# Frequently Asked Questions: Long Term Care & COVID-19

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1. **Are there any updated Executive Orders impacting long term care residents?**

There are not any new Executive Orders signed by Governor Whitmer related to long term care, but the Department of Health and Human Services issued an Emergency Order on September 10, 2020 regarding visitation which applies to long term care settings.

1. **What types of facilities are covered by the September 10th Order?**

The MDHHS Epidemic Order released on September 10th defines facilities as nursing homes, homes for the aged, adult foster care facilities, hospice facilities, substance abuse disorder residential facilities, independent living facilities and assisted living facilities.

1. **Is the MDHHS Epidemic Order issued on June 30th still effective?**

Yes. This new order expands upon the June 30, 2020 order, leaving in place the visitation permitted under that prior order and allowing additional visitations to these facilities, based upon the recommendations of the Michigan Nursing Homes COVID-19 Preparedness Task Force and upon the Department’s review of epidemiological data over recent weeks and practice in other states.

1. **Are residents allowed to have an outdoor visit at this time?**

Yes. The September 10th Epidemic Order allows for outdoor visits if all of the following conditions are met:

* 1. The facility has had no new COVID cases originate in the facility, including those involving residents or staff (“facility-onset cases”), within the prior 14 days. Admission of a resident who is known to be COVID-19-positive at the time of admission does not constitute a facility-onset case;
	2. The Local Health Department has not made a determination that the facility is unsafe for visitation based upon local epidemiological conditions;
	3. The facility is able to meet all additional requirements identified in Section 4 of this order
1. **What are the additional requirements in Section 4?**

There is a long list of requirements intended to protect the residents. We will review the exact language from the order so visitors understand the order and know what to expect if visiting. The facility must meet all of the following to allow an outdoor visit:

1. Permit visits by appointment only. Facilities may impose reasonable time limits on visits and must require that visitors log arrival and departure times, provide their contact information, and attest, in writing, that they will notify the facility if they develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 within 14 days visiting;
2. Limit the number of visitors per scheduled visit to two persons or fewer;
3. Exclude visitors who are unwilling or unable to wear a face covering for the duration of their visit, and persons unable to follow hand hygiene requirements, and instead encourage those persons to use video or other forms of remote visitation;
4. Limit visitor entry to designated entrances that allow proper COVID-19 screening;
5. Consistent with Executive Order 2020-174, perform a health evaluation of all visitors each time the visitor seeks to enter the facility, and deny entry to visitors who do not meet the evaluation criteria. Screenings must include tests for fever (≥100.0°F), other symptoms consistent with COVID-19, and known exposure to someone with COVID-19. Facilities must restrict anyone with fever, symptoms, or known exposure from entering the facility;
6. Post signage at all visitor entrances instructing that visitors must be assessed for symptoms of COVID-19 before entry, and instruct persons who have symptoms of a respiratory infection (including but not limited to, fever, cough, or shortness of breath) to not enter the facility;
7. Make hand sanitizer and/or hand washing facilities safely available to visitors, and post educational materials on proper hand washing and sanitization;
8. Ensure availability of adequate staff to assist with the transition of residents, monitoring of visitation, and for cleaning to appropriately disinfect surfaces in the visitation areas after each visit;
9. Educate visitors on additional personal protective equipment (PPE) use requirements for visitors beyond a face covering, if any. The facility must supply the visitor with the additional PPE. Entry may not be denied based on a visitor not having the additional PPE required by the facility;
10. Require that visitors follow social distancing requirements and refrain from any physical contact with residents and employees.
11. Limit the number of overall visitors at the facility in any given time based upon limited space, infection control capacity, and other appropriate factors to reduce the risk of transmission;
12. Advise residents and visitors to not share food;
13. Communicate with residents and their families to inform them of updated visitation protocols;
14. Prohibit visits to residents who are in isolation or are otherwise under for observation for symptoms of COVID-19.
15. **Are there other requirements for outdoor visits?**

Yes. Prior to offering outdoor visitation, the facility must assure all of the following:

* 1. The outdoor visitation area allows for at least six feet between all persons. Tables are recommended as a barrier to ensure proper distancing. Marking the area and signage may be necessary to inform visitors of expectations. Tables and chairs must be disinfected after each use;
	2. The outdoor visitation area provides adequate protection from weather elements (e.g., shaded from the sun);
	3. An employee or volunteer trained in infection control measures has sufficient proximity to observe and assure compliance with the patient protections in Section 4.
1. **Can other medical services providers enter the facility?**

Yes. The order states that visitation restrictions do not apply to medical service providers such as hospice, podiatry, dental, durable medical equipment, mental health, speech pathology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and other specialists in the definition of essential workers.

These services must be provided outdoors or in a well ventilated area whenever possible. If services must be provided indoors, the facility must restrict movement within the facility to the greatest extent possible to reduce the risk of infection. Medical service providers must be subject to the same PPE and testing requirements as other staff working in the facility.

1. **Can residents now get their hair cut at the facility?**

The order allows non-medical service providers such as hairdressers to provide services to residents when it is determined that there will be an actual or potential negative impact on the resident when the service is not provided, and the resident will not benefit from remote service delivery. These services may be provided to residents who have never been diagnosed with COVID-19, or who are no longer in the infectious period for COVID-19 per CDC guidance.

These services must be provided outdoors or in a well-ventilated area whenever possible. If services must be provided indoors, the facility must restrict movement within the facility to the greatest extent possible to reduce the risk of infection. Non-medical service providers must be subject to the same PPE requirements as other staff working in the facility. Non-medical service providers who are routinely in the building for more than 8 hours per week and have direct resident contact during this time must be subject to the same testing requirements as other staff working in the facility.

1. **Are there any other people allowed to visit at this time under the September 10th order?**

Yes, the order does allow for resident physicians or other clinical students to enter the facility. Resident physicians and other clinical students must be subject to the same PPE and testing requirements as other staff working in the facility.

Also, volunteers who have been trained in infection control measures and are serving as facilitators of outdoor visits are not restricted.

1. **What is the status on window visits?**

Per the September 10th order, window visits are allowed when a barrier is maintained between the resident and visitor. Accommodations shall be made for residents without access to a ground floor window or a window that does not open to an area accessible to the visitor. Accommodations may include utilizing a visitation room or space with a window or door with access to the visitor.

1. **When is did this order go into effect?**

This order was effective on September 15, 2020 and remains in effect until lifted.