Homes, licensed pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §§ 44-7-10, *et seq.*, and S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 61-17

Community Residential Care Facilities (“CRCFs”), licensed pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §§ 44-7-10, *et seq.*, and S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 61-84

Subject: Guidelines on Visitation Restrictions

As directed by Executive Order No. 2020-08, issued on March 13, 2020, DHEC has restricted visitation to nursing homes and assisted living facilities, with the exception of end-of life situations. Following are guidelines to nursing homes and CRCFs to assist with the implementation of the visitation restrictions.

Facilities must restrict all visitation, except for end-of-life situations. This means no patient or resident visitors shall be allowed into the facility, except for end-of-life situations.

End-of-life situations may include patients receiving hospice, palliative, or other compassionate care. **End-of-life situations should be considered on a case by case basis**, and should include careful screening of the visitor (including clergy, bereavement counselors, etc.) for fever or respiratory symptoms. In end-of-life situations, the Department suggests the facility make efforts to allow for safe visitation for residents and loved ones. For example, limit the visitation to a specific room. Additionally, suggest refraining from physical contact with residents and others while in the facility.

In lieu of visits, the Department suggests that facilities should consider:

- Offering alternative means of communication for people who would otherwise visit, such as virtual communications (phone, video-communication, etc.).
- Creating/increasing listserv communication to update families, such as advising to not visit.
- Assigning staff as primary contact to families for inbound calls and conduct regular outbound calls to keep families up to date.
- Offering a phone line with a voice recording updated at set times (e.g., daily) with the facility's general operating status, such as when it is safe to resume visits.

For more information about COVID-19, visit scdhec.gov/COVID19 or the CDC website [here](https://www.cdc.gov).