



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

*This communication was sent in an email on September 11, 2020.*

### **Saint Mary's & COVID-19: Update #26**

Saint Mary's East and Saint Mary's at Asbury Ridge continue to report zero cases of COVID-19. One resident at Saint Mary's East was tested this week for the virus but thankfully the result came back negative.

The visits continue to go well! This was the first week of outdoor visits at Saint Mary's East. It was great to see some friendly faces again. East is on track for one more week of outside visits before moving to indoor visits the week of September 21<sup>st</sup>. At Saint Mary's at Asbury Ridge, this past week was the first week of indoor visits and the transition was seamless. We know the visits go quickly and it is hard to sit across from one another without being able to hug or touch, but we appreciate everyone's commitment to follow our protocols! A reminder that if you are traveling from one of the states under an advisory you must quarantine for 14 days upon entering Pennsylvania before visitation with a resident can occur. Please be open with us about your travel history as it is for the safety of our residents and employees. The state list changes frequently – be sure to stay up to date with the list provided [here](#).

There are a lot of questions about what comes next – and not a lot of answers. At this time, there is not much discussion from state or federal officials as to what happens after step three. We anticipate remaining in step three for the foreseeable future. This means visits likely will continue inside our lobby areas during scheduled times for a while longer and that visits in resident areas will not take place any time soon.

The Department of Health released updated guidance at the end of last week that outlined some terms, such as compassionate caregiver visitations, and addressed testing for skilled nursing facilities. We are still reviewing a lot of the new information and are working on a course of action to implement the updates as part of our reopening plan. We will continue to share those plans as we know more.

What we do know right now is that testing will be required for all employees at least once a month as long as Saint Mary's remains free of COVID-19 and Erie County has a low positivity rate. If Erie County sees an increase in positivity rates, testing would need to be conducted more frequently and expanded to include residents. Saint Mary's East and Asbury Ridge both received their point-of-care testing device this week. The devices are small, hand-held machines that can analyze one test specimen at a time but will process results in about 15 minutes. It will be beneficial to have the ability to test and receive results rapidly onsite, but the low capacity still presents somewhat of a challenge in processing large batches. We did receive a small supply of test materials with the device but we are finding that additional supplies are not readily available. We do remain in frequent communication with Associated Clinical Laboratories and they have informed us that they are currently able to turn around results in 48-hours (which is much better than the 14-day wait we previously experienced.)

Hope you all are staying well in mind, spirit and body. Thank you for your continued trust as we care for your loved ones!