

To our patients and visitors:

During the current COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak, [HEALTH SYSTEM] is working to protect the health and safety of our communities. This includes all our patients, visitors, and staff. [HEALTH SYSTEM] is following the advice of the CDC and the [STATE] Departments of Health. As a result, patients in [HEALTH SYSTEM] hospitals and buildings cannot have visitors or family members present at this time.

In special circumstances, a visitor or support person may enter the building. These include [CUSTOMIZE WITH LOCAL POLICY]:

- Patients nearing the end of life, including for those patients with COVID-19
- Patients in Neonatal Intensive Care
- Pediatric patients
- Labor/delivery and post-partum (one designated support person)
- Outpatients who are unable to complete the visit on their own, such as people unable to navigate to and from the clinic location without support from a family member

For these special circumstances only, one person may be present. This person must be over the age of 18. Visitors must complete health screening procedures before entering. They must be willing to undergo health monitoring while in the building. They must not move around the building. Visitors may not leave and return. Additional instructions for visitors will be given by [HEALTH SYSTEM] staff.

Any visitor who is sick or who may have been exposed to COVID-19 may not enter any [HEALTH SYSTEM] hospital or building for any reason.

[HEALTH SYSTEM] understands how important it is to have family and loved ones close and supporting care efforts. This is especially true during this stressful time for our patients and families. We encourage families to stay involved even when not in the building. We understand how difficult this time is for everyone. Please find more information on resources and programs available to patients and families at [LOCAL RESOURCE WEBSITE] and on the back of this page.

Find information for patients and families here: [LOCAL RESOURCE WEBSITE]

Here are some answers to common questions:

**What is happening to my family member right now?**

Please contact your family member directly for updates if possible. If your family member is unable to speak with you, please call the hospital operator.

**Who will get updates from the team?**

We can only give out information to family members with the patient's permission. We know there are many people who care about your loved one. We will contact your loved one's emergency contact person if we need to reach someone.

**Does this policy apply if my family member does not have COVID-19?**

This temporary policy is in place for all patients, no matter what brought them to the hospital.

**What if my family member is ready to leave the hospital?**

If your family member is ready to leave the hospital, your family member or the hospital staff will call the contact person to prepare for next steps.

**What if my family member needs to stay in the hospital?**

The hospital team will call the contact person within 24 hours of admission if your family member gives them permission to do so. We know you want information immediately. Our top priority is taking care of your family member. If your family member is unable to give permission, we will reach out to the emergency contact or legal health care decision maker. Please be sure the family contact person(s) has their phone on and answers in case we need to reach someone.

**What if I have something to bring to my family member in the hospital?**

Do not bring or send food or flowers.

We may not be able to deliver cards and gifts right now.

If you have items your family member must have, please label them with the patient's name and your contact information. [CUSTOMIZE WITH LOCAL DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS]

Example essential items:

- Phone or tablet with charger
- Headphones
- Medication only if requested by the hospital team
- Change of clothing, slippers, or robe
- Glasses, contact lenses, or similar personal care items

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, you won't be able to visit your loved one in the hospital. You are still important to us. We still want you to be connected and engaged during this time.

### Things you can do at the time of admission:

- **CONFIRM:** who your loved one's legally authorized health care representative (medical or health care power of attorney) will be. This is the person who makes decisions when the person cannot speak for themselves. Give the person's name and phone number(s) to the hospital team
- **DISCUSS:** who will be the primary family contact. We can only give out information to family members with the patient's permission. We know there are many people who care about your loved one. **Please choose one person who will talk to the hospital team during the stay.**
  - It's best if this is the legally authorized health care representative
  - That person can then share the information with your loved one's family and community.
  - Give the name and phone number(s) for a back-up person.
- **GIVE:** the hospital team a copy of your loved one's advance directive / living will if they completed one. (You can also mail or drop off later if you don't have it now.)
- **HOW:** do you prefer to get information from the team. Let the hospital team know what kind of technology the primary family contact has at home. Does that person have a smartphone (like a iPhone or Android), tablet (like a iPad or Chromebook), or computer with a camera and internet?
- **PLAN:** how you and your loved one will stay in touch while you are apart. You can use the phone the hospital gives. If your loved one has a smartphone or please leave it with them. Be sure the device is labeled with their name and please provide a charger cord that is also labeled with their name. We can also help connect their smartphone, tablet, or computer to our free hospital internet.

### Things you can do for your loved one and yourself during the hospital stay:

- Keep a diary or journal:
  - Write down the names of your hospital team members to keep things clear.
  - Write down the name and phone number for your loved one's hospital ward.
  - Write down your questions for the hospital team so that you can ask them all at once.
  - You may choose to write down your thoughts and feelings to share with your loved one

### **DO NOT send food or flowers. We may not be able to deliver cards and other items during this time.**

- Reach out to your community outside of the hospital so that you don't feel as alone during this hard time. Many faith leaders and community organizations are able to connect to you by phone.
- Contact our pastoral care support team. These individuals are not just for spiritual support, but also work closely with the hospital team to be sure you are feeling supported at home. Call the hospital operator and ask for the "chaplain on call."
- Make a plan to update family and friends. With your loved one's permission, set up a CaringBridge ([www.caringbridge.org](http://www.caringbridge.org)) to communicate with other family and friends who may wish to leave messages of support during the hospital stay.

Hospital ward: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number of ward: \_\_\_\_\_

My loved one's bedside phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital team: \_\_\_\_\_

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**This policy is strict to keep our patients safe during the COVID- outbreak. If you feel you have a unique exception to this policy, please explain this to your hospital team. Any exceptions would require following strict guidelines while in the hospital. Thank you for your support and understanding.**