



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
PO Box 45600, Olympia, Washington 98504-5600

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AL TSA: CCRSS #2021-015

UPDATES TO THE SAFE START FOR LONG-TERM CARE RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS DOCUMENT

Dear Provider:

The *Safe Start for Long-Term Care Recommendations and Requirements Document* (Safe Start Plan) establishes criteria permit visitation in the various Certified Community Residential Services and Support programs. The plan also offers guidance on trips outside the facility or home, communal dining and group activities, testing and screening, source control and personal protective equipment (PPE), and staffing.

On March 19, 2021, the Department of Health and the Department of Social and Health Services released updates to the *Safe Start Plan for Certified Community Residential Services and Supports* (CCRSS). The updates include allowing visitation under specific conditions, as well as updates to the risk assessment and quarantine processes.

Visitation Allowances

Facilities and homes should allow indoor visitation when either the visitor or client is fully vaccinated, except under the following circumstances:

- Clients with confirmed COVID-19 infection, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, until they have met the criteria to discontinue Transmission-Based Precautions, or
- Clients in quarantine, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, until they have met criteria for release from quarantine.

Outdoor visits remain preferable due to lower risk of transmission, which is largely attributable to increased space and airflow.

Compassionate Care visits should be permitted at all times regardless of COVID activity in the building and regardless of a client's vaccination status or COVID-19 status.

Risk Assessment and Quarantine

Providers must complete a risk assessment for each client who participates in community activities or attends medical appointments. The Risk Assessment has been updated to accommodate vaccinated clients.

- If a client is fully vaccinated, they would only need to quarantine if they came into prolonged contact with a person who has COVID-19. Prolonged contact means within 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period
- For an unvaccinated client, or a client who is not fully vaccinated, complete the full risk assessment and quarantine if the assessment indicates high risk.

Facility and Home Operations

- Plan to manage visitation and visitor flow.
- The facility or home may limit the number of visitors allowed in the facility or home to allow for adequate adherence to infection prevention protocols.

- If the client has a roommate:
 - Ideally, no visitors should be in the client's room.
 - Unvaccinated roommates should not be present during the visit if the visit must take place in the bedroom.
 - Maintain source control and physical distancing during the visit.

Important Reminders

- The Essential Support Person system is no longer active as clients are allowed visitors.
- If an individual client is restricted from visitors for the reasons previously outlined, they may have compassionate care visits under the compassionate care model, if needed.
- The facility or home must establish policies and procedures outlining how the number of visitors per client at one time and the total number of visitors in the facility or home at one time may affect the ability to maintain the core principles of infection prevention:
 - The facility or home must take into consideration work schedules of visitors and include allowances for evening and weekend visits.
 - The facility or home will post with the visitor log vaccination requirements for visitation, as well as a notice that visitors are not to visit indoors if they are unvaccinated and the client is unvaccinated. The posting will also indicate it is a violation of the Governor's Proclamation for an unvaccinated person to visit an unvaccinated client indoors.
 - If necessary, the facility or home should consider scheduling visits for a specified length of time.
 - Visitor movement about the facility or home should be limited with visitors going directly to the designated visiting space.
 - Visitors must be screened and they must acknowledge they have reviewed the notice about unvaccinated visitors. The visitor log must be maintained for 30 days.
- For clients who share a room, visits should take place outside of the room if possible.
- The facility or home must establish policies and procedures around tours of the facility or home for the purpose of screening for prospective new clients.
- Visitors and clients should wear a well-fitted cloth mask or face mask and practice hand hygiene before and after the visitation, and the safest approach, particularly if either party has not been fully vaccinated, is for clients and their visitors to maintain 6-foot distance from others.

Click [here](#) to access the updated *Risk Assessment Template* to assess COVID-19 exposure risk for clients after community visits.

Click [here](#) to view the updated *Safe Start for Long-Term Care Recommendations and Requirements Document* in its entirety.

Thank you for your continued commitment to client health and safety. If you have any questions, please contact RCSPolicy@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



Mike Anbesse, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: "Transforming Lives"