Outdoor Family Visitation at LTCF’s
Frequently Asked Questions

1. The facility has a screening table where an employee fills out the information for employees and visitors. Does this meet the requirements for the COVID-19 attestation as long as we ask the questions required? We do not require the visitor to sign due to infection control and privacy.*
   ANSWER: Facility staff will document the visitor screening. Visitors must also attest to their COVID-19 statuses (testing results). If they have had COVID-19, they must provide documentation (e.g., doctor’s note) that they no longer meet CDC criteria for transmission-based precautions. It is acceptable for the facility screening staff to document this information on the same document as the visitor’s screening.

2. I would like to verify that all counties are in Stage 4 according to the State website? Specifically Marion and Cass where we have campuses. Currently it states Indiana entered Stage 4 on June 12.
   ANSWER: The state is in Stage 4 of reopening based on Indiana Back on Track, although some jurisdictions may have opted to be more restrictive. Check with your local health department to verify the reopening guidelines for your county.

3. Residents who are able to should wear a face mask during visitation. Are residents who are unable to keep their mask on at all times, such as those with Alzheimer’s disease, still allowed to have visitation as long as we meet all the other criteria?
   ANSWER: Yes, but please encourage face mask use during visitation and social distancing of at least 6 feet.

4. Adequate staff must be present to help with visitation: Once they are outside, does this require our staff to sit outside to monitor the visitation?
   ANSWER: Yes, visits should be supervised.

5. What was the effective date for family visitation?

6. How long should visits last?
   ANSWER: How the resident tolerates the visit and facility established visiting hours will dictate the length of the visit.

Created June 15, 2020
7. “There must be no new COVID-19 cases that originated within the facility, including those involving residents or staff, within the last 14 days.” How would we know if a staff case originated within the facility?
   ANSWER: If your staff member is working at the facility he or she would be included among those cases originating in the facility.

8. Is the Outdoor Family Visitation at Long-term Care Facilities a recommendation or a requirement?
   ANSWER: Residents have been socially isolated for several months due to COVID-19 pandemic, this guidance is being provided to allow visitation with specified conditions and criteria. Any facilities that meet the visitation criteria would still retain the right to deny outdoor visitation if they believe, 1) circumstances pose a risk of transmitting COVID-19 to the facility, or 2) either the resident or visitor might be at risk of harm. If your facility is unable to implement visitation at this time, communicate the reason to residents and families and keep them updated on the status of visitation. This may be communicated in the daily communication already being provided to residents and their designated representatives.

9. Can the facility use its own discretion on when to implement even if they meet the conditions of visitation? The facility wants to remain cautious as they have not had any resident cases.
   ANSWER: Any facilities that meet the visitation criteria would still retain the right to deny outdoor visitation if they believe, 1) circumstances pose a risk of transmitting COVID-19 to the facility, or 2) either the resident or visitor might be at risk of harm. If your facility is unable to implement visitation at this time, communicate the reason to residents and families and keep them updated on the status of visitation. This may be communicated in the daily communication already being provided to residents and their designated representatives.

10. If a family member and/or resident who is cognitively intact, chooses to disregard the visitation guidelines such as hugging, touching and not keeping social distance. Is the facility able to restrict those visits? Will that be a violation of resident rights?
    ANSWER: Staff must monitor visits. Be sure residents and families know the facility infection control and guidance protocols for the visit. Involve the Ombudsman if necessary for a meeting with all parties. If the family does not follow the facility guidelines, the facility can restrict the visits if non-compliance continues after education.

11. What authority does the facility have to intervene with a break in social distancing so they can keep all residents safe?
    ANSWER: Facility protocols based on ISDH guidance for outdoor family visitation.

12. What does the state have in place to support facilities following guidelines, but then facing possible non-compliance from family members as they re-open?
    ANSWER: Develop and implement facility protocol for visitation based on ISDH guidance. Communicate with families the facility protocols for safe visits.
13. Are residents receiving dialysis allowed to have outdoor visits?  
   ANSWER: Residents receiving dialysis are under observation with droplet-contact due to in and out of the building, with appropriate infection control this is acceptable, if they reside in a non-COVID-19 facility.

14. Regarding the outdoor guidance, can we get clarification on how this will work...is it going to be appointments for 1 resident at a time, or will they allow more than one family/resident if social distancing, masking is occurring?  
   ANSWER: Facilities will need to facilitate this with staffing and social distancing.