

January 14, 2022



To All Families and Residents

PLEASE READ THE **ENTIRE** NEWSLETTER FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON COVID. THIS IS THE PRIMARY MEANS OF COMMUNICATION ON THIS TOPIC.

**Due to the Omicron variant's spread and new NYS guidance, we are resuming our weekly COVID updates in a new, revised format.**

**“WELCOME” TO OUR NEW FAMILY CONTACTS**

We are required to notify all residents, families and staff of a facility whenever we have a positive COVID test result for any staff member or resident. Two points of contact are required.

To help us meet these requirements, we have utilized a broadcast tool (School Messenger) to send emails and automated phone calls to up to two email addresses and two phone numbers per resident or resident contact, which is usually the first Health Care Proxy. The system then broadcasts to all the contact phone numbers and emails in this database. We also use this system to send out this update letter to our resident family contacts.

**You will also receive a broadcast when we have a staff member or resident test positive for COVID-19.** This includes an email *and a phone call*. We understand these phone calls can come at inconvenient times and would like to offer you the option to opt out of the phone calls for one or both of the numbers on file *so long as we have an email address on file to receive the alert*. This opt out will only effect the notification databases used by School Messenger. All contact info will remain on file in our Electronic Health Record, PointClickCare.

If you wish to opt out of alerts for one or both phone numbers we have file, please email me at [pm@goodshepherdcommunities.org](mailto:pm@goodshepherdcommunities.org) with the specifics. Please note it will take time to make the changes to the databases, so dependent on volume, there may be a delay from the time you make the request and the time the database revisions are completed. Thank you in advance for your patience.

## STATISTICS

as of 11/13/2022	GSFH	GSVE	Chase
<b>Year To Date + residents</b>			
SNF	0	0	1
ACF	0	1	n\a
IL	0	0	n\a
<b>Year To Date + Staff</b>			
SNF	10	4	3
ACF	2	4	n\a
IL	n\a	4	n\a
<b>Year To Date Deaths</b>			
SNF	0	0	0
ACF	0	0	n\a
IL	0	0	n\a
<b>Active Residents Cases (in-house or hospitalized)</b>			
SNF	0	0	1
ACF	0	1	n\a
IL	0	0	n\a
<b>Staff Furloughed</b>			
SNF	8	3	2
ACF	2	4	n\a
IL	n\a	1	n\a

## NEWS: NYS NEW COVID GUIDANCE

- **Health Care Personnel Vaccination and Booster Shots:**
  - All personnel must be up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations as required by the NYS DOH emergency regulation, including booster shots at the appropriate interval.
    - This will become effective in the near future and we will have a 14 day grace period to comply.
    - Boosters are required 5 months after completing the primary series for Pfizer and Moderna, and 2 months after completing the primary series of the J&J.
    - We are identifying staff who will require a booster within the 14 day grace period, and will continue to track staff deadlines for the booster.
    - Failure to comply with this requirement will result in termination- this is a NYS DOH regulation, and our compliance is not optional.
- **Staff Masking:**
  - All staff must be masked at all times, regardless of vaccination or booster status.
- **Visitors Masking and Distancing:**
  - All visitors must wear a well-fitting non-surgical paper mask or a mask of higher quality (i.e., surgical mask, KN95, or N95) at all times during any visitation at the facility. If the visitor wishes, a cloth mask may be placed over the paper mask. The masks must cover both the nose and the mouth.

- All visitors must physically distance from facility personnel and other patients/residents/visitors who are not directly associated with the specific resident(s) being visited by that individual.
- **Visitor Testing**
  - All nursing homes “must verify that visitors have received a negative SARS-CoV-2 test result one day prior to visitation for antigen tests and two days prior to visitation for NAAT (e.g., PCR) tests.” This means, for example, that a test for a Sunday visit should be conducted no earlier than Saturday if it’s an antigen test or Friday if it’s a PCR test. We can accept lab results or the results of a home test.
  - *GSC will begin requiring the test results as of Monday 1/17/22. Results should be presented at screening.*
  - GS will provide rapid tests for those unable to obtain them elsewhere. These tests can be obtained from the receptionist screening the visitor, but must be administered outside of the facility independent of any assistance from our staff. Unfortunately, our staff will not be able to provide direction or physical assistance with the testing, so visitors who are unsure of their ability to self-administer the test should make alternate arrangements.
  - For visitors who visit for multiple days, including a visitor who comes every day, proof of negative testing is required as often as feasible, at a minimum every third day (meaning at a minimum testing is required on day 1, day 4, day 7, and so on).
  - Exemptions:
    - Ombudsman representatives. Under certain circumstances, the resident and ombudsman should be made aware of the potential risk of visiting, and the visit should take place in the resident’s room.
    - Compassionate care visitors who are visiting in anticipation of end of life or in the case of significant mental, physical, or social decline or crisis. The visitor must wear any additional PPE that the facility deems appropriate.
    - Emergency Medical Services personnel.

## COMMUNICATIONS

We will provide any further guidance on the new NYS requirements as it becomes available, and will refine our process for visitor testing compliance as needed. We are asking for your patience as these new requirements were announced with very little time to prepare and comply. While we understand you may have questions, please understand our staff are very busy putting all the proper protocols in place, and have limited time to address generic questions on an individual basis.

Thank you

Patti Mackey

GSC COO