



Dear Families,

As we head into the holiday season, Advocates is taking an extremely cautious approach for both visitation in our group homes and visitation to the homes of our residents' families and friends. We know the holidays are an important time for you and your loved one, and your health and safety are at the forefront of our minds.

Considering the surge of COVID-19 cases in congregate care programs and across the state, we strongly encourage family members and others to consider the following when making plans over the holidays:

- Areas across the state are experiencing an unprecedented surge in positive COVID-19 cases. There is a 25% increase in positive cases related to in-home visitation in state operated group homes across the state.
- The increase in COVID-19 positive cases is now considered intergenerational; the likelihood of transmission is high for all ages.
- The Commonwealth is limiting indoor gatherings to 10 or less people. Wearing masks is recommended for any indoor gathering, even within homes.
- The state and CDC recently updated guidance regarding the length of time that is considered an exposure risk from a continuous 15 minutes of contact to an accumulative 15 minutes.

Given the high possibility that there will be an increase in positive cases as a result of holiday visitation, we ask that you not take your family member to your home this

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Subject Line: Staying safe for the holidays.

year and consider alternative ways of celebrating holidays. We want you to know all our residences will offer festive holiday celebrations for your loved ones. A few additional ideas:

- Celebrate virtually with your loved one using methods such as FaceTime, Skype, or Zoom
- Drop off a favorite Thanksgiving food or a holiday treat
- Mail a card or letter

Many of the people living in group homes at Advocates have serious pre-existing conditions. We urge everyone to make careful decisions while making holiday plans for the safety and health of your family, staff caring for your loved one, and those who live with your family member.

We hope everyone will do their part to keep everyone healthy this holiday season. Together, we will care for each other and get through this pandemic.

Thank you for all that you do.

Be well,

Diane Gould
President & CEO

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