

March 2021 Village Care Center Updates

Village Care Center COVID-19 Cases

- **March 31:** No new cases.
- **March 30:** No new cases.
- **March 29:** No new cases.
- **March 28:** No new cases.
- **March 27:** An associate tested positive. The individual has minimal contact with residents.
- **March 26:** No new cases.
- **March 25:** No new cases.
- **March 24:** No new cases.
- **March 23:** No new cases.
- **March 22:** No new cases.
- **March 21:** No new cases.
- **March 20:** No new cases.
- **March 19:** No new cases.
- **March 18:** No new cases.
- **March 17:** An associate who works in the Memory Care unit tested positive.
- **March 16;** No new cases.
- **March 15:** No new cases.
- **March 14:** No new cases.
- **March 13:** One resident on the Village Rehabilitation Unit (VRU) tested positive.
- **March 12:** No new cases.
- **March 11:** No new cases.
- **March 10:** No new cases.
- **March 9:** No new cases.
- **March 8:** No new cases.
- **March 7:** No new cases.
- **March 6:** No new cases.
- **March 5:** A resident on the Village Rehabilitation Unit (VRU) tested positive.
- **March 4:** No new cases.
- **March 3:** No new cases.
- **March 2:** No new cases.
- **March 1:** An associate, who is not in a direct care position and who has not worked since Feb. 19, tested positive.

Communication Updates

March 30, 2021

I have great news for you – the Village Care Center will be open to visitors once again starting on **Wednesday, March 31**.

With that said, in addition to welcoming visitors to our building, we also are implementing updates to the visitation policy. The most notable change: you no longer need to schedule your visits! Instead, you can simply stop by within the set visiting hours (see below).

We are implementing this change on a trial basis and hope the added flexibility will make it easier for you to visit with your loved one. However, I need to point out that if visitors don't adhere to the guidelines, we will need to move back to a scheduled visit system.

Here are the details you should be aware of:

- **VCC visiting hours** are from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.
 - **Please be aware:** the end times are hard-stop times because the VCC does not have staff available outside of those hours to greet and screen visitors. Entry will be denied after visiting hours close.
- **Visitor(s) must complete a visitor log and screening prior to entering resident care area.**
- **Visits need to take place in the resident's room OR outside**, with the preferred method still being outside.
- **When visiting, please adhere to the following:**
 - Visitors must wear masks at all times. (Children also must wear face coverings and remain in the rooms of the person they are visiting.)
 - Visitors should go directly to the resident's room or designated visitation area.
 - Visitors should remain 6 feet from other residents and staff in the facility.
 - No more than two visitors can be present in one room.
 - Visits should be limited to one hour.
 - If a resident has a roommate, the visit should not occur in the resident's room.
 - Pets are not allowed for indoor visits.
 - Please let me know if you want to read the entire policy.

Please know that we have put these guidelines in place for the safety of our patients/residents, staff and visitors. They are based on screening guidelines provided by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Please let me know if you have any questions.

March 29, 2021

On Friday, we conducted a routine weekly COVID-19 testing of all associates. I'm sorry to inform you that on Saturday, we received a positive test for one of our associates. The associate is a nurse but does not work in a neighborhood and has had minimal contact with residents/patients. Unfortunately, this means that we cannot do in person visitation on any neighborhood until we are able to do an additional round of testing for all residents. We will test everyone today and tomorrow. If all the tests come back negative, we will be able to resume indoor visitation on Wednesday.

Although the number of positives in the community is declining and the number of people who are getting vaccinated are increasing, we still must remain vigilant with our actions. I'll be in contact with an update as soon as we receive all the test results to inform you of our next steps.

March 26, 2021

It has been great to see all of you this past week! I know how much your resident loved ones have missed you, but we have really missed all of you, as well. With that most welcome of changes, and the fact that we have NO new cases of COVID-19 to report, I have some other exciting news to share:

We are changing the times for our in-person visits to allow more flexibility.

- Beginning Monday, visiting hours will be from 8:30 AM – 6:30 PM. Additionally, we will be open on weekends from 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM.
- Please be aware that the end times are hard-stop times, because we do not have someone available outside of those hours to greet and screen visitors. If you are the only family member on this email group, please communicate to your loved ones.
- We will have to deny entry after visiting hours close.

Please remember that these visits need to take place in the resident's room OR outside, with our preferred method still being outside.

Updated Guidance. Yesterday afternoon, the Department of Health and Senior Services issued updated guidance to all Missouri licensed facilities that streamlines, consolidates, and replaces all previous guidance on visitation, community reopening, beauty & barber services, communal dining, group activities, and resident outings. Recognizing Missouri's lower COVID-19 positivity rates and increasing vaccination rates, the updated guidance is our State's attempt to balance still needed infection control and resident quality of life.

The team is currently working through the updated guidance and creating new policies around it. Early next week I will have specifics to share with you. But, for now, just know I think you will be extremely happy.

Also, I had a great opportunity to be interviewed on KCTV5's "Better KC" show this week and share about some of the cutting edge technology we are using in the Village Care Center to help keep people safe and give the best possible care to the residents and patients at the VCC. If you'd like to see that portion of the show, [click here](#).

Village Assisted Living. Renovations are continuing and are bringing about amazing transformations. There have been NO new positive cases of COVID-19.

Independent Living. There have been NO new cases of COVID-19 reported.

Lastly, I am off next week and taking my family on a much needed vacation. Like many of you, I have not seen my grandparents in over a year and am ecstatic to finally be able to see them. There will not be an update next week unless we see new COVID-19 cases; if that happens, you will receive correspondence from our assistant administrator, Tami Hoversten.

Thank you all for your continuing support and for following the visiting safety measures carefully so we can keep them going.

SUMMARY OF JOHN KNOX VILLAGE'S CURRENT STATUS WITH COVID-19 CASES							
	RESIDENTS				ASSOCIATES		
	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths	Cumulative Totals*	Active Cases	Recovered	Cumulative Totals*
Village Care Center (as of 03/26/21)	0	95	47	142	1	137	138
Village Assisted Living (as of 03/26/21)	0	19	6	25	0	45	45
All Village areas outside of VCC and VAL (as of 03/26/21)	0	28	4	32	0	74	74

March 22, 2021

My update this today is short and sweet: **WE ARE OPEN FOR VISITORS!**

Please note: We are open on each of our long-term care neighborhoods, as well as our Village Rehab Unit. Unfortunately, our memory care neighborhood cannot have indoor visitation until March 31st, but can still do courtyard visitation.

Please call at least 24 hours in advance to schedule an in-person visit at 816-347-2400.

See you soon!

March 17, 2021

I am so sorry to inform you that overnight, as part of routine weekly testing of all associates, we had an associate test positive for COVID-19. The associate was working on the memory care neighborhood. Unfortunately, this means that we cannot do in person visitation on any neighborhood until we are able to do an additional round of testing for all residents. For memory care specifically, we cannot do indoor visitation for fourteen more days in order to ensure there is no community spread.

I know this news is so disheartening. It really feels like we take one step forward and one step back. It is, however, a good reminder that the pandemic is ongoing and each of us must be vigilant in order to truly turn the corner and get back to normal. I will continue to update you as soon as I can.

SUMMARY OF JOHN KNOX VILLAGE'S CURRENT STATUS WITH COVID-19 CASES							
	RESIDENTS				ASSOCIATES		
	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths	Cumulative Totals*	Active Cases	Recovered	Cumulative Totals*
Village Care Center (as of 03/17/21)	0	95	47	142	1	137	138
Village Assisted Living (as of 03/17/21)	0	19	6	25	0	45	45
All Village areas outside of VCC and VAL (as of 03/17/21)	0	28	4	32	0	74	74

March 16, 2021

I wanted to let you know that baseline testing was completed for all residents and all test results came back negative!

All care neighborhoods are available for outdoor and indoor visits in resident rooms. Be sure to call 347-2400 in the morning so we can have your loved one ready to see you when you arrive. See you all tomorrow.

March 14, 2021

I wanted to let you all know that yesterday, as part of routine new admission testing in the Village Rehabilitation Unit, we received a COVID+ result. The individual has been moved to the isolation unit and all potentially affected persons have been notified of the positive result.

Unfortunately, this means we have to suspend in-person visitation on the long-term care and memory care neighborhoods until we can complete a baseline test for all residents. Outdoor visitation can still occur if the weather is appropriate. We plan on testing all residents on Tuesday, which means visits could re-start on Wednesday, assuming all tests come back negative.

I am so sorry to report this disappointing news, as we were all so excited to see everyone this week. We will continue to notify you as soon as we have any updates.

SUMMARY OF JOHN KNOX VILLAGE'S CURRENT STATUS WITH COVID-19 CASES							
	RESIDENTS				ASSOCIATES		
	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths	Cumulative Totals*	Active Cases	Recovered	Cumulative Totals*
Village Care Center (as of 03/14/21)	1	95	47	143	1	137	138
Village Assisted Living (as of 03/14/21)	0	19	6	25	0	45	45
All Village areas outside of VCC and VAL (as of 03/14/21)	0	28	4	32	0	74	74

March 12, 2021

Sunday will mark the anniversary of the date we closed our doors to visitors.

Almost one year later, I am so excited to tell you that effective Monday, March 15, **we will be welcoming visitors back to the VCC!**

On March 10, thanks to the nation-wide vaccination of residents and nursing home staff, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released [updated nursing home visitation guidance](#), which is consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [updated guidance for healthcare settings](#) released the same day. Both offer more flexible visitation guidance, and both emphasize the importance of maintaining infection prevention practices, given the continued risk of COVID-19 transmission. These changes are effective immediately.*

While this is terrific and exciting news, John Knox Village needs a little bit of time to review and digest these new guidance documents and gain a clearer understanding of what they allow and how best to carry them out.

Each Village Care Center family will receive a phone call over the next couple of days to go over the nuances of the guidance and give everyone a chance to ask questions.

To help with that conversation, here is a summary of the new guidance for in-person visits for each of you to review:

Outdoor Visitation

Outdoor visitation is still the preferred method of visitation, regardless of the vaccination status of residents or visitors. As before, outdoor visitation may generally continue regardless of the nursing home's outbreak status or county positivity rate. Residents on transmission-based precautions, either

due to suspected or confirmed infection, or due to quarantine, are still restricted from visitation regardless of vaccination status until transmission-based precautions have been discontinued.

Indoor Visitation

Indoor visitation has been revised significantly. The new guidance has adjusted restrictions related to county positivity rates and outbreak status, as outlined below. As noted above, residents on transmission-based precautions are still restricted from visitation regardless of vaccination status until transmission-based precautions have been discontinued.

- **Indoor Visitation – County Positivity Rate.** Indoor visitation may now take place regardless of the county positivity rate, with one exception: residents who are not fully vaccinated are restricted from indoor visitation if the county positivity rate is greater than 10% and fewer than 70% of the nursing home’s total resident population has been vaccinated.
- If the county positivity rate is less than 10% or if more than 70% of the nursing home’s total resident population has been vaccinated, unvaccinated residents may enjoy indoor visitation.
- Fully vaccinated residents may enjoy indoor visitation regardless of county positivity rate and the vaccination rate of the total nursing home resident population.
- **Indoor Visitation – Outbreak.** Indoor visitation may now occur during an outbreak according to the following processes and parameters:
 - If one positive case has been identified among staff or one nursing home-onset case among residents (outbreak), indoor visitation is immediately suspended and the nursing home must initiate outbreak testing protocols.
 - After one round of outbreak testing of all staff and residents, if the outbreak is found to be contained to a single area, such as a single unit, indoor visitation may resume in the unaffected areas / units. Outbreak testing will continue according to previously-outlined requirements.
 - If the first round of testing or any subsequent outbreak testing indicate that the outbreak is not contained to a single area or unit, indoor visitation is restricted for all residents regardless of vaccination status until criteria have been met to discontinue outbreak testing. That is, all residents and staff test negative and 14 days have passed since the last positive test result.

Additional Flexibilities and Considerations

- Nursing homes should continue to screen all visitors prior to entry. Visitors who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 infection in the past 14 days should be restricted regardless of the visitor’s vaccination status.
- Visitors should also continue to adhere to core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention including wearing a mask throughout the visit and practicing effective hand hygiene. Visitors should be notified of the risk for exposure during visitation, including appropriate signage regarding current outbreaks.
- Fully vaccinated residents may choose to have physical contact with their visitors provided they are wearing a well-fitting mask and hand hygiene is performed before and after physical

contact. Visitors must continue to maintain social distancing from all other residents and staff during the visit.

- CMS permits testing of visitors or inquiries about vaccination status; however, nursing homes may not require proof of testing or vaccination as a condition of visitation. Similarly, CMS does not require vaccination of surveyors and nursing homes must permit entry of the surveyor regardless of vaccination status.
- It is essential to note that **testing requirements do not change**. Nursing homes must continue to test all residents and staff regardless of vaccination status in response to signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and in response to an outbreak. Nursing homes must continue to test all staff routinely based on county positivity rates regardless of vaccination status.
- Additionally, we note that the CDC guidance referenced above encourages unvaccinated residents to delay indoor visitation until they have been fully vaccinated. CDC additionally recommends that both residents and visitors are counseled on risks prior to beginning indoor visitation.

**Please note: These are not to be confused with the OTHER CDC guidance that came out this week: [Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#), which does not apply to healthcare settings.*

I know this is confusing. Trust me, this is the simplified version of the guidance. We look forward to talking with you and helping you better understand the great new opportunity to begin in-person visits again at the VCC, and I look forward to seeing you soon.

March 5, 2021

I am sorry to report that during routine testing today we found that we have a new COVID+ case on our Village Rehabilitation Unit (VRU). The patient has been isolating in their room, per our “New Admission Policy.” As such, we believe there is very little risk of exposure to other VRU patients, with zero chance of exposure on our memory care and long term care neighborhoods. Unfortunately, this does set us back to Day 1 and we cannot have visitors inside the building for fourteen days or until our guidance changes, whichever comes first. Fortunately, the weather is looking good for being outdoors.

Regarding guidance, many have asked who and where this comes from, so I wanted to clarify. We have three different bodies that are issuing guidance (from local all the way to federal), but our ultimate authority is the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). We continue to advocate loudly for them to change their current guidance, in light of having the vast majority of our residents being fully vaccinated, but we are still bound by that guidance.

While we continue to await new indoor visitation guidance from CMS, we have made an exciting change to our policy regarding our outdoor visitation. In short, we will be allowing unlimited outdoor visitation appointments for all of our residents. The visits can take place any time of day until 4:30 p.m., including Saturdays and Sundays. We can still only accommodate two visitors per visit, but with the weather improving, we feel like this will allow each of you to visit as often as you like. Please contact Debbie Bowlen at 816-347-2400 at least one day before, to schedule your visit.

Across Jackson County, we continue to see the positivity rate and number of new cases go down. However, across the nation, the rate of decline has stalled, which is worrisome. We are so close to moving past this devastating period, but we need to press as hard as we ever have with our public health measures of mask wearing, physical distancing, and good hygiene. We can do this!

SUMMARY OF JOHN KNOX VILLAGE'S CURRENT STATUS WITH COVID-19 CASES							
	RESIDENTS				ASSOCIATES		
	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths	Cumulative Totals*	Active Cases	Recovered	Cumulative Totals*
Village Care Center (as of 03/05/21)	1	94	47	142	1	137	138
Village Assisted Living (as of 03/05/21)	0	19	6	25	0	45	45
All Village areas outside of VCC and VAL (as of 03/05/21)	0	28	4	32	0	74	74

March 2, 2021

I wanted to let you know that yesterday we learned that a non-direct care associate has tested positive for COVID-19. The individual last worked on Feb. 19.

Due to this COVID+ result, we are required to suspend indoor in-person visitation until Monday, March 8. However, the current guidance from CMS states that we can continue to have outdoor visitation, as long as the weather is appropriate.

So for the remainder of the week, if you had an indoor visit scheduled it will need to be moved to our courtyard. **Due to the colder nature of the mornings, we are asking that if you have a morning visit schedule, please call Debbie Bowlen at 816-347-2400 to reschedule for the afternoon.**

The other short-term consequence of the new COVID+ result is that all of our residents will be required to be tested, to ensure the virus did not spread.

While I am disappointed in this result, I am grateful that the weather is cooperating for outdoor visitation. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions.