



OREGON VETERANS' HOME  
THE DALLES • THE PLACE WHERE HONOR LIVES

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Dear Residents, Family, and Friends.

As we approach the holiday season during this health crisis, we are aware that families are planning how best to be with and support with loved ones through these difficult times. Each year, we have provided extensive support in helping you and your loved ones have a memorable holiday experience at the OVHTD. This year, we will need support from you.

In the past, our biggest challenges revolved around having enough space to accommodate the many visitors. In this current environment of infection prevention guidance for Long-term Care Facilities issued by Oregon's Department of Human Services, it is clear to us that this year that we will be facing different challenges than those faced in the previous years.

At the forefront of these challenges is how to help families engage with residents in a place where we can NOT accommodate visitors nor is it recommended that residents leave the facility. We understand leaving the facility temporarily to visit family and friends for the holidays or other outings is tempting. However, COVID-19 poses an elevated danger to the health of nursing home residents. With the potential for a safe and effective vaccine on the horizon, extra precautions now are essential to protect nursing home residents until a vaccine becomes available. **Leaving the nursing home increases a resident's risk for exposure to COVID-19.** The risk may be further increased by factors such as a resident's health status, the spread of COVID-19 in the community (e.g., cases or positivity rate), or attendance at large gatherings.

Here are some practical specifics:

- We will not be hosting any visitors, except those for pre-approved compassionate care visits (questions about Compassionate Care should be directed to the Social Service Department)

- Skype, facetime or zoom meetings are encouraged and can be arranged through [jadel@oregonveteashome.com](mailto:jadel@oregonveteashome.com)
- Cards are welcomed and can be addressed to your loved one directly

For your convenience, we have attached a copy of our policy for leaving the nursing home and included Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recommendations regarding holiday gatherings.

Thank you for your continued support of our residents and for your partnership in helping us keep them safe and healthy during this holiday season.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Maitland  
Administrator CEO

Melissa Sanders  
Program Director, ODVA

## **CMS Recommendations If Leaving the Nursing Home**

Should a resident ultimately choose to leave the nursing home, The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is providing the following recommendations:

- Limit close contact (maintain physical distancing of six feet or more), keep gatherings as small as possible, and use technology to engage with others remotely;
- Wear facemasks or cloth face covering at all times (including in cars, homes, restaurants, etc.);
- Limit contact with commonly touched surfaces or shared items;
- Keep safe around food and drinks. Avoid communal serving utensils, passing of food, potluck or buffet style food service, and instead opt for individually prepared plates by a single server;
- Perform hand hygiene often (e.g., wash hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer);
- Avoid large gatherings, crowded areas, and high-risk activities such as singing;
- Avoid contact with individuals outside of your household for 14 days prior to the gathering;
- Ask anyone who has signs or symptoms of COVID-19, or has been exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19 to not attend the gathering;
- If possible, conduct gatherings outdoors. Indoor gatherings should have good ventilation, open windows and doors if possible;
- Verbally greet others instead of shaking hands or giving hugs. Think ahead about how you will manage to prevent physical interactions with loved ones of different ages such as young children; and
- Check local conditions and state requirements for precautions and restrictions, including positivity rates and quarantine requirements before crossing state lines.

CMS has collaborated with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on these recommendations, and we encourage you to review CDC's webpage on holiday celebrations, which has more suggestions for preventing the spread of COVID-19.



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## POLICY / PROCEDURE

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### **POLICY DESCRIPTION PREVAILS OVER PREVIOUS WRITTEN POLICY.**

TOPIC: Residents Leaving the Facility During COVID 19 Pandemic

Date Created: June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Ref: QSO-20-30-NH

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Policy: Residents who choose to leave the facility during pandemic will take all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of COVID 19.

*Note: To guard against risk of COVID 19 infection and transmission, CMS recommends against residents leaving the facility for any reason other than an emergent medical need.*

If a resident chooses to leave the facility the following procedure will be put in place:

- Prior to leaving the facility, the resident will be asked to read and sign a form stating that they understand the risks of leaving the facility and agree to comply with any testing, precautions, contact tracing, and self-isolation requirements following their travels.
- Upon returning to the Home the resident will be interviewed to determine necessary information for contact tracing, as well as review for possible exposure situations.
- Based on information received from interview, resident may be placed on enhanced monitoring for a 14 day period pursuant to guidance provided by Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS).
- If the resident subsequently is diagnosed with COVID 19, we will work with county public health officials in support of any contact tracing they will do to identify the source of the COVID infection.

For updates to guidance, please check:

<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/PROVIDERS-PARTNERS/LICENSING/AdminAlerts/NF-20-89%20-%20Phase%20One%20Re-opening%20Guidance.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html>

## **Checklist for resident leaving the Home**

This document will be completed by facility staff for each resident prior to leaving and upon return to the Home. Once completed, this document will be placed in the residents file for documentation purposes.

### **Prior to resident leaving the facility (check each of the following once competed):**

- Provided a mask to the resident
  - Observed resident's face mask for appropriateness
- Informed and provided resident with facility policy regarding leaving the facility.
- Provided information about COVID-19 to residents and families including:
  - Information regarding the importance of handwashing/use of hand sanitizer
  - Transmission of COVID-19 and the significant risks it poses to older adults and individuals with compromised immune systems
  - Importance of face masks or face coverings during community outings, and guidance on appropriate use
  - Reasons for social distancing during community outings, including information about how to practice effective social distancing
  - Reasons for avoiding large gatherings in community outings
  - Information and examples of outside activities or behaviors which may be considered high risk. Some examples include encountering a large gathering, inability to maintain a six-foot distance between people, going to establishments that don't require face masks

**Upon re-entering the Home (check each of the following once completed):**

**Resident was asked to:**

- Remove mask worn outside of building. (Said mask was either thrown away or placed in appropriate receptacle to be washed. This is being done to prevent cross contamination.)
- Immediately use wash hands/hand sanitizer upon entering the premises
- Change clothes if appropriate (soiled clothes were laundered)
- Bathe or shower if appropriate and assistance was provided if necessary

**Resident was then:**

- Screened for signs and symptoms
- Interviewed regarding activities engaged in while in the community by asking the following:

Please describe what activities you engaged in while outside of the facility to help keep us informed to allow us to continue to provide a safe environment for all residents: \_\_\_\_\_

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Who did you see: \_\_\_\_\_

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What did you do: \_\_\_\_\_

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Where did you go: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Additional follow-up questions based on the responses above (if needed):**

Did you encounter other people in groups during your outing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, how many?	
Were they wearing masks or protective covering?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Were you able to remain at least six feet away from others during your visit?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
To your knowledge, did you encounter another person that was coughing, sneezing, short of breath or fever?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did you wear a face mask or covering when you were around others?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Did you enter any establishments that did not require the use of face masks?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the interview indicate the resident engaged in behavior that poses a significant risk of COVID-19 exposure?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, was the resident placed on 14-day enhanced monitoring period?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

**The following measures were taken during the enhanced 14 day monitoring period:**

**Resident was asked to:**

- Limit the amount of time spent outside of their room
- Not enter other resident's rooms during the monitoring period
- Wear a face mask/covering while outside of their room
- Socially distance from other residents

**Staff:**

- Provided reminders and redirection of resident while on enhanced monitoring
- Monitored the resident daily for signs and symptoms of Covid-19
- Appropriately documented all monitoring actions and interventions for resident while under enhanced monitoring

Were additional measures added based on changes in recommendations by regulatory authorities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If so, what measures were taken:	
Did the resident display symptoms of COVID-19 during the enhanced monitoring period?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Was test performed? If no – what was reason?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, what was the result of testing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Positive





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Dear Resident or Responsible Party:

Per CMS recommendation, the Oregon Veterans Home has developed requirements in case a resident chooses to leave the facility to visit family or for any reason other than to receive essential medical care:

- ***The known health risks of leaving the facility were explained to the resident prior to leaving the facility.***
- The facility provided a copy of their policy and I agree to comply with any testing, precautions, contact tracing, and enhanced monitoring requirements upon return to the facility.
- Upon returning to the Home an interview will be done by staff for contact tracing purposes, as well as potential exposure to the virus. If there is a concern regarding exposure, I understand that I will be placed on enhanced monitoring which will include:
  - Limiting the amount of time spent outside of my room
  - Not entering other resident's rooms during the monitoring period
  - Wearing a face mask/covering while outside of my room
  - Socially distance from other residents
- If I am subsequently is diagnosed with COVID, the Home will work with county public health officials in support of any contact tracing they will do to identify the source of the COVID infection.

I have read and understand the above and agree to comply with these requirements.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_