

April 29, 2021

Dear Lorien Residents and Families:

Yesterday, Governor Hogan announced that Maryland has experienced the largest drop in new cases and lowest transmission rate in country. Maryland's COVID positivity rate continues to decrease and is now below 4%. As new cases across the country also decline, health officials have relaxed several guidelines. While I am encouraged by these trends and updates, I also ask that you remain cautious. As you know, eased restrictions in the past have led to increased cases in our communities.

On Tuesday, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) revised its testing guidance for staff, stating that **fully vaccinated nursing home staff who are asymptomatic can be exempt from routine COVID-19 testing**. Both vaccinated and unvaccinated residents and staff must still receive tests if they show signs of infection or in the event of an outbreak. Again, routine testing of asymptomatic residents is not required unless a resident or staff member tests positive for the virus. If a facility has an outbreak, regardless of vaccination status, residents will be tested every 3-7 days until no new cases are identified for 14 days. More on the updated testing guidance can be found here:

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/gso-20-38-nh-revised.pdf>.

The revised guidance also permits visitations and personal contact among residents and visitors who are fully vaccinated. If visitors and residents are both fully vaccinated, they can visit without masks and without social distancing as long as they are alone in their room or in a visitation room without unvaccinated individuals. You can read the detailed guidance here:

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/gso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf>.

In addition, CMS issued updated guidance for nursing homes that allows fully vaccinated nursing home residents to resume dining activities without masking or social distancing restrictions. We are working closely with local health departments and ombudsmen to formalize protocols in each facility around activities and communal dining. We will update you with these policies next week.

On the heels the U.S. Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) new guidelines for outdoor mask use, Governor Hogan also lifted the outdoor mask mandate and outdoor dining restrictions in Maryland effective yesterday. While the CDC recommends unvaccinated people still wear a mask around strangers outdoors, it is not required in Maryland. Face coverings are still required indoors, and indoor dining restrictions will remain in place until more Marylanders are vaccinated.

Please use your best judgement to protect yourself and your loved ones. According to the CDC, it is still unknown if someone who has been fully vaccinated can spread Covid-19. The CDC also reported that the UK variant is prominent in our region. At this time, 5 of the Lorien facilities are on outbreak status. We encourage you to continue to practice proper hand hygiene, wear a tight-fitted mask

indoors, and social distance when it is appropriate. Vaccination is now open to all and pre-registration is no longer needed for vaccination <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/vaccine>.



I'm grateful for these positive changes especially as Mother's Day approaches. **During your visits, you are now able to bring in fresh cut flowers (but please no plants in soil at this time) as well as commercially or home prepared meals.** I'm looking forward to hearing more stories about the happy and long awaited reunions between you and your loved ones similar to Evelyn and Raymond, pictured here. They have been finally reunited in their new Lorien Taneytown apartment after being separated for 3 months!

I wish you and your family a very Happy Mother's Day on May 9th!

Sincerely,
Lou Grimmel, CEO