



7/22/2020

Dear Whisper Woods of Smithtown (N.Y.) Residents & Family Members,

Through thoughtful planning and consideration, Benchmark Senior Living has established a five-phased approach to reopening using a proprietary risk management process. As part of this next stage of our response to COVID-19, we're evaluating how to safely reinstate the use of dining rooms and other communal areas, group programming, visitation and new resident move-ins as soon as possible across our communities, while remaining in compliance with respective state mandates.

Specifically, we've identified the reopening phases as follows:

- **Phase 1** – Permit socially-distanced outdoor visits with residents
- **Phase 2** – Resume new resident move ins; conduct virtual community tours for prospective residents; reinstate communal dining and group programming in a limited capacity
- **Phase 3** – Permit socially-distanced indoor visits with residents
- **Phase 4** – Conduct limited in-person community tours for prospective residents; allow local outdoor entertainment
- **Phase 5** – Resume all pre-COVID-19 activities

We've worked closely with our team of consulting physicians to establish criteria for each phase of reopening that relies on COVID-19 case data from each Benchmark community and the greater region, which include:

- A decrease in the number of new positive cases among associates and residents in both the community and surrounding geographic area over the past 14 days;
- Confirmation that communities are appropriately staffed to care for residents; and
- Approval from the Regional Director of Operations and the community's Executive Director that the community is able to reopen safely.

Each community will take an individualized approach to reopening and entering the respective phases based on the above criteria and evolving state guidelines. As New York begins a phased reopening of businesses and operations that were affected by the COVID-19/coronavirus emergency, it is now allowing visits to qualifying senior living communities. **We are now allowing scheduled outdoor visits with our residents at New York Benchmark communities.**

Following the state's senior care visitation guidance, Benchmark Senior Living has established policies for our residents' beloved friends and families to follow during visits. These guidelines are critical to helping protect our residents, our associates and you:

- Visits will be limited to 45 minutes to ensure all residents can spend time with their loved ones. Visits can include up to two guests for each resident and any visitor under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult.
- Visits will be permitted Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 10 am to 4 pm and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 pm to 7 pm.
- Communities have designated several outdoor areas for your visits that ensure proper social distancing. Depending on the community, visitation areas may include a freestanding tent that is at least 10 feet from the building to provide protection from the sun. Only one family will be permitted under the tent at a time.
- Separate visitation areas will be available for Traditional Assisted Living and Mind and Memory residents.
- Prior to arrival, you and other visitors will complete a visitor screening tool to help determine potential symptoms and exposure to the virus.
- Residents will be screened and have their temperature taken before entering the visitation area.
- Visitors and residents will need to wear a mask at all times. Visitors are encouraged to bring their own masks, but we will have disposable masks available if needed.
- Hand sanitizer will be available at each visitation area. Visitors will need to sanitize hands before and after the visit. A Benchmark Senior Living associate will be there to help and ensure proper use of the sanitizer.
- Our staff will clean and disinfect visitation areas between each visit.
- A Benchmark Senior Living associate will escort the resident to their loved ones and be available, if needed, while also ensuring community protocols are followed.
- Unfortunately, we cannot allow physical contact, per federal requirements.
- If you have gifts, including flowers, for your loved ones, please drop them off at the vestibule prior to your visit, so our staff can disinfect or isolate the gifts, per the community's protocols. The gifts will be given to your loved one later.
- Drinks to keep residents and our guests hydrated during visits will be provided by Benchmark Senior Living associates.
- Visitors will be asked by associates to provide contact information. This is asked in case contact tracing is necessary.
- Visitors will be asked to self-monitor their health following their visit and to contact the community immediately in the event they develop any COVID-19-related symptoms within fourteen days after visiting.
- To ensure the health and safety of our residents and associates, an outdoor visit will not be scheduled if:
 - A resident is suspected or confirmed to be infected with COVID-19.

- A visitor has experienced any COVID-19-related symptoms within the last 14 days and/or has been in contact with someone who was diagnosed presumptive or positive for COVID-19.

To schedule a visit, please reach out to the community's front desk. All visits will be subject to weather and staff availability. Scheduled visitors will be called and notified if the visit is cancelled and will be offered an available timeslot on another day.

Please note that visits need to be scheduled in advance and no walk-ins will be allowed.

In the event a new case is identified, the community will suspend outside visitation for a minimum of 14 days from the onset of the new COVID-19 case. All residents and families will be notified if visitation is suspended and when it will resume.

We are committed to keeping families in touch with their loved ones, so for those residents who are unable to participate in outdoor visits, we are offering window visits through a closed window and virtual visits via FaceTime, Skype or Zoom. Please contact your community to arrange a time to speak with your loved one.

Be assured that the health and safety of our residents and associates remains our top priority as we evolve our policies and protocols to adapt to this new way of living. We are guided by the core values of our company, *Called to Care, Better Together* and *Be the Benchmark*, and we are driven by our people-first philosophy. We continue to work closely with public health authorities to evolve our response in accordance with applicable local, state and federal guidelines for senior living facilities.

We understand the hardships this situation has brought about over the past several months and want to thank you for your unwavering support and patience. We hope you take advantage of the opportunities to visit and communicate with your loved ones, and we are committed to updating you as we continue to evolve our policies.

For more up-to-date information on how the State of New York is working to address COVID-19, visit <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>. If you would like to contact the State with questions regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, you may contact the Department of Health's Infection Control Program at icp@health.ny.gov or the agency which oversees assisted living residences at covidadultcareinfo@health.ny.gov.

Please do not hesitate to reach us with questions or concerns at http://benchmarkliving.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5BU14b94P1ZwVY9.

Sincerely,

Bob Moran
Senior Vice President of Operations
Benchmark Senior Living