

This communication was sent in an email on March 26, 2021.

Saint Mary's & COVID-19: Update #53

Good Afternoon!

We have made it another week with no new cases of COVID-19 at either of our campuses.

We hope you have enjoyed a little bit of normalcy being able to visit with your loved ones in the past week – but, we have to remind you that things are not all the way back to “normal” and that while visitation has returned, all of the other safety measures remain in place.

Wearing a face mask is required at all times, regardless of vaccination status. We understand that there is guidance from the CDC which states that vaccinated individuals do not need to wear face masks around one another – however, this is general public guidance. Healthcare is different and nursing home residents are still a fragile population, so infection prevention measures are important and necessary. Additionally, the vaccination rate in our facilities has declined slightly. This is in part due to new admissions from the community who have not had a chance to be vaccinated. There are a number of a community efforts underway, and while we are working with the local hospitals to help vaccinate residents who have not yet had an opportunity, we all must do our best in following the core principles of infection prevention to help keep everyone protected.

The Accushield devices, which record your temperature and conduct screening, are there to help in the endeavor of keeping the facility safe. If you answer “yes” to any of the questions during the screening process, we cannot permit you to visit at that time. Please be honest in your answers. We understand that there is a bit of a learning curve with these devices and that there may be a short waiting period at the entrances, thank you for your patience!

Visitors additionally are still not to be bringing items, food or packages with them into the facility. This safety measure has not changed. We know this is one of the more difficult measures to understand, so why do we ask this? There is a still a risk in delivering items directly from visitor to resident and we do not have the ability to securely store and then quarantine a large volume of items. Exceptions are made for new admissions and for medically necessary items.

With Easter and Passover approaching, the CDC has once again released information on how to safely observe these religious holidays. You can view their holiday tips here:

[cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays/winter.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays/winter.html). Thank you!