

**GUIDANCE
COVID-19 VISITOR MANAGEMENT**



DOC ID HHCMPA302020 v3

Effective Date: October 18,
2021

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Purpose	To provide guidance and steps to screen and manage visitors/support persons prior to and during visitation of admitted patients or accompanying patients to ambulatory care visits.
Scope	New York City Health + Hospitals System
Requirements	<p>NYS DOH ACOG</p> <p>Section 405.7(c)(20) of Title10 of the Official Compilation of Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York (NYCRR)</p>
Process	<p>Hospitals may allow each patient to have up to TWO visitors at a time for up to four hours per day, unless otherwise disallowed by the hospital according to the patient’s status, condition, circumstances OR facility policy. At times, additional visitors may be allowed or the hours may be increased, at the facility’s discretion. Restrictions on the number of visitors, length of visits, and visiting hours may differ among various units of the facility.</p> <p>All visitors entering a NYC Health + Hospitals (H+H) clinical care sites are screened for COVID-19 using a standardized Point of Entry (POE) screening format, implemented by the facility POE staff, which includes the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visitor’s Name 2. Patient Name & Room Number 3. Date and Time of Visit 4. Exposure Screening: Does the visitor or household member have significant exposure or have they tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 10 days? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For ambulatory care patients, entry into the facility will be coordinated with the clinic leadership ○ Regardless of vaccinations status, if yes to exposure to an active case of COVID-19 OR if the visitor has tested positive for COVID-19 within past 10 days prior to the first visit, a navigator will review and further assess if the visitor will be allowed entry. 5. Symptom screening and temperature check: Do you currently have cough, shortness of breath, rash, sore throat, diarrhea, chills, new loss of taste and smell or other flu like symptoms and other COVID-like-illness signs and symptoms? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ YES: Regardless of vaccinations status, if yes to symptoms consistent with COVID-19 during the prior 10 days OR have a temperature equal to or greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, an H+H representative will review and further assess if visitor will be allowed entry. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The H+H representative will also facilitate referral to the appropriate clinical care for the visitor as needed. For example:

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primary care referral or ED visit depending on the visitor's symptoms

- **NO:** If the visitor reports no symptoms, the following is required for entry:
 - For ambulatory care patients and their companions, please refer to page 5 of this policy
 - Proof of full vaccination status, such as a vaccination card, NYSDOH Excelsior pass certification, or documentation of vaccination in the visitor's medical record such as Epic's My Chart, or other official documentation (i.e. full vaccination is defined as 2 weeks after completion of one of the authorized vaccines series) OR
 - Negative COVID-19 PCR test within 48 hours prior to the first visit, then weekly thereafter.
 - If the visitor is not vaccinated and does not have a negative COVID-19 PCR test, an H+H representative will review and further assess if the visitor will be allowed entry for a limited number of exceptions. Exceptions could include visitors of patients who fall in the following categories:
 - acute trauma
 - active labor
 - end-of-life
 - pediatrics
 - For these exception situations, it is strongly recommended that unvaccinated visitors undergo a PCR COVID-19 test within 24 hours after the first visit, then weekly thereafter.
 - The H+H representative will also facilitate on site COVID-19 vaccination or testing as appropriate for the visitor.

In summary, an H+H representative will review – either in person or remotely via phone - and further assess if visitor will be allowed entry and to aid them with the proper follow-up required to gain entry to the facility if they:

- Report exposure to an active case of COVID-19 in the prior 10 days
- Have symptoms consistent with COVID-19
- Have a temperature equal to or greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- Test positive for COVID-19 within past 10 days prior to the first visit
- Lack documentation of COVID-19 vaccination or recent COVID-19 negative test documentation.

*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. COVID-19

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testing and vaccination are available 6 days a week, typically from 7am to 4pm Monday-Saturday at each of our Acute sites

Infection Prevention and Control:

All visitors- including ambulatory care patients and their companions- must adhere to the following policies and practices:

- Visitors must wear a surgical mask at all times, regardless of visitor or patient vaccination status for influenza or COVID-19. Surgical masks will be provided to the visitor, 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 effective hand hygiene and the proper donning, doffing, and disposal of PPE and must adhere to such procedures.
- 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.

Additional Considerations:

- Hospitals must:
 - Provide guidance to visitors on the potential risks and benefits of the visitor's presence with the patient, as needed.
 - Ensure the ability to contact visitors as part of contact tracing, if necessary.
 - Collect, in electronic format, the visitor's name, contact information, date(s) of visit(s), and name of the patient(s) visited. If collected, this information must be maintained for a minimum of 4 weeks from the date the visitor was last in the facility.
 - Monitor visitor compliance with wearing surgical masks and PPE and must ask visitors who fail to comply to leave the facility.

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Visitation for Pediatrics, Childbirth and Patients with an Intellectual, Developmental, or other Cognitive Disability:

NICU

- NICU- hours in accordance with facility schedule.
- Continue visitor screening process, which includes screening for symptoms and fever, outside the NICU (using current visitation workflow). Hand hygiene is performed by everyone entering the NICU.
- Only mothers that are COVID-19 Negative will be permitted.
- COVID-19 negative support person(s) will also be allowed to visit. However, only one person at a time will be allowed at the bedside.
- When one parent exits the NICU and the other enters, the parent exiting will be encouraged NOT to leave the floor.

Pediatrics

- Pediatric patients may have two designated support persons with them at all times and these individuals may rotate.
- Parents/caregivers/legal guardians will be screened for COVID-19 as defined in the *process* section upon entering the facility.
- The same parent/caregiver/legal guardian is strongly encouraged to remain with the patient for the duration of the hospitalization.

Labor and Delivery/Postpartum/Antepartum/Mother-Baby Units

- Labor and Delivery patients are permitted two visitors (aka, support persons) including a doula if requested. The support persons may accompany the patient throughout labor and delivery, recovery and the postpartum period, until discharge to home. The support persons can be the patient's spouse, partner, sibling, parent, or other persons of their choice. The designated person(s) will have an ID/baby band.
- Visitors will be screened upon entry to the hospital using POE screening process.
- After delivery, the designated visitor will accompany the patient to the Postpartum Unit. Visitors will be allowed to leave the unit and will be screened upon re-entry to the hospital. Visitors must abide by the visitation guidelines of the hospital/unit.
- Antepartum patients will follow the same visitation guidelines as noted in the hospital. Visitors will be screened upon entry to the hospital.

Exception: If the support person is not vaccinated or does not have proof of a negative PCR test result within 48 hours, the hospital is to offer PCR testing. The support person will be given appropriate PPE until such time that they may be tested.

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Patients for whom a Support Person has been Determined to be Essential to the Care of the Patient (medically necessary) including Patients with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD), and Patients with Cognitive Impairments including Dementia:

- One support person may remain with the patient throughout their hospitalization, and an additional visitor may also be with the patient during hospital-designated visiting hours.
- This support person can be the patient's family member, caregiver, or another person they chose.
- Support persons will be screened for COVID-19 as defined in the *process* section upon entering the facility.

Patients in Imminent end-of-life Situations:

- Two support persons may be designated to remain with patients in imminent end-of-life situations and will be counseled on appropriate infection prevention and control measures.
- Support persons will be screened for COVID-19 as defined in the *process* section upon entering the facility.
- The NYSDOH defines imminent end-of-life situations as a patient who is actively dying, where death is anticipated within less than 24 hours.

Ambulatory Care Visits and Procedures

- Ambulatory care patients and their companions will be screened upon entry into the facility as above.
- If an ambulatory care patient or their companion screens **NEGATIVE**, they will **not be required** to have been vaccinated or have a negative COVID-19 test in the prior 48 hours.
- If an ambulatory care patient or their companion screens **POSITIVE**, their entry into the facility will be coordinated with the clinic leadership with the assistance of the H+H representative at the point of entry.
- Ambulatory care patients and their companions must adhere to social distancing in the waiting rooms.
- Companions must step-out of an examination room if an aerosol-generating procedure is performed.
- Patients undergoing same day procedures may be accompanied to the facility by a companion and that companion must remain in a hospital designated waiting area until the patient is discharged.

Post-acute Care

- Refer to facility specific visitor guidance for PAC/skilled nursing facilities.

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References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYS Health Advisory: COVID-19 Updated Guidance for Hospital Visitation, June 7, 2021 https://www.gnyha.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Hospital-visitation-guidance-6.7.2021.pdf • NYSDOH Pregnancy and COVID-19, Resources for Health Care Providers, March 21, 2020 • ACOG-AAFP-AACNM-SMFM Patient-Centered Care for Pregnant Patients during the COVID-19 Pandemic, March 30, 2020 • AAP Committee on Fetus and Newborn, Section on Neonatal Perinatal Medicine and Committee on Infectious Diseases Initial Guidance: Management of Infants Born to Mothers with COVID-19, April 2, 2020 • AAP News—AAP issues guidance on breastfeeding during COVID-19 pandemic, April 23, 2020 https://www.aappublications.org/news/2020/01/28/coronavirus • NYS Executive Order No. 202.25 Continuing Temporary Suspension and Modification of Laws Relating to the Disaster Emergency, April 29, 2020
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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.