



TO: Mill Street Tenants & Family Members
From: Mick Siems, Director
DATE: September 11, 2020
RE: COVID update re visitation and testing

Dear Mill Street Tenants & Family Members,

As we continue to adjust to the changes brought on by COVID I wanted to provide an update on our visitation options/plans as we move towards allowing visitors back into our building. I've also included an update on our future testing plans as well.

Window & Outdoor Visits – Window visits and outdoor visits are both available by scheduled appointment with 24-hour advanced notice preferred. Window visits are available Mon-Fri between the hours of 9:00am-4:00pm. Outdoor visits are available Mon-Fri between the hours of 1:00-3:00pm. Both type of visits are 30 minutes in length. Please contact our front desk to schedule (218-739-2900).

Essential Caregiver – The MN Department of Health (MDH) has created a visitor designation of Essential Caregiver which, by definition, is an individual who was actively engaged in providing direct, hands-on care to their parent, family member or friend prior to COVID. Examples of direct, hands-on care could involve assistance with bathing, dressing, medication management and other direct care functions. When I think back to what our pre-COVID times were like in early-March, we had only a couple family members routinely providing this level of direct care, and all involved assisting their family member with their medications. MDH has recognized that the psychosocial/emotional support provided by family members and friends visiting can be as equally important. By adding in the psychosocial/emotional support element this pretty much includes everyone when determining “who” should be allowed in as an Essential Caregiver.

MDH has provided some guidance and leeway to help us safely manage Essential Caregiver visits. Each tenant will be asked to identify one person as their Essential Caregiver. To begin, this person most likely will be the individual identified as the tenant's emergency contact. We will be contacting each tenant's Essential Caregiver, either by phone and/or by letter, in the very near future to explain the parameters of this program. Please note that the number of Essential Caregivers per tenant will likely be expanded in the following weeks as we get comfortable with the processes put into place to safely manage the return of visitors back into our building.

We anticipate the start date for our Essential Caregiver visitation program to begin on Monday, September 21st. The initial days and hours will be Mon-Fri between 9:00am-4:00pm. These days and hours will be expanded at a later date to include evening hours and weekends. Essential Caregivers will be screened upon entry into the building and their visit

may last up to 3 hours. One visit per day will be allowed. Essential Caregivers will be required to wear face masks and eye protection at all times. Visits should be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance.

Level 1 & 2 Visitation & Activities – Level 1 Visitation and Activities is essentially where we are today. All visitor and non-essential health care personnel are restricted from entering the building. Window visits and outdoor visits are allowed. Essential caregiver visits are allowed. Communal dining and group activities are allowed with the appropriate 6-foot social distancing.

Facilities may consider transitioning to Level 2 Visitation and Activities once they have had no COVID positive tenant and/or staff exposures within the past 28 days. Since we (Mill Street) had a positive staff exposure on September 2nd the earliest we could consider transitioning to Level 2 is October 1st. Window visits and outdoor visits are allowed. Essential caregiver visits are allowed. Communal dining and group activities are allowed with the appropriate 6-foot social distancing. Additionally, facilities will be allowed to schedule a limited number of trips outside the facility.

Probably the biggest change with Level 2 is that additional visitors (aside from Essential Caregivers) are allowed in the building. Visits will be limited to one hour in length with each visitor being allowed one visit per day. All visitors will be screened upon entry and will be required to wear face masks and eye protection at all times. Visits will need to be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance.

We are expected to take into account the rate of positive cases in the County and the level of community transmission when deciding upon whether or not to move from Level 1 to Level 2. It should also be noted that if a tenant tests positive or a staff member tests positive and has worked in the facility while infectious, we must move back to Level 1 Visitation and Activities immediately.

Testing – Our plan is to continue to conduct weekly testing of both tenants and staff until we have two continuous weeks of no positive test results. Upon reaching that point we will shift to surveillance testing consisting of weekly testing of staff only plus any tenants under 14-day quarantine. Our website (www.millstreet.org) will contain the latest situation updates and ongoing developments related to our plans moving forward as we monitor and adjust to current conditions.

The health and well-being of both our staff and our tenants continues to be our highest priority. If you have any questions or concerns related to our visitation and/or testing schedules you are invited to contact either Krisjohn Veum (218-736-8594) or myself (218-736-8590). We will continue to update you on any important news and emerging issues.