

Dear Families and Residents:

To ensure the safety of our residents and team members, we have prepared a summary of the Texas Health and Human Services emergency rules for essential caregivers.

### **What is an essential caregiver?**

- An essential caregiver visit is defined as a personal visit between a resident and an essential caregiver.
- An essential caregiver can be a family member, friend, volunteer, private personal caregiver, or court appointed guardian.
- Essential caregivers must be 18 years of age or older.
- Essential caregivers have a negative COVID-19 test no more than 14 days before the first essential caregiver visit.
- Essential caregiver visits are permitted for residents who are COVID-19 negative or unknown.
- Up to two essential caregivers can be designated per resident, but each visit is limited to one essential caregiver at a time.

### **What training is required to be an essential caregiver?**

- Prior to their first visit, essential caregivers must watch the community's training video that provides training and information on proper personal protective equipment (PPE) usage and infection control measures, hand hygiene, and cough and sneeze etiquette.
- The training video may be found on the Surpass website (<https://surpassliving.com/essential-caregiver-training/>) under the Family Learning Center tab.
- Essential caregivers will be required to acknowledge they were provided training.

### **What is required of an essential caregiver prior to visiting a resident?**

- Essential caregiver visits must be scheduled in advance. Times are first come, first serve. We do apologize in advance for any inconvenience this may cause.
- **Please note that essential caregiver visits are limited to six total per day and each visit is limited to thirty minutes. Visits are currently planned between the hours of 10:00 am to 11:30 am and 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm, Monday through Saturday. We plan to gradually add more time options as we become more efficient with the process.**
- Essential caregivers must leave the community at the required appointment times unless approved by the community.

- Essential caregivers must be screened for COVID-19 signs, symptoms, and exposure before entering the community at each visit.
  - An essential caregiver visit is not allowed if the visitor has signs or symptoms of COVID-19, an active COVID-19 infection, or other communicable diseases, or if the resident has an active COVID-19 infection.

**What is required of an essential caregiver during a visit?**

- Upon arrival and prior to each visit, essential caregivers will be required to sign an acknowledgement that training was received from the community and they agree to follow the community's COVID-19 policies.
- Only one essential caregiver at a time may visit a resident.
- Present a valid form of picture identification.
- Community staff will escort the essential caregiver from the entrance to the designated visitation area at the start of each visit, and escort from the visitation area to the exit at the end of each visit.
- Both the resident (if tolerated) and essential caregiver must wear a facemask or cloth face covering over both the mouth and nose throughout the visit.
  - Failure to adhere to proper PPE protocol will result in the community asking the essential caregiver to leave the premises.
- Essential caregiver visits may occur in designated outdoor areas, in the resident's bedroom, or in another designated area within the community.
- Essential caregivers do not have to maintain physical distancing between themselves and the resident they are visiting but must maintain physical distancing between themselves and other residents and staff.

Please contact your Executive Director should you have any questions regarding the essential caregiver rules. We truly appreciate your continued patience with us. We are in this together.

Best Regards,

Paula West-Hicks  
Executive Director