



SAINT MARY'S AT ASBURY RIDGE  
SAINT MARY'S EAST

November 2, 2020

Dear Families and Friends of Saint Mary's East,

The health and safety of our residents and employees is our overriding concern. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, please be assured we are acting in the best interest of those who live and work here and we are diligently following all of the latest guidance.

It is thanks to strict infection prevention efforts and adherence to our policies that we have successfully kept our community safe since the onset of this pandemic. With the holiday season upon us, we need your continued help. We thought it would be best to provide you with some more information so you know what to expect in the coming weeks and review a few protocols.

### **Restricted Holiday Visitation**

Due to a number of constraints, visitation will be restricted on and around the major holidays. We are informing you of this policy now so that you have ample time to make arrangements and coordinate a visit. Visits will not be held on the following dates:

- **Thanksgiving:** No visitations beginning Thursday, November 26 through Sunday, November 29. Visits will resume on Monday, November 30.
- **Christmas:** No visitations beginning Thursday, December 24 through Sunday, December 27. Visits will resume on Monday, December 28.
- **New Year's:** No visitations beginning Thursday, December 31 through Sunday, January 3. Visits will resume on Monday, January 4.

During the week in which these holidays fall, we will be limiting the number of visits each resident can have so that every resident and family have an opportunity for a visit before the holiday if desired.

While visitations may be unavailable, families who agree to follow certain safety protocols will have the option to take their loved one home or out of the building for a few hours on the holiday and holiday weekend. If this is something you are considering, please coordinate in advance with your loved ones Residential or Neighborhood Nursing Department so that our team may prepare accordingly. Families must be prepared to be vigilant in following all guidelines including social distancing, wearing facemasks, limiting exposure to large groups and out-of-state travelers, monitoring for symptoms and practicing frequent hand hygiene. Residents who leave the building may be required to quarantine for up to 14 days in their room upon return, based on a case-by-case evaluation of the outing. Additionally, residents who leave for an outing may be tested for COVID-19 every three (3) to seven (7) days for 14 days following their return. This is subject to change. Saint Mary's reserves the right to halt such outings at any point if there is new facility onset of COVID-19, if Erie County reverts to the red phase, or if the positivity rate in Erie County increases above five (5) percent.

## **Gifts and Packages for Residents: Holiday Drop off Event**

Saint Mary's Home of Erie fully understands the desire to give gifts and packages to loved ones, especially during the holidays. For a limited period, Saint Mary's will make accommodations for families and friends who wish to drop off holiday gifts and packages for their loved ones. We need your help in making this holiday drop off event go as smoothly as possible! Please pay close attention to the following.

Gifts and packages for in-person drop off must meet these restrictions:

- Limited to a total of three (3) gift boxes and/or packages per resident
- Boxes must be no bigger than 24x24"
- Boxes may be gift wrapped for the holidays but must be clearly labeled with the residents name and room number
- Clothing items must be labeled and include the name and room number of the resident
  - If you do not have clothing labels, Saint Mary's can provide them. To coordinate, please contact Social Services in advance.
- No perishables

Gifts and packages will be accepted during the following times:

**When:** Monday, December 7 through Friday, December 11  
**Time:** 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
**Location:** Adult Day Services at Saint Mary's East

*Tip:* Adult Day Services is located on the corner of East 26<sup>th</sup> Street and Ash Street, with the driveway accessible from East 26<sup>th</sup> Street. Follow signs for Adult Day Services and look for the brown awning.

Once Saint Mary's receive the items, we will sort and quarantine them before delivering them to residents. Saint Mary's is planning a festive delivery of these gifts and packages during the week of December 21 to help make this holiday extra special! If you plan to send gifts and packages via the USPS, UPS or FedEx, we advise that you mail these items early as shipping delays are anticipated around the holidays.

## **Holiday Decorations and Floral Arrangements**

Saint Mary's Home of Erie must comply with specific Life Safety regulations that limit what is and is not acceptable in regards to decorations. We want our residents to receive and keep holiday decorations and we need your help to ensure that items of this kind meet the regulations.

When ordering floral arrangements or mailing decorations, please be aware of the following:

- No real (live) Christmas Trees or fresh cut pine arrangements or wreaths
- No candles of any kind except for those in the chapel
- No extension cords, surge protectors or adapters
- If decorating with an artificial Christmas Tree or artificial arrangements, there must be an official tag on the item stating that it is fire retardant and there must also be a (UL) tag on any lights

To help in this endeavor, we have shared these policies with local florists. If an arrangement arrives that does not comply with these regulations, we will not be able to accept the item and it will be returned with the delivery driver.

### **Gifts for Employees**

Per federal regulations and our policies, individual employees of Saint Mary's Home of Erie are *not* permitted to accept gifts or cash gifts from residents or family members at any time including the holiday season. This year, due to COVID-19 restrictions, we additionally cannot accept gifts in the form of edible items such as cookie trays, fruit baskets, etc.

We understand that many people generously want to find a way to thank the employees for their dedication. While monetary donations are not expected, Saint Mary's Home of Erie will gratefully accept donations from those who wish to support our employees and will direct such donations to an Employee Holiday Fund. This fund will be used to organize a special holiday treat that can be shared equally with all of the employees at Saint Mary's.

If you would like to make a donation to the Employee Holiday Fund, you may give via:

- **Cash or check**, made payable to *Saint Mary's Home of Erie* and mailed to Attn: Development Office, Saint Mary's Home of Erie, 607 East 26<sup>th</sup> Street, Erie, PA 16504
  - Please include a note with the contribution or in the memo line of the check that designates the gift for the "Employee Holiday Fund"
- **Online** at [www.stmaryshome.org/charitable-giving](http://www.stmaryshome.org/charitable-giving)
  - Please select "Employee Holiday Fund" as the gift designation

If you have any questions about making a gift, please contact Emma Berkstresser in the Development Office at (814) 451-1316 or [eberkstresser@stmaryshome.org](mailto:eberkstresser@stmaryshome.org).

This year has proved to be challenging beyond measure, but we are so proud of the many ways our community at Saint Mary's has pulled together. We must not lose that spirit as we move forward and we must always remember that every action taken is for the benefit of our residents and those who care for them. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

**We wish you all a wonderful and safe holiday season!**



Allen L. Bonace, MSN/MBA, RN, NE-BC, NHA  
President/CEO  
Saint Mary's Home of Erie



Daniel Bucci, NHA  
Administrator  
Saint Mary's East