

## **COVID-19 Policy Change: Copley Hospital Visitor Policy** ***Effective Date: March 20, 2020***

Pursuant to Governor Scott's Executive Order 01-20, *Declaration of State of Emergency in Response to COVID-19 and National Guard Call-Out*, the Agency of Human Services has revised the minimum standard for visitation policies and procedures for all hospitals throughout Vermont.

We know family members and loved ones play a key role in supporting and comforting those who are sick and ill, however, as we seek to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we are making temporary changes to our Visitor Policy to protect the health of our patients and employees.

**This Visitor Policy shall be in place from now until changed, or  
the expiration of the Executive Order on April 15.**

### **For All:**

- Entrances into all medical buildings and clinics will be restricted, and everyone who enters will be asked the purpose of their visit.
- Only ADA service animals are permitted. All other animals, including previously approved therapy dogs/support animals, are not allowed at this time.
- No visitors are permitted at this time, and until further notice, with some very limited exceptions. For the allowed exceptions, each hospital will implement entry control points in their hospitals to enable the screening of all individuals entering their facilities.
- The limited exceptions include:
  - One (1) support person for patients in The Birthing Center.
  - One (1) parent or support person for pediatric patients.
    - One (1) consistent support is strongly recommended.
    - When necessary, a second support can be identified as an alternate.
  - One (1) visitor/support person escorting an individual undergoing same-day surgery or an outpatient procedure.
  - One (1) consistent support person may be permitted in other rare circumstances, such as for a patient with a cognitive impairment or disability who requires assistance to access care.
  - Patients in end of life care.
    - The care team will manage decisions around these exceptions.
  - Support people accompanying a patient will be screened at the main entrance and those who have respiratory symptoms will not be permitted to enter and should follow-up with their own healthcare providers.
- Hospitals shall implement a process for tracking the approved visitor associated with each patient and implement access control for visitation to the patient.
- Visitors are asked to remain in the patient's room for the duration of the visit, limit traffic in hallways and avoid congregating in waiting rooms, café, and lobby before, after, or between visits.
- The unit will determine whether those attempting to visit meet an exception criteria and ask whether they have a cough, shortness of breath, or a fever.
- No visitors will be permitted with patients suspected of having COVID-19 or who test positive for COVID-19. We will make every effort to support patient and family interaction by deploying the use of technology.
- Hospital volunteer programs are suspended until further notice.

**Outpatient Clinics, Lab, Radiology, Rehabilitation Services:**

- Visitors/family members are not permitted to accompany patients to outpatient visits unless the patient requires support and assistance to access their appointment.
  - Support people providing this level of assistance by accompanying a patient will be screened upon check-in at the clinic.
  - Those who have respiratory symptoms will not be permitted to enter the clinic and should follow-up with their own healthcare providers.
- One (1) parent or support person should accompany pediatric patients.
- Patients who would benefit from other forms of support during a visit (such as a family member to listen, participate in the discussion, etc.) are encouraged to include support people via phone or other technology.

**Other:**

- Any approved visitors will be asked to clean their hands upon entry/exit from the building, entry/exit from the unit or clinic, and entry/exit from patient rooms.
- Employees may not visit patients either on or off-duty unless they are an approved exception visitor.
- Exceptions to this policy may be made in extenuating circumstances.