

To: LifeSpire residents and families

From: Jonathan Cook, president and CEO, and Paula Bolton, vice president of clinical services

Date: August 3, 2021

Re: updated guidance to minimize risk of COVID infection

Across our communities, in all levels of care, we have seen a great resident response to the COVID-19 vaccine with an overall 98% resident vaccination rate. Our team members are slightly behind this percentage, averaging 61% across LifeSpire communities.

Sadly, COVID infection rates across the commonwealth are on the rise due to a new form of the COVID-19 virus called the Delta variant. We want to remain vigilant in the fight against COVID-19 and all its variants. Individuals who are fully vaccinated must also be on alert. Being vaccinated does not guarantee immunity, though the COVID-19 vaccines have proven to be effective in several ways - by helping to keep individuals from getting and spreading the virus and by keeping those vaccinated from getting seriously ill if infected. If vaccinated individuals do become infected, having the vaccine can prevent hospitalization and even death. Please see the following link to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) information regarding the benefits of a COVID-19 vaccine - [Benefits of Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine | CDC](#). A booster vaccine for COVID-19 is not currently available. We are monitoring for recommendations from the CDC and/or Virginia Department of Health regarding booster vaccination and will communicate that information when we have it.

Because we are learning of increased transmission, both in vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals in our communities at large, and of isolated breakthrough cases (infection in individuals who are vaccinated) we are taking steps to minimize risk of transmission and protect our residents and team members. The steps outlined below are effective immediately.

We are temporarily reinstating mask usage throughout all levels of care, for team members, residents, and visitors regardless of vaccination status. This decision is based on CDC guidance recently released recommending all individuals wear masks indoors regardless of vaccination status.

In addition to mask usage, we are implementing the following:

- temporarily discontinuing visitors/guests dining in all community dining rooms
- temporary adjustments to activities/programs such as changing location to outdoors or limiting number of participants – these adjustments will be communicated by each community's team

Dining rooms will remain open for resident dining. Residents have the choice of whether to have meals in the dining room or in their private residence. Communities may be offering other ways to dine with a guest in your private residence. If you need special accommodations regarding a dining plan or for information on dining options with guests, please reach out to your community leadership team.

We feel this approach is better than returning to more restrictive measures such as dining room closures for resident use, visitation restrictions and the cancelation of events and programs.

While we see this as a temporary spike, we would encourage residents to please try and reschedule, or not attend, large gatherings. Please attempt to not gather in large groups, especially with unvaccinated or unmasked people, such as summer BBQ's or other social gatherings. Please continue to use good judgement, hand sanitizer and any precautions at your disposal. If you feel you are in a high-risk category, we encourage you to take extra precautions and potentially restrict yourself from all large group gatherings. Please evaluate whether visits from others is necessary currently, if not consider postponing the visit.

The Virginia Department of Health, as of today, has not yet issued updated recommendations that align with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) guidance released last week regarding the use of masks indoors regardless of vaccination status. Part of the challenge with following official guidance is that governing agencies do not release recommendations that align or do not issue them simultaneously. Our communities routinely balance unaligned guidance from multiple agencies while working to be proactive based on changing conditions related to COVID.

Residents, families, and team members have done an amazing job navigating these issues last year and this year. We sincerely hope these are temporary measures.

Reminders:

- All residents who received a COVID-19 vaccine at another location—outside of a LifeSpire community—should report this immediately if you haven't already done so. This is important for tracking and operational purposes.
- Residents should report signs/symptoms of COVID-19 immediately.
- If you haven't received a COVID-19 vaccine, please consider getting the vaccine to protect yourself, residents, team members, family members and others.
- If you experience an exposure to someone with COVID-19 and are fully vaccinated, you still may be asked to quarantine based on the situation.

Thank you for your continued support and patience. Please reach out to a member of your community's leadership team if you have any questions and/or concerns regarding this new guidance. Stay safe as we navigate increasing infection rates and the Delta variant.