

VISITOR POLICY FAQ

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GENERAL QUESTIONS:

Why is the visitation policy so strict?

It is Jefferson Healthcare's responsibility to keep our patients, staff, and community safe during this dangerous pandemic. We appreciate your understanding.

How is community prevalence determined?

Community prevalence is determined in partnership with the public health department and is based on the number of known COVID-19 cases in Jefferson County within the last 14 days.

What exceptions can be made to allow visitors?

Very rare visitation policy exceptions can be made in special circumstances. The following scenarios may qualify for visitation exceptions including 1 visitor per day with in and out privileges:

- Minor patients may be accompanied by a caregiver at all times
- Patients with altered mental status, developmental delay, or display disruptive behavior (where caregiver provides safety / is key to safe care delivery).
- Patients who require support person to assist in complex medical decision making for serious illness.
- Patients with disabilities are allowed one visitor that is knowledgeable about the needs of the person with a disability to serve as a designated support person.
- Adult patients seeking emergent care for themselves or a minor may have other minor children present until childcare arrangements can be made.
- Note: end-of-life patients have separate visitation guidelines as noted below.

I think my loved one qualifies for visitation exceptions based on the special circumstances listed above. What do I do?

In most cases, the care team (not the visitor) determines if a patient meets special circumstances. Please call the department providing care to discuss your concerns with the care team. The screening staff can provide you with the appropriate phone number. We ask that you make these calls outside of the hospital building and from your personal cell phone.

I need transportation assistance to my appointment, can I have a visitor?

Yes. If you need assistance such as help with a wheelchair, your visitor may escort you after they have been screened.

I really want to see my loved one but am being told I am not allowed to visit. Are there any other options?

In most areas of the hospital, the staff can provide patients with technology that would allow for a video visit. Please speak with the staff to make these arrangements.

Can I wait in the hospital lobby?

No. For safety reasons, we cannot have visitors inside the hospital building. If you need to wait for a patient while they are in an appointment/procedure, we ask that you wait outside of the hospital building (inside your car if possible). If you need to call a department to discuss visitation exceptions or other patient care information, please make the call outside the hospital building and from your personal cell phone.

END OF LIFE PATIENTS

What if my loved one is dying?

COVID negative end-of-life patients may have up to four visitors per day regardless of community prevalence. Some exceptions may be made for immediate family. Exceptions will be considered via huddle with hospitalist, house supervisor, and nursing staff. There is no restriction regarding how many of these four visitors may be in the room at one time. However, all visitors are expected to remain in the patient's room and wear a hospital-issued mask throughout the entire visit. Four different people may be designated as tomorrow's visitors. Once a visitor leaves the room, their visit is over. If you need assistance during the visit, please press the call light in the room, and a staff member may assist you.

PATIENTS WITH SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED COVID-19:

My loved one has suspected or confirmed COVID-19, can I visit?

In most cases, no one with COVID-19 may have visitors. Exceptions can be made for:

- **A COVID+ end of life patient:** may have up to 2 visitors per day. Visitors must remain in the patient's room for the entire visit. Once the visitor leaves the room, their visit is considered over. Visitors must adhere to COVID-19 visitation requirements (below).
- **A COVID+ laboring patient:** May have 1 visit with 1 visitor per day. Visitors must adhere to the COVID-19 visitation requirements (below).
- **A COVID+ special circumstance patient:** Patients who have altered mental status, developmental delay or disruptive behavior (where the caregiver provides safety / is key to safe care delivery) may have 1 consistent visitor per day. This exception is determined by the care team. The visitor may visit multiple times and must adhere to the COVID-19 visitation requirements (below).
- **A COVID+ minor patient:** may always be accompanied by a caregiver and must adhere to the COVID-19 visitation requirements (below).

What are the requirements to visit a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19?

- The patient must fit into one of the above exception categories.
- The patient must not be undergoing an aerosol generating procedure.
- The visitor must not be on quarantine (persons who were exposed to COVID-19 in the last 14 days, may not visit under any circumstance).
- Visitors must wear required PPE including a hospital issued procedure mask, contact gown and eye protection for the duration of their visit. Staff may provide visitors with this PPE.
- The patient must also wear a hospital-issued procedure mask for the duration of the visit.
- If any of the above criteria are violated, the visit will be revoked.
- Note: if the visitor is wearing required PPE and the patient is also wearing a hospital issued-procedure mask, the visit will NOT count as a COVID-19 exposure. This means the visitor may continue to visit. However, if the patient or visitor remove their mask during the visit, the visitor will be considered to have been exposed to COVID-19. This means that the visitor will need to start 14 days of home quarantine and will not be allowed in public places. No more visits to the hospital may be made.

IF VISITATION IS PERMITTED BASED ON COMMUNITY PREVALENCE OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:

Do I have to wear a mask while I am visiting?

Yes, if visitation is permitted based on community prevalence or special circumstances. In compliance with the statewide masking mandate, all visitors are required to wear hospital-issued masks throughout the duration of their visit. Failure to comply with masking guidelines may result in the visit being revoked.

Can I wear my own cloth mask?

No. If visitation is permitted based on community prevalence or special circumstances, visitors must wear a hospital-issued procedure mask for the duration of their visit.

How are visitors determined?

If visitation is permitted based on community prevalence, most departments allow 1 visit with 1 person per day. This visitor is determined at the beginning of the day by the patient.

Can a different person visit tomorrow?

If visitation is permitted based on community prevalence, most departments allow 1 visit with 1 person per day. This person may change day to day.

How long can I visit?

If visitation is permitted based on community prevalence, there is no time restriction on visits if the visitor remains in the patient's room. However, when the visitor leaves the patient's room, your visit is considered over for that day.

I am today's visitor, but I have an important errand to run, can I leave and come back?

No. If visitation is permitted based on community prevalence, the visit is considered over as soon as you leave the patient's room. No exceptions are made for food or important errands. Please be sure to make all necessary arrangements including food and pet care prior to your visit.

What if I came from far away?

No exceptions are made based on visitor's length of travel. For this reason, it is important to coordinate with the care team prior to visiting. In most areas of the hospital, the staff can provide patients with technology that would allow for a video visit. Please speak with the staff to make these arrangements.

Can children visit?

No. Children under 16 will not be allowed to visit any department.

What if I need to ask the staff something during my visit?

If visitation is permitted based on community prevalence or special circumstances, please press the call light and the staff will come to assist you. Please do NOT leave the room to approach staff. If you leave the room, your visit is over.

What if I need to use the bathroom during my visit?

If visitation is permitted based on community prevalence or special circumstances, please use the bathroom in your loved one's room (the patient's bathroom).

What if I need to eat during my visit? Can I bring in my own food for myself?

If visitation is permitted based on community prevalence or special circumstances, please plan ahead for your visit and bring all food and beverage that you will need throughout your visit. In some situations, the staff may help you arrange to have a visitor meal tray delivered to the patient's room. Please arrange this service with staff.