



COVID Updates for March 26, 2021

Dear Residents, Families, and Friends of Redstone,

This Sunday, Christians will begin our commemorations of Holy Week as we remember Jesus' entrance to Jerusalem with the waving of the palms. By the end of the week we will again remember the Last Supper, Jesus' death on the cross, and the glorious celebration of resurrection on Easter morning. Similarly, our Jewish brothers and sisters will be commemorating the Passover this week. Last year at this time, our COVID journey was just beginning. We had closed our doors to visitors, our residents were sheltering in place in their rooms, and we had no idea how long the journey ahead of us would be or the many challenges we would face. In hindsight, the images of Holy Week and Passover are all the more meaningful. The journey can be very challenging and frightening, but God does not leave us. At the end of the suffering, hope rises again. As we approach Easter again, hope is blooming on our Redstone campuses.

When we opened our campuses to in-person visits on March 16th, unfortunately our Greensburg Personal Care (Courtyard) residents were not able to have visitors because of a positive employee case. We are glad to report that we have had no additional positive cases, and beginning on Saturday, March 27th, visitors will be welcome in that unit, too. Please remember that our visitor status will remain in flux as the pandemic continues. As hopeful as we are and as much as we would like to think that this pandemic is behind us, we still must follow all guidelines and protect our residents as best we know how. When there is an outbreak (one or more positive cases in a level of care) that level of care will need to close to visitors until we go through a process ensuring that there are no additional cases. If there are no additional cases in other units, visitation may continue in those areas. Our goal is to always resume in-person visitation as soon as possible, while still following the guidelines.

At all times, end-of-life visits may be arranged, and those with compassionate caregiver status may continue to visit. Our current visitor status for all levels of care is available on our website at <https://redstone.studio2adv.com/news/coronavirus-visitors>. Please check that website or call the receptionist on your campus to confirm visitor status, especially if you are traveling from a distance for a visit.

As a reminder, two persons at a time may visit with a resident between 11 am and 7 pm. Visitors must appropriately wear their masks at all times, and social distance from other residents and caregivers. When possible, take your resident outside for the visit since this is a safer environment. If the resident being visited has been vaccinated, visitors may hug or touch that resident if the resident wishes. Hand hygiene must be performed before and after the contact. You will also be glad to hear that screened visitors may now take a resident from one of our Personal Care Homes or Skilled Nursing and Rehab Center for an outing in a vehicle. The resident should still only be exposed to the two screened visitors during that outing, and masks must be worn. A full copy of the visitor policy is available on the website.

We have been able to broaden the scope of activities for residents across all levels, while following our masking and social distancing policies. We continue to see the very positive results of our vaccination clinics. Information released yesterday in the New England Journal of Medicine showed that among 36,659 healthcare workers who were vaccinated early in the vaccine process, only 7 have tested positive for COVID-19 more than 14 days after their second vaccination. Furthermore, not a single one of these employees was hospitalized or died due to COVID. While data for senior living communities is only beginning to be evaluated, we

anticipate similarly positive information. For the families and friends of Redstone, we hope that when you are able, you will choose to be vaccinated. We continue to provide an employee incentive program to encourage all of our employees to be vaccinated, too. Because the COVID vaccines are currently authorized as emergency use, there are challenges to making it a requirement of employment. When possible, we will consider adding this to our requirements for employment, similar to our requirement of the flu vaccine.

Even in the midst of our hopefulness, I must acknowledge that there has been a recent increase in COVID cases here in our region and around the country. In part, these cases reflect the slow rollout of the vaccine that we have experienced. Even if you are vaccinated, continue to do your part to protect others. Wear your mask, covering your nose. Practice rigorous hand hygiene, and avoid large gatherings.

This letter (we hope) will be our final scheduled COVID specific communication. Moving forward, we plan to merge this information into a COVID Corner of our monthly Window newsletter. Those who are on our email distribution list will begin receiving the newsletter with the April issue. Some of you have told us that you don't want these letters to stop. We hear you. We have learned a lot about the importance of communication with all of you over the past year, and the communication will not cease. We think that it is time, however, to broaden our conversation and talk with each other about more than just COVID. Please know that if COVID cases arise, and situations change, we will not hesitate to reach out to all of you with a message that addresses such concerns.

We've shared quite a journey. None of us will ever forget this time. I'm grateful for your many messages of support, encouragement, challenge, and prayers that I have received. May God bless each of us with signs of resurrection and hope as we approach Easter. Hope is blooming, at Redstone and beyond. Alleluia!

P.S. Have you seen our video celebrating our reopening to in-person visits? It was a special day! <https://fb.watch/4stwz3294v/>

Take care and Happy Easter!

Vicki

Vicki Loucks, RN, MSN, MBA
Vice President & Chief Operating Officer
Redstone Presbyterian Seniorcare