

HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital Updates Visitor Guidelines To Suspend Inpatient Visitors

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O'FALLON, IL – As the number of COVID-19 cases continue to increase throughout our region, HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital in O'Fallon, IL, will be suspending visitors for inpatients with some exceptions, **effective today, August 19, 2021.**

“With the number of hospitalizations of COVID-19 patients rising quickly in our community along with additional increased volumes of patients, many with higher

acuity in our hospital, we made this decision to better protect our patients and colleagues,” said St. Elizabeth’s Hospital President and Chief Executive Officer Patti Fischer. “We understand these restrictions are extremely difficult for those with loved ones in our facility. We saw a dramatic decline in previous months, but this recent surge of COVID positivity with subsequent hospitalizations warrants these additional safety measures.”

Visitor guidelines at St. Elizabeth’s Hospital are as follows, with some noted exceptions listed below:

- **NO VISITORS ALLOWED** for patients under investigation for possible COVID-19 diagnosis and those confirmed positive for COVID-19.
- **NO VISITORS ALLOWED** in the Emergency Department.
- **NO VISITORS ALLOWED** for inpatients.
- **NO VISITORS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD**
- No one who is currently positive for COVID-19 but asymptomatic or has been asked to quarantine based on possible exposure to COVID-19 should visit the hospital unless seeking medical attention.

Exceptions to visitor guidelines include:

- **Women and Infants Center patients** may have two support persons during delivery and one (same person) throughout rest of stay.
- **Pediatric emergency and inpatients** under the age of 18 may have two parents or guardians present.
- **Surgery (inpatient and outpatient) patients** may have one visitor to stay in designated area.
- **For outpatient appointments and/or procedures, including pediatric patients**, one approved adult support person may be with the patient for the duration of their procedure or clinical visit. Patients being provided outpatient services are encouraged to come alone whenever possible or have visitors wait outside until services are complete. If the patient becomes admitted, inpatient restrictions will apply.
- **End-of-life patients** may have two visitors per day, but additional safety precautions and restrictions are in place for COVID positive patients. Families will be directly informed by the care team on these accommodations.
- **Patients with intellectual and/or developmental disability or cognitive impairments** may have one support person.

Approved support persons must be over the age of 18 and will continue to be screened upon entering the facility for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure. Masks are **MANDATORY** for all persons within a health care facility, per CDC guideline.

Family members and loved ones should provide nursing staff with their contact information and may call (618) 234-2120 to check on their loved ones.

“By putting these guidelines in place, we continue our commitment to respectfully care for all, especially those most vulnerable amongst us,” Fischer said. “We will continue to evaluate our visitor guidelines based on regional positivity rates. The public can do their part to help by most importantly getting vaccinated, wearing a mask, and practicing the other health and safety measures we’ve been encouraging for the last year and a half.”