

March 25, 2021

Dear Families,

Over a year ago, none of us could have predicted the challenges and obstacles we would all face during the COVID-19 pandemic. We still have a ways to go to fight this virus, but the light at the end of the tunnel is getting brighter every day.

At Advocates, more than 80% of people we support in our residential group homes and 60% of staff caring for your loved ones have received the COVID-19 vaccine. In accordance with state guidelines, we continue to test staff monthly and increase the frequency when cities become a high-risk area. Most importantly, the number of cases in our programs remain low.

With spring and summer months ahead, we are hopeful that you and your loved ones will be able to spend more time together safely. Just this week, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) updated their visitation policy for residential group homes. [Read the full visitation guidance here.](#)

**Summary of key points and changes for visitation:**

- Updated guidance for fully vaccinated residents and visitors: when both residents and visitors are fully vaccinated, social distancing is not required on the visit.
- All individuals, including fully vaccinated individuals, should continue to wear face coverings in public settings or settings in which some individuals may not be vaccinated.
- Allowance for an increased number of visitors if all visitors are of the same household.
- Clarification that visitors are not required to be tested or vaccinated, or show proof of such as a condition of visitation.
- Visits are no longer required to be scheduled in advance, but may be at the program's discretion based upon safety considerations.
- Additional clarifications regarding off-site visits for fully vaccinated residents.

If you have any questions or concerns about the updated visitation policy, please be sure to review the full guidance on the DDS website or reach out to program staff caring for your loved ones.

We are grateful for your continued support and collaboration during this difficult time. Together, we will remain hopeful and resilient and continue to fight this virus.

Take care,



Diane Gould  
President & CEO