

GUIDANCE
COVID-19 and Other Respiratory Viral Illness Visitor Management



DOC ID HHCMPA302020_v9

Effective Date: January 30,
2023

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Purpose	To provide guidance and steps to screen and manage visitors and companions prior to and during visitation of admitted patients or accompanying patients to ambulatory care and outpatient clinic visits for COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illness.
Scope	New York City Health + Hospitals System
Requirement	NYS DOH; Section 405.7(c)(20), for hospitals, and Section 751.9(g) for diagnostic and treatment centers of Title 10 of the Official Compilation of Codes, Rules, and Regulations of the State of New York (NYCRR)
Process	<p>Hospitals and Diagnostic and Treatment Center must allow family members and other adults including end-of-life religious, spiritual leaders and/or cultural advisors, to visit consistent with the facility's ability to receive visitors. These visits are essential and contribute to the patient's well-being and care and must be allowed to the maximum extent possible. Similarly, companions accompanying patients to ambulatory care/outpatient visits are allowed.</p> <p>Visitation/accompaniment must, however, must follow strict adherence to infection prevention and control requirements including the requirement that all individuals two years of age and older who are able to medically tolerate a face covering/mask, shall continue to be required to wear a face covering/mask in healthcare facilities, regardless of vaccination status, until the Commissioner' Determination is modified or rescinded. See section on Infection Prevention and Control on page 2 for more guidance.</p> <p>All visitors and companions entering a NYC Health + Hospitals (H+H) clinical care sites will self-screen for viral respiratory illnesses, including, but, not limited to, RSV, influenza, and COVID-19, using a standardized signage at the point of entry into the facility.</p> <p>Screening Questionnaire Signage for visitors and patient companions asks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fever, shortness of breath, cough, sore throat, nasal congestion or other COVID-19 symptoms 2. Close contact with someone with COVID-19 in the past 10 days 3. A positive COVID-19 test within the past 10 days <p>Visitors and/or patient companions who answer "yes" to any of the above screening questions on signage are to inform staff, for example, at visitor registration check-in, and may be allowed entry to the facility if approved by appropriate clinical leadership at their intended destination within the facility. H+H</p>

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staff at visitor registration check-in (e.g., reception desk staff) may help coordinate approval from the respective parties as noted above.

Generally, visitors who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 10 days or have compatible symptoms should defer non-urgent in-person visitation until they have completed their 10-day isolation period (note: this time period is longer than what is recommended in the community).

Urgent in-person visitation can include:

- Acute trauma
- Active labor
- End-of-life
- Pediatrics
- Intellectual, developmental, or other cognitive disability
- Any additional patient care areas or circumstances at the discretion of facility leadership based on patient's status, condition, circumstances, OR facility policy.

For visitors who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 in past 10 days, as long as the visitor can wear a facemask throughout time at facility, may enter the facility but should be encouraged to also defer non-urgent in-person visitation until 10 days after their close contact.

*NYC H+H will provide testing or vaccination on-site in our COVID-19 testing tents or vaccination pods where they are available at no cost to the individual.

Infection Prevention and Control:

All visitors, including outpatient/ambulatory care patient's companions, must adhere to the following policies and practices by the facility:

- Counseling patients and their visitor(s) about the risks of an in-person visit (as needed).
- Visitors must wear a surgical mask or other well-fitting mask at all times, regardless of visitor or patient vaccination status for COVID-19. Surgical masks will be provided to the visitor, as needed.
- Facilities are expected to provide masks to all visitors and staff. In addition, unit staff should actively distribute facial masks to all visitors enter their unit, as needed.
- Visitors may be provided with and asked to wear additional personal protective equipment (PPE), as appropriate to the patient's condition or diagnosis(es) as recommended by the facility policy.
- Visitors must be advised regarding how to perform appropriate and

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	<p>effective hand hygiene and limiting surfaces touched in patient's room as well as the proper donning, doffing, and disposal of PPE and must adhere to such procedures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitors who fail to wear a surgical mask and other PPE as requested by the facility will be asked to leave the facility. Once in the facility, visitors must remain in the patient's room throughout the visit, except when directed to leave by staff during aerosol-generating procedures or other procedures or circumstances for which visitors are usually asked to leave, or to use the restroom, and must maintain appropriate distance from any other patients or staff. Visitors must be at least 12 years of age except in rare exceptions as determined by the facility; there is no age restriction for companions accompanying patients to ambulatory care visits. <p>Additional Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitals must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor visitor compliance with wearing surgical masks and other PPE, as needed, and must ask visitors who fail to comply to leave the facility. <p>Ambulatory Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If an ambulatory care patient's companion screens positive based on screening questionnaire signage, their entry into the facility will be coordinated with the clinic leadership. <p>Post-acute Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to facility specific visitor guidance for PAC/skilled nursing facilities. 	
Definitions	Visitor	Visitor are individuals who are granted permission to enter the facility as a support person to a patient for limited duration of time.
	Companion	Companion are individuals who are assisting a patient during their visit at NYC H+H ambulatory site
	Close Contact	Close Contact through proximity and duration of exposure: Someone who was less than 6 feet away from an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinical diagnosis) for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
References	<p>NYS DOH November 18, 2022 DHDTC DAL#: 22-11: Hospital Visitation Notification</p> <p>Infection Control: Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) CDC</p>	

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Reviewed and Readopted Without Change

Signature	Title	Date
Machelle Allen	SVP/CMO	Version 1 - October 23, 2020
Machelle Allen	SVP/CMO	Version 2 - July 1, 2021
Machelle Allen	SVP/CMO	Version 3 – November 18, 2021
Machelle Allen	SVP/CMO	Version 4 – December 22, 2021
Machelle Allen	SVP/CMO	Version 5 – February 4, 2022
Machelle Allen	SVP/CMO	Version 6 – March 14, 2022
Machelle Allen	SVP/CMO	Version 7 – December 6, 2022
Machelle Allen	SVP/CMO	Version 8 – December 12, 2022
Machelle Allen	SVP/CMO	Version 9 – January 30, 2023

Personal Protective Equipment Guidance for Visitors

How to stay safe when visiting a loved one.

Speak with a health care provider before entering the room to ensure you wear the correct personal protective equipment.

IN ALL AREAS:



- + Wash your hands often. Use soap and water for at least 20 seconds or hand sanitizer.



- + Wear a mask at all times. Make sure your nose and mouth are both covered.

IN SPECIFIC AREAS:



GOWN

- + Fully cover from your chest to your knees and your arms to your wrist.
- + Tie the back of your gown securely.



EYE PROTECTION

- + Make sure eye protection covers your eyes properly.



GLOVES

- + Make sure to choose the right hand size.
- + Make sure the gloves cover your wrist.