

# News Release

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## **Long-term care facilities permitted to offer outdoor visitation with safeguards**

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SALEM, Ore. — Oregon’s licensed long-term care providers may begin providing limited outdoor visitation for residents if the facility develops a plan to adhere to required safeguards to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Following the safety prerequisites – including health screenings, face coverings, physical distancing and limits on the number of visitors – is mandatory as Oregon continues to experience an increase in outbreaks at long-term care facilities. While visits with family and friends are essential to well-being, they also create significant risk, not only for the individual who is seeing a loved one, but for everyone who lives and works in that care facility.

The Department of Human Services outdoor visitation policy applies to all facilities licensed by the Office of Aging and People with Disabilities including nursing, assisted living, residential and memory care facilities as well as all adult foster homes. Facilities that are currently coping with COVID-19 cases, or suspected cases, may not offer outside visitation until DHS determines that the outbreak has resolved. All current indoor visitation restrictions issued in March remain in place regardless of the reopening plan status of the county where the facility is located; however, residents are free to leave and return to their facility if following all public health guidance.

“We hope this policy provides some relief to residents, their family members and friends who we know have suffered extreme hardship as a result of visitation restrictions required during the pandemic. Balancing resident safety with the essential need to have contact with family and friends is challenging as COVID-19 presents life-threatening risks and spreads rapidly in congregate care settings,” said Mike McCormick, interim director of the DHS Office of Aging and People with Disabilities. “We will continue to evaluate all long-term care policies in partnership with Oregon Health Authority to ensure they are in line with Governor Kate Brown’s reopening plan for the state.”

### **Resources:**

- For more information on DHS requirements for facilities providing outdoor visitation, [see a copy of the policy issued here](#).

- Visit this DHS [webpage for lists of facilities reporting cases of COVID-19 that would not be able to adopt outside visitation](#). These lists are updated on Tuesday and Friday.
- [DHS guidance issued for residents who leave and return to a licensed long-term care facility](#).
- Long-term care providers, residents and family members with questions should reach out to: [SOQ.LTCInfo@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:SOQ.LTCInfo@dhsosha.state.or.us).

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