

## PRESS RELEASE

# Baker-Polito Administration Announces New Indoor Visitation Guidance for Nursing Homes, Rest Homes, and Assisted Living Residences

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Executive Office of Elder Affairs

Department of Public Health

## MEDIA CONTACT

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**BOSTON** — The Baker-Polito Administration today announced new guidance that allows safe indoor visitation to resume in nursing homes and rest homes, and further expands indoor visitation options in assisted living residences (ALRs) starting Friday, September 25. The guidance from the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) balances the important role visitation plays in supporting resident emotional health and quality of life, while ensuring necessary infection control measures are in place.

Today's announcement builds on [previous guidance](#)

[\(/info-details/covid-19-public-health-guidance-and-directives#caregivers-\)](#) to further support residents and their loved ones who have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. In March, the Commonwealth acted quickly to take precautions in restricting visitation at nursing homes, rest homes, and ALRs to protect resident safety and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. As the Commonwealth proceeded with a phased reopening, visitation restrictions were updated in [June](#)

</doc/limitations-on-visitors-in-long-term-care-facilities-during-the-covid-19-outbreak/download>) to allow for outdoor visitation with guidance on how these visits could safely occur.

Nursing homes and rest homes may resume in-person visits so long as appropriate infection control and safety measures are in place, including:

- Indoor visits should occur within a designated visitation space that is close to the entrance of the facility and allows for social distancing
- The visitor must be screened for COVID-19 symptoms and have their temperature checked
- Residents, staff, and visitors must wear a mask or face covering for the duration of the visit
- The visitor must remain at least 6 feet away from the resident for the majority of the visit
- If desired by both parties, there may be physical contact between the resident and visitor so long as precautionary measures are followed such as hand sanitation before and after contact
- A schedule is implemented for frequent disinfection of the designated visitation space
- The unit, floor, or care area where the resident lives must not have any COVID-19 cases in residents or staff in the past 14 days and the facility is not experiencing a staffing shortage that requires a contingency staffing plan

ALRs were previously able to resume indoor, in-unit visitation, and may now also resume indoor visitation in a designated shared space such as a waiting room near the entrance of the residence. ALRs are subject to the same appropriate infection control and safety measures described above, except for the requirement that there are no COVID-19 cases in the past 14 days.

[View the full DPH long-term care visitation guidance](#)

</doc/limitation-on-visitors-in-long-term-care-facilities-during-the-covid-19-outbreak-sept-15/download>

[View the full EOEA ALR visitation guidance](#) </doc/alr-visitation-guidance-september-21/download>

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**Executive Office of Health and Human Services**

</orgs/executive-office-of-health-and-human-services>

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services is the largest secretariat in state government and is comprised of 12 agencies, in addition to 2 soldiers' homes and the MassHealth program. Our efforts are focused on the health, resilience, and independence of the one in four residents of the Commonwealth we serve. Our public health programs touch every community in the Commonwealth.

[More \(/orgs/executive-office-of-health-and-human-services\)](/orgs/executive-office-of-health-and-human-services)

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Promotes independence, empowerment, and well-being of older people, individuals with disabilities, and their families. We ensure access to the resources you need to live healthy in every community in the Commonwealth.

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DPH promotes the health and well-being of all residents by ensuring access to high-quality public health and healthcare services, and by focusing on prevention, wellness, and health equity in all people.

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### **Long term care facility visitation guidance**

(<https://www.mass.gov/doc/limitation-on-visitors-in-long-term-care-facilities-during-the-covid-19-outbreak-sept-15/>)

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### **Assisted Living Residence visitation guidance**

(<https://www.mass.gov/doc/alr-visitation-guidance-july-2/download>)