[Name of facility]

Policy on Essential Caregivers

DATE

Purpose:

[Name of facility] recognizes the importance of social distancing and physical separation to help keep residents safe from exposure to COVID-19. [Name of facility] also acknowledges the unintended consequences of prolonged social distancing and isolation on a resident’s overall health and well-being, particularly with residents who have had friends, family, or caregivers participate actively in their care prior to the pandemic. The following protocols will be utilized to address the desire for essential caregivers effective DATE.

**Note: if at any time there is a concern about community exposures to COVID-19, or exposures of staff, residents or families to COVID-19 within our facility, we will be suspending this policy until further notice.**

**1. Essential Caregiver (ECG) Eligibility:**

Residents/Resident Representatives requesting an essential caregiver need to meet these qualifications:

a.

*(This is where you identify your criteria for ECG such as the resident had an ECG in past caregiving roles or use of ECG is identified in resident plan of care or* *resident has an identified need for an ECG due to failure to thrive or exacerbated signs of depression.)*

b.

**2. Requesting Essential Caregivers**

Qualifying residents/resident representatives can request an essential caregiver using the following process:

a.

*(This is where you identify the staff member point of contact for requesting ECG, how to contact the staff member, how the staff member will process the request, length of time before request will be considered/granted.)*

b.

**3. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

a. ECGs must wear the same level of PPE for the resident visit that staff are required to wear. (MDH PPE grid can be found here:

<https://www.careproviders.org/members/2020/COVID_ppegrid.pdf>) At minimum, this includes a face mask and protective eyewear (eyewear must cover the front and sides of the eye area). PPE shall also be worn in the hallways/corridors.

b. The facility will / will not provide PPE to ECGs.

c. Staff will train ECGs on the proper method of donning and doffing required PPE.

d. ECGs failing to properly utilize PPE will not be eligible for future visits.

**4. Facility Essential Caregiver Screening/Check in Process**

a. Essential Caregivers (ECG) must go through our essential caregiver orientation training, which includes review of proper infection control, screening, use of personal protective equipment, visitation terms, and triggers for pausing ECG visits, prior to their first visit.

b. All ECG must enter the building through XXX door, and immediately check in XXX for their screening prior to each visit.

c. All ECGs must perform hand hygiene at XXX before proceeding to visitation.

d. All ECGs will be screened by staff for temperature and other signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

e. At each visit, ECGs will sign and date a visit form indicating their understanding of the ECG requirements and rules.

**5. Essential Caregiver Visits**

a.All visits by ECGs must be scheduled. “Walk-ins” will not be permitted.

b. Scheduling visits: The following system will be utilized for ECGs to schedule visits: XXX *(This is where you identify the scheduling process for your visits)*

b. After screening, ECGs must wear the appropriate PPE and go directly to XXXX (either resident room or other designated area). Visits can only be between the resident requesting the ECG and the ECG, and not include other residents or staff in the facility.

c. Visits shall be limited to no more than: XXXX(time) in duration.

d. No more than one ECG can visit a resident at a time, but a resident can have more than one ECG scheduled visit in a day (maximum 3 hours per day of visits)

**5. Triggers for Pausing Caregiver Visits**

a. ECG visits will be prohibited during a resident 14-day quarantine – exceptions will be made for compassionate care visits

b. ECG visits will be prohibited if a resident is COVID-19 positive or symptomatic – exceptions will be made for compassionate care visits.

c. Visiting rights may be restricted or revoked for individual ECGs if communicated safety measures are not followed.

d. Visiting rights will be revoked for the ECG if they are COVID-19 positive or are exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19, until one of the following criteria are met:

Symptom-based strategy. Exclude from visits until:

* + At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and**,
  + At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

Test-based strategy. Exclude from visits until:

* + Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
  + Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), **and**
  + Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected ≥24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens).

**6. Concerns with Essential Caregiver Policy can be directed to:**

a. XXXX (facility staff member)

b. Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care at 651-431-2555 or 1-800-657-3591 to request advocacy services.