

POLICY AND PROCEDURE
COVID-19 Pandemic Essential Caregiver

Department: Nursing

Subject: COVID-19 Pandemic Reopening Guidance

Policy Initiated: 09/2020

Revised:

Mission Statement

Seacrest Village, a quality adult health care community, is committed to providing comprehensive health care to its residents and members.

The owners, staff and volunteers are guided by our moral and ethical responsibility to our fellow man.

Seacrest Village will provide the services necessary to enhance the physical, emotional, recreational, social and spiritual needs of our residents, members, and family members.

Vision Statement

Seacrest Village will plan and develop a continuum of health care services for older adults in a community setting. We will affiliate, network and associate with other health service organizations to meet our goal of a seamless health care community.

BACKGROUND:

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) together with the New Jersey Department of Health (DOH) under E.O. No. 20-026 issued Nursing Home Reopening Guidance that outlines criteria for reopening to visitation and group activities. This guidance is composed of tiered recommendations to address nursing homes in different phases of COVID-19 response.

OBJECTIVES:

To provide guidance on managing, screening, educating and training of designated Essential Caregivers (EC) pursuant to the requirements of the directives from CMS and NJDOH E.O. No.20-026 to prevent the introduction of SARS-CoV2 into the facility as Seacrest moves towards reopening phase.

POLICY:

Although technology can help decrease unintended consequences of prolonged physical separation and isolation on a resident's overall health and well-being, it is not a sustainable replacement for in-person contact. This is especially true for residents with cognitive impairments, visual and/or hearing difficulties, and mobility limitations as they struggle to maintain connections with loved ones. Seacrest has recognized the critical role family members and other close, outside caregivers have in the care and support of residents. As such, Seacrest has developed a process of designating essential caregivers (EC) to help ensure these high-risk residents continue to receive individualized, person-centered care.

PROCEDURES:

A. Designating Essential Caregivers

1. All residents may receive Essential Caregiver visitation, except for those residents in a 14-day quarantine period, positive for COVID-19, and have not yet met the criteria for the discontinuation of isolation.
2. Seacrest staff members must consult the resident or the resident's responsible parties about the resident's wishes or best interests to determine whom to designate as the Essential Caregiver.
3. Those interested in serving as Essential Caregivers must complete the "Seacrest Essential Caregiver Application." The Administrator, in collaboration with the Director of Nursing or the Social Worker, will approve or deny the application to serve as an Essential Caregiver.
4. Both the resident and Essential Caregiver must sign the "Seacrest Village Visit Rules, Informed Consent, Hold Harmless, & Release Regarding COVID-19" and "Seacrest Village Essential Caregiver Agreement" prior to beginning the Essential Caregiver relationship.
5. Residents or residents' responsible parties may express a desire to designate more than one Essential Caregiver based on their past involvement and needs (e.g., more than one family member previously split time to provide care for the resident). In these unique situations, Seacrest staff members will work cooperatively with the resident and family to work out a schedule to accommodate the Essential Caregivers. A resident may have no more than two (2) Essential Caregivers.
6. Essential Caregivers must be at least eighteen (18) years old.
7. Essential Caregivers must plan to visit residents at least once per week, absent exceptional circumstances or community prohibitions on entry

B. Role of Essential Caregiver

1. Essential Caregivers will support and encourage residents with activities of daily living (ADLs) and have an essential purpose.
2. Essential Caregiver visitation is not solely to provide social visits.
3. Seacrest Village staff members will hold an IDC meeting and careplan the role of each Essential Caregiver.

C. Testing & Screening Essential Caregivers

1. For the safety and wellbeing of the residents and healthcare personnel, Seacrest Village strongly recommend that Essential Caregivers demonstrate results of two negative COVID-19 tests before providing care to the residents: the first negative COVID-19 test should occur 7 days prior to the second test. The second test should occur no more than 5 days prior to the visit to Seacrest Village. The Essential Caregiver should thereafter continue to demonstrate negative COVID-19 tests on a weekly basis or 2 negative COVID-19 tests prior to returning to provide care in Seacrest Village.
2. Essential Caregivers can undergo COVID-19 testing through their own healthcare providers. Essential Caregivers also have the option of undergoing COVID-19 testing in Seacrest Village by providing valid insurance information; Essential Caregivers are responsible for the unpaid costs of any COVID-19 testing at Seacrest Village.
3. Essential Caregivers will always be screened prior to being allowed access into the facility. Screenings shall include temperature checks, questioning on symptoms and diagnosis of disease (including COVID-19), and questioning on travel and interaction with those with COVID-19 and suspected of having COVID-19.

4. For the safety and wellbeing of the residents and healthcare personnel, Seacrest Village strongly recommend that Essential Caregivers provide proof of having received a flu vaccination by November 1, 2020.

D. Essential Caregiver Visitation Details

1. Essential Caregiver visits will be scheduled in advance. Essential Caregivers may visit during the following hours: M-F, 9am-4pm, and Sa-Su, 10am– 4pm. To reduce congestion during the screening process, Essential Caregivers may not enter the community during the changes of shift.
2. When Seacrest is in Phase 0 pursuant to NJ DOH guidance, a resident may have Essential Caregiver care for 1 visit per week for a maximum of 2 hours per visit.
3. When Seacrest is in Phase 1 or Phase 2, respectively, pursuant to NJ DOH guidance, a resident may have Essential Caregiver care for two visits per week for a maximum of 2 hours per visit.
4. When Seacrest is in Phase 3 pursuant to NJ DOH guidance, regular visitation will resume.
5. Essential Caregivers must remain in their assigned areas for the duration of their visits.
6. Essential Caregivers must engage in hand hygiene and social distancing from others besides the resident while in the facility.
7. The Essential Caregiver must maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet with staff and other residents while in the facility.
8. Seacrest Village staff members may stop any Essential Caregiver visit or visits if it is believed that the visit or visits are not in the best interests of the resident or facility.
9. Essential Caregivers must sign in and sign out of the facility.
10. The Essential Caregiver must always wear proper Personal Protective Equipment while in the facility. Depending on the NJDOH Phase, this PPE include a surgical mask, face shield and/or isolation gown. Essential Caregivers must always wear masks while in the facility.
11. Essential Caregivers must provide their own PPE.
12. Essential caregivers must watch the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) video on donning and doffing PPE <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xy00pLT9M4&feature=youtu.be> and sign an in-service sheet that they have watched the video.

